

PIGTEON POST



Bye Bye 2023



Hallo 2024

January 2024 Issue 384





‘For Starston People’ <i>The Production Team</i>		<i>Copyright ©2024 PIGEON POST</i>
Co-ordinating Editor:	Michael Bartlett: Tel: 852318	The Red Cottage, The Street IP20 9NN Email: pigeonpost19@gmail.com mike@jack-ilott.co.uk
Editors:	Kathryn Gates: Christina Greathead Mark Spiers	Email: chloejames6699@gmail.com Email: cgreathead2@gmail.com Email: mark.spiers@live.co.uk
Standby Editors:	Chris Doughty: Sue Moore:	Email: chrismartindoughty@gmail.com Email: suemoore0717@gmail.com
Features Editor	Karen O’Keefe:	Email: karenokeeffe63@gmail.com
Treasurer:	Mandy Carter: Tel: 854600	Brick Kiln Farm, Cross Roads Email: mcarter@carrotech.com
Advertising Manager:	Liz Stacey: Tel: 853427	The Old Coach House, Starston Email: elizabethstacey99@hotmail.com
Distribution Organisers:	Brian & Christina Greathead: Tel: 852352	Cart Lodge Barn, Church Hill Email: bgreathead99@gmail.com
Distributors include:	Brenda & David Beech, Sonja Burnett, Mandy Carter, Tessa Dunbar, Alison Miners, Rosemary & Norman Steer, and others.	
ISSUE EDITOR	Michael Bartlett	
<p>Whilst the editorial team do not necessarily agree with the opinions expressed by contributors, they believe that the magazine is available for local people to air their views. Letters to the Editor must be signed. The Editor reserves the right to alter or amend any copy received. Items for inclusion in the next issue MUST reach the Co-ordinating Editor by noon on 12th of the preceding month, (usually earlier in December). Space in the magazine will be allocated on a first come, first served basis. Photos and pictures are welcome and will be used wherever possible.</p> <p>Please send copy by e-mail to: pigeonpost19@gmail.com</p>		
<p style="text-align: center;">Advertising</p> <p style="text-align: center;">For advertising rates please contact</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Liz Stacey: Tel: 01379 853427 Email: elizabethstacey99@hotmail.com</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Advertisements should reach us by 10th of the preceding month to be considered for inclusion</p>		
<p style="text-align: center;">Distribution</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Pigeon Post is delivered free to every home in Starston. It can also be sent by email in PDF format. To request a PDF version please contact the Co-ordinating Editor.</p>		
<p>If you know of any new residents in the village please tell Norman Steer (854245), Michael Bartlett (852318) or Brian Greathead (852352) to ensure they are welcomed and receive the Pigeon Post</p>		

Front Cover Photo: Hardwick Road, Dec 2022 by Helen Knowles

Village Diary

Monday 29th January 7.30 pm

Parish Council Meeting in Jubilee Hall

Saturday 3rd February 9.30 am

Glebe Meadow Working Party—see Page 20

Saturday 17th February Time TBC

Starston Burns night in the Jubilee Hall

Saturday 20th April Time TBC

Auction of Promises in St. Margaret's church

NO OTHER VILLAGE INFORMATION RECEIVED



To Book the Jubilee Hall - Contact the Bookings Manager:

Robert Wood: 01379 852535 or Email: starstonrobert@gmail.com

Deputy: Joy Brooks: 01379 854755 or joybrooks2007@yahoo.co.uk



Let us know of anything happening in the village

Personal adverts and events are free so long as they are not for personal profit

Jubilee Hall Wi-Fi Hot Spot: **Network:** Jubilee Hall **Password:** Starston

Starston Village Website: <http://starstonvillage.co.uk/>

Webmaster: Stuart Griffin: Website Email: info@starstonvillage.co.uk

**Final Copy Date for the February Edition:
12.00 Noon - Friday 12th January**



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Thurs	Closed
Fri	8.30am - 1pm 2pm - 6.30pm
Sat	7.30am - 12.30pm

Door closes 15 mins prior to last haircut

01379 854047



Around and About



A warm welcome to Demelza Scholes (and her cat Spooky) who moved into the village in November. Welcome to Starston, Demelza.



BURNS NIGHT SUPPER

Saturday 27th January 2024

Alburgh Village Hall

Includes 3 course meal

(vegetarian option available)

Entertainment by Miss Kitty

Ticket only Admission

Doors & Bar open 6pm Start 7pm

LIMITED TICKETS AVAILABLE

Book Early

Tickets £17.50
Box office: 01986 788 732

In aid of
All Saints Church Alburgh

The **SUANLO TRIO** in
'WINTER JOY'

A concert of popular music,
film songs and classical pieces.
Loreto Aramendi (Organ)
Ana Salaberria (Soprano)
Suzanna Guterl (Flute)

Saturday 20th January at 19:30
All Saints Church, Alburgh

Tickets £15.00 each. Children under 12 are free.
Price includes canapes and a glass of wine.
Hamper raffle to be held during the interval.
All proceeds go to the All Saints extension fund.

Call **Ann Wrench** for tickets:
01379 852569 / 07990 524794



Happy New Year to all of our members and supporters!

The Borderhoppa 2024 outings leaflet is now available. We have many trips arranged throughout the year including pub lunches, garden centres, the coast, mystery tours, boat trips and many more. You can pick up a leaflet at your local library, information centre, GP surgery, from one of our drivers or by calling the office.

Need help with transport? Borderhoppa buses are available to people of all ages who are unable to use ordinary bus services either because of mobility difficulties or because there isn't a bus service available for them to use.

Our door-to-door dial a ride service can take you shopping, to medical appointments (excluding hospitals), to visit a friend or relative or attend a local club.

If you would like to find out more about the great service we provide please call us on 01379 854800 or visit our website www.borderhoppa.org



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Editor's Notes

And the Future of Pigeon Post

So here we are again. To be honest I never expected to do another stint as Pigeon Post Co-ordinating Editor but the magazine had a problem and there was no easy solution. A year ago Sue Moore said she would step down at the end of 2023 so a new Co-ordinating Editor was needed. Sue has done a superb job - especially as she hasn't even been living in Starston for the past 3 years or so - and she deserves the thanks of the whole village.

The problem was there is no-one on the current PP team who had both the technical knowledge and the time to do the job. I was included in the discussions about possible solutions and we briefly considered splitting the C-E role up into sections but that was never really a satisfactory option. It would be like having a football team with 3 or 4 captains. There has to be someone who 'Co-ordinates'.

There were extreme options of course. The magazine could be cut back to 6 editions a year, or maybe even just one edition a quarter. These solutions would reduce the time pressure but a Co-ordinating Editor would still be needed. Also, if the magazine were less frequent, it could not publicise and report on village events so efficiently.

None of the current team were happy about these options but we had reached an impasse. The year was fast running out so, as a stop-gap, I offered to take on the job again for the next 12 months. However, the problem has not gone away. During 2024 someone else has to be found to join the editorial team with a view to taking over as Co-ordinating Editor by the end of the year. If that doesn't happen then the crisis has only been postponed. I can only commit to one year.

Please contact me if you think this is something you could do or would at least like to explore. I will work with you, show you how it all works and give you all the help you need. The main requirement is to be able to use - or learn to use - Microsoft Publisher on a PC. The software will not work on a Mac but if necessary we can lend you a PC with the software on it. The sooner someone comes forward, the sooner we can get started with a longer overlap until I, in turn, step down at the end of this year.

You will be supported by a very strong team. The current monthly editors are myself, Christina Greathead, Kathryn Gates and Mark Spiers, with Chris Doughty and Sue Moore as back-up if required. Karen O'Keeffe has joined the team as Features Editor to seek out and commission general interest (and timeless) articles which can be used when necessary. Then there are three excellent administrators, Mandy Carter – Treasurer, Liz Stacey – Advertising Manager and Brian Greathead – Distribution Organiser (helped by Christina of course).

So we've won a year. Pigeon Post is safe for the time being but the future is uncertain. The magazine has been going since March 1991 and it would be very sad to lose it now but if we don't have a new Co-ordinating Editor by the end of the year then December 2024 may be the last ever Pigeon Post.

Michael



Notes from a Travelling Starston Gardener

Hanoi, the capital of Vietnam, is one of the busiest cities I have ever visited. The narrow streets of the old town in particular are clogged with cars, delivery vehicles and especially motor bikes and scooters. Crossing the road is a nightmare. The knack is to walk slowly and purposefully from one side to the other, with no hesitation or deviation. The assumption is that the motor bikes will go round you. Amazingly, they do.



Yet even in this urban landscape there are gardens, using whatever space is available from balconies and rooftops to the courtyards of temples. In tribute to our fellow gardeners, I offer some pictures of their horticultural endeavours.



Happy New Year and Happy Gardening, whatever your space.

Dee the Gardener



Cookery Corner

Stuart's Cheesy Chicken

Cheese and chicken - that's what we call it but it can be any white meat – turkey, pheasant etc. For the vegetarian version you can use spinach or chard and the stalks, courgette and hard boiled eggs.

This is for the chicken option:

- * 1 onion
- * Butter
- * Plain flour
- * Milk
- * Cheese
- * English mustard - optional
- * Cooked chicken pulled apart in lumps
- * Spaghetti or other pasta
- * Chicken stock - optional

Fry the onion in butter - don't burn the butter or onion. Add plain flour and gently cook out - you are making a béchamel sauce. I leave the onions in.

Add milk - quantities are to your preference and size of family. You want enough sauce to coat the pasta liberally but not so the pasta's swimming in it or the pasta is in a soup.

Add cheese - a handful for us for 4 servings. If you like cheese put more in and melt into the sauce. Pop a bit of mustard in if you like it. The sauce wants to be fairly thick but it must flow easily. You can always add a little more milk.

For the pasta. This is up to you. I cook the pasta in chicken stock or with a stock cube. If using spaghetti I use a long smallish roasting tin. Boil the stock, put spaghetti in so it soaks up the stock. Add a little more hot water if pasta not cooked so it dries most of the water out. The other way is just to put pasta in salted water and boil. Don't over-cook the pasta.

Add the sauce to the pasta and fold in with the chicken. Put in an oven bowl. If you want you could put cheese on top. Add salt to taste but remember cheese and stock can be salty.

Put in the oven till it bubbles. Don't dry it out too much, just a slight crisp on top. Eat with salads, peas etc.

You can freeze it with chicken so if you make too much, don't waste it .



Benefice Letter

Hi Everybody.

A Happy New Year and my wish for 2024, to be the year you wish for. It has been said that the best way to keep a New Year's resolution is to keep it to yourself. Pause for a wry smile.

The New Year is like getting a new exercise book when at school, clean pages, no red comments from the teacher, a new beginning. The first prayer would be to ask God for forgiveness so giving us a clean sheet and a new beginning. It is good to take a quick look back over the year 2023, perhaps to put right some of the wrongs that we were involved in, to improve on those times we could have done better, to thank God for his continued love and the love of our family and friends, and for all the good times we have enjoyed. It is time to look forward to 2024, after all we are starting with a clean sheet.

Your Ministry team, led by our Rector Reverend Carl, is waiting for your call to be with you, to share any fears, problems or joy that you may have. Your church is also open wide to welcome everyone young or old into an atmosphere of joy, understanding and a loving fellowship and worship of a God whose inestimable love is constant and forever. Come explore and ask your questions, let us share your concerns and beliefs and above all, know that you matter and are important. Please, if you feel lonely or despairing give us a telephone call or knock on our door. Maureen Lipman used to say "It's good to talk", citing British Telecom, and how right she was.

New Year reflections offer us an opportunity to share thoughts, feelings, fears, hopes and to put things into perspective. Sharing feelings is not easy but it is worthwhile and is worth exploring. This year let us all work together as a Benefice family and show kindness to each other. Choosing to do something kind for someone else is a sure way to make you and other people smile. God's blessing be upon you and take my love with you always.

Reverend Norman

Could You Help Save Pigeon Post?

We need someone to join the Pigeon Post editorial team to learn the ropes and be willing take over the role of Co-ordinating Editor by the end of 2024. Training will be provided but the sooner the training starts, the easier it will be for everyone.

If no-one can be found then 2024 might be Pigeon Post's last year. For an initial discussion please contact Michael Bartlett on 01379 852318 or mike@jack-ilott.co.uk





Harleston Library

Tel: (01379) 852549 Email: Harleston.lib@libraries.norfolk.gov.uk

All of us at Harleston Library would like to wish you a very Happy New Year!

A big thank you to all of you who have already shared with us your memories of Harleston Library, but we still need more. Do you have any stories or photographs of Harleston Library that you would like to share? If so, please e-mail us at the above address or pop something through our door, we would love to hear from you!

The library officially opened on 11th December 1963, but we have decided to tie our celebrations in with '**Library Lovers Month**' which runs for the whole of February. On 14th February we will be holding a 60th Anniversary celebration afternoon where you can come and see our display of '**Highlights in the History of Harleston Library**'. Refreshments will be provided.

More details of our special birthday will be in the next issue, and we will also keep you posted about our plans on our Facebook page:

<https://www.facebook.com/DissHarlestonLongStrattonLibrariesNorfolk/>

Dates for your Diary (all activities are free of charge with refreshments available):

- Every Monday: LEGO Club 3.30-4.30pm
- Wednesday 3rd January: Meet & Make group (Adults) 2.00pm–3.00pm
Family Fun Time (Accompanied children aged 4+) 3.30-4.30pm
- Wednesday 10th January: Knit and Natter Group 1.30pm-3.00pm
- Wednesday 17th January: Meet & Make group (Adults) 2.00pm–3.00pm
Family Fun Time (Accompanied children aged 4+) 3.30-4.30pm
- Wednesday 24th January: Knit and Natter Group 1.30pm-3.00pm

Opening Hours:

Monday 8am -7pm (Staffed 11.30am-7pm)
 Tuesday 8am -7pm (Open Libraries all day)
 Wednesday 8am -7pm (Staffed 10am-7pm)
 Thursday 8am -7pm (Open Libraries all day)
 Friday 8am -7pm (Staffed 11.30am-7pm)
 Saturday 8am - 4pm (Staffed 11.30am-4pm)
 Sunday 10am - 4pm (Open Libraries all day)

Harleston Library will be closed on New Year's Day.

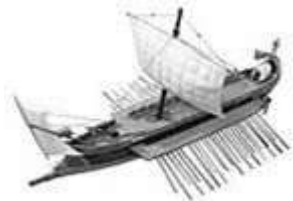


Happiness



Harleston & District u3a

Harleston & District u3a's monthly talk, on Wednesday 17th January at 2.00 pm in St John's Church, Harleston IP20 9AZ will be given by u3a member Geoff Doggett and is entitled '**Did the Romans sail to Diss ?**' Come along and find out about the river crossings on the Waveney which were tied to navigation and trade on the river, from the Roman times to the present day.



Further information about this and all Harleston & District u3a's activities is on our website:

www.u3asites.org.uk/harleston or by contacting Kim Poulton on 01986 788149.

pic courtesy of Rama

Stress Management

A psychologist walked around a room while teaching stress management to an audience. As she raised a glass of water, everyone expected they'd be asked the "half empty or half full" question. Instead, with a smile on her face, she inquired: "How heavy is this glass of water?"

Answers called out ranged from 8 oz. to 20 oz.

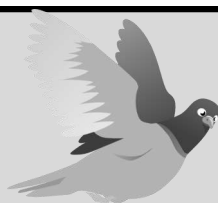
She replied, "The absolute weight doesn't matter. It depends on how long I hold it. If I hold it for a minute, it's not a problem. If I hold it for an hour, I'll have an ache in my arm. If I hold it for a day, my arm will feel numb and paralyzed. In each case, the weight of the glass doesn't change, but the longer I hold it, the heavier it becomes."

She continued, "The stresses and worries in life are like that glass of water. Think about them for a while and nothing happens. Think about them a bit longer and they begin to hurt. And if you think about them all day long, you will feel paralyzed – incapable of doing anything."

It's important to remember to let go of your stresses. As early in the evening as you can, put all your burdens down. Don't carry them through the evening and into the night. Remember to put the glass down!

It's not about the size of the wingspan.,

It's about the determination to fly...!





Alternative Fairy Tales

Jack and the Beanstalk

I'd just like to make the point that I did not choose to be an Ogre. Being twelve feet tall can make life a bit tricky. Your home has to have a number of adaptations to make living comfortable and buying clothes that fit is always a challenge. There are some advantages of course. Being twelve feet tall means you can always reach the top shelf and I am always in demand to come to the rescue when kittens get trapped up a tree.

Ah, now, I can hear you saying: "An Ogre who rescues kittens? What nonsense." But it isn't. Why should being twelve feet tall make you bad? I do no harm to anyone, live quietly, trouble no one and yet when some juvenile delinquent acquires some magic beans and creates a beanstalk that comes up into my world from below and steals stuff from me, he is hailed as a hero and I'm the baddie. It's just not fair. My parents taught me that the world above is good and the world below is bad and that makes sense to me. What is this 'Jack' boy other than a common thief. Had I ever done him any harm? No. So what justification is there for him to invade my home and steal from me? All that guff about me having stolen goods from his family, is pure propaganda. And as for all that 'Fee, fie, foe fum' stuff, well, I ask you, have you ever heard such nonsense? It's not even good poetry.

All I'm asking is look at the facts before making a judgement. Yeah, I know about his hard luck tale, no father, has to care for his dear old mother and they didn't have a bean between them. Well, from my point of view they did have a bean. If they really hadn't had a bean then there wouldn't have been a beanstalk, Jack would not have given in to temptation and I would have been left alone. And that's all I ever wanted – to be left alone. Though having said that, I'm always happy to help if you need someone who is twelve feet tall - high shelves, kittens up trees and so forth. Only if you do need help, please don't arrive by beanstalk, just pick up the phone and give me a call. I'm sure we can sort out something.

Ogre

Harleston Choral Society

Our Spring Term begins on Monday 8th January and we'll be rehearsing the Saint-Saëns *Requiem* and Dvořák's *Mass in D Major* (the 'Luzany Mass') for our Summer Concert on 29th June.

Please come and join us, even if you've never sung in a choir before - we welcome everyone, especially Tenors and Basses. There are no auditions, and music is provided free. Practices are on a Monday evening 7.30 pm - 9.30 pm, in The London Road Church, Harleston IP20 9BH. Parking is available in The Original Factory Shop (TOFS), almost opposite the church.

Further information about the choir is on our website:

www.harlestonchoralsoc.org.uk or from Stella Brownsea (Chair)
at **heidihouse@btinternet.com**



*Picture courtesy
of Elisa Riva*



STEPHEN LETCH - MASTER THATCHER

For the past 47 years I've been a thatcher of roofs and I'm still working full time thatching and repairing water reed (Norfolk reed), long straw (wheat) roofs and even the very rare heather roofs from up north. I have also harvested my own thatching wheat straw since 1985 using a collection of vintage reaper binders and threshing machinery from a bygone age, not through sentimentality but through necessity to get a suitable quality thatching material.

I decided I wanted to become a thatcher when I was 14 years old. Thinking back to my childhood I realise I was slightly anti-establishment and I wanted my future to have a degree of freedom from the norms of clocking in and out for the rest of my life, that and wanting to work in the fresh air totally focused my objectives. Slightly on the spectrum? Certainly my buddies thought so!



Thatching for me is still enjoyable, a passion and a life worth living. My partner, Alison, says if my arms were cut off we would discover they are made up of straw!

My school holidays were spent working with a soon to be retired thatcher from Hawkedon, Suffolk. Unfortunately he couldn't take me on as an apprentice due to ill health, so I spent a few months writing to thatchers in a 75 mile radius of home looking for a job. I even advertised in the Essex Chronicle... Ended up working for a 'character' called John 'Flash' Potter from Pebmarsh near Sudbury after he found my advert several weeks later wrapped around his groceries. As it turned out I stepped into a dead man's shoes as Flash's work buddy was found dead one night in a snow drift still sitting on his scooter, he and Flash had been on the juice that night!



Traditional Long straw thatch with a post WW" block cut pattern.

Google John Potter, thatched car for a short Pathe film.

As a teenager I learnt all the thatching groundwork preparations such as, coppicing and riving hazel into brotches (twisted pointed staples) for securing thatch, forging iron hooks also for securing thatch, preparing straw yealms (like tiles) ready for the roof, wire netting to cover straw thatch to protect from the then plagues of sparrows and the thatching straw harvest.



Creative Starston

What I never was given, was the opportunity to lay the reed or straw or cut out the fancy ridges. For John I was a labourer and sometimes an unpaid one for weeks on end, so with regret I left and started work for Countryside Properties (construction) and quickly rose through the ranks gaining new skills.

I still yearned to be a thatcher, and an opportunity arose at Hawkedon from a farmer desperate for a water reed re-thatch. Now bear in mind I had never laid a bunch of reed and I was only 19, but the farmer agreed to take me on as Frank Linnett (the thatcher I spent my school holidays with) agreed to stand as guarantor for my workmanship and lend me his thatching tools as I didn't have any.



Orchard Cottage

The confidence of youth.....I started thatching from memory from what I'd seen of Flash's thatching skills. I came unstuck within the first 2 days and Frank who was recovering from surgery arrived and was installed on the ha-ha lawn with a deckchair, jug of lemonade and a bullhorn to shout instructions. One day from Frank and I was sorted!

Word soon got out, I was sussd and would need further help, so I had two visits from Peter Brockett, the then Rural Development Commission thatching training officer for the east of England, to show me different better techniques.

My first thatch (1979) is still going strong and was recently re-ridged I understand. From that first contract I was taken on by several farmers in the area to re-thatch their properties and I lived on site in a caravan for 18 months. For the next 10 years I worked mostly in North Essex with three of my younger brothers and cousin as they left school. During that time we gained membership of the East Anglia Master Thatchers Association and won the double cup for best Norfolk reed and long straw thatches in 1987.

Early in 1991, Alison, our daughters and I moved to Starston. A thatcher from Long Stratton had recently retired and I was looking for land to grow heritage wheats for thatching. So here we still are 32 years on, we love the Waveney valley!

During my career I've trained a number of thatchers, even in Eire. Five of those thatchers have their own businesses in East Anglia and train up a new generation. At present there is a shortage of authentic traditional long straw thatchers and because this type of thatching is a passion of mine, and I'm prepared to put the extra work into it, I find myself being booked up for the next 7 years!

Read 'Of Brecks Thatch & Sparrows' Link on home page of ntsga.org.uk



Starston Parish Council

Dear Starston residents, Happy New Year to you all!

The project to install Quiet Lane signs along Low Road/Hallwong Lane/Dicky Hill in partnership with South Norfolk District Council is progressing, and we hope the signs should be in position early in the new year.

With the weather having turned much colder recently, we are pleased to report that the Warm Welcome initiative continues in the Jubilee Hall with a hot lunch on a bi-monthly basis. It is also heartening that South Norfolk Council have launched another grant scheme to support the initiative over the winter, for which the Parish Council will be putting in an application. Everyone is very welcome to come along; the first lunch of 2024 will be on Wednesday 3rd January. Further information can be obtained from the Clerk or Cllr Broadhurst.

The 2024 dates for Parish Council meetings have been set as follows:

- Monday 29th January
- Monday 18th March
- Monday 20th May (including AGM)
- Monday 15th July
- Monday 16th September
- Monday 18th November

All meetings will be held at 7.30pm in the Jubilee Hall.

The Annual Parish Meeting will be held on Thursday 23rd May at 7.00 for 7.30 pm in the Jubilee Hall.

If you would like to attend the next Parish Council meeting or if you would like any matters raised in the public forum, do please contact me in advance.

Libby Alexander
Clerk to Starston Parish Council
07943 279946
starstonparishcouncil@yahoo.co.uk

New Year Resolutions -

A triumph of optimism over experience.



2024 SYC Events Programme

Starston Youth Club (SYC), now in its 9th year, is run by local people for local children. The events programme is developed each year by Starston children and their parents. Starston PCC provide public liability insurance, and safeguarding cover is provided via the Church of England Diocese of Norwich.

We would like all Starston families to be able to attend the club, so all events are **FREE**, except for the Fireworks Party which is our annual fundraiser. Donations or gifts in kind are hugely appreciated and can be given to Janet Broadhurst or Ann Leitch. £5 covers an hour of Jubilee Hall hire charges (2022 rates); £30 buys a professional firework; £70 covers the cost of the Easter Egg Hunt.

For further details on events see the SYC page on the village website www.starstonvillage.co.uk or contact Ann Leitch on 01379 423387 to join the SYC Whatsapp Group.

Janet Broadhurst; Jonathan Cobbald; Amanda French; Ann Leitch; Brian Penfold; Dominika Was. **2024 SYC Organising Group**

Date	2024 Clubs <i>Time: 3 – 4:30pm at the Jubilee Hall, unless otherwise stated</i>
Sat 24th February	“Dogs, Hearts & Tulips” – origami for beginners
Sat 30th March	Easter Egg Hunt on the Glebe Meadow and Easter crafts
Sat 27th April	“The Hangout” - the Jubilee Hall is open for games eg table football, snooker/pool, giant jenga, giant connect, table tennis. There will also be parachute games outside if weather permits.
Sat 1st June From 2pm	International Children’s Day - beach trip (Pakefield or Walberswick). <i>Meet at the Jubilee Hall car park.</i>
Sat 13th July From 4pm	Camp Out with music, songs and toasting marsh mellows around a firepit; bacon rolls & hot drinks Sunday morning. <i>This event will be held on the Glebe Meadow.</i>
Sat 3rd August	We are joining in the Starston Village Fete, which usually includes family games.
Sat 14th Sept From 6 pm	Baked potatoes supper, board games and chatter around a firepit. <i>This event will be held at Hillside, The Street.</i>
Sat 2nd Nov 4:30 – 5:30pm	Starston Fireworks Party
Sat 30th Nov From 3pm	Christmas crafts & Starston Christmas Tree lights switch on at 5pm
Sat 21st Dec 4.45-6.30pm	SYC Christmas Party



County Councillor's Report

On 8th December 2022, Norfolk County Council signed an “in-principle” Level 3 Devolution County Deal for Norfolk which, if agreed, will provide Norfolk with new powers, devolved funding and additional investment to help us boost our economy through jobs, training and development, improve our transport network and support our environment. One of the first of its kind, Norfolk’s County Deal will bring greater independence to local decision-making and priority setting. The Investment Fund, available through a Level 3 Deal will bring an additional £600m over 30 years. To secure Level 3 Deal, the council must change its governance model from a ‘leader and cabinet model’ to a ‘Directly Elected Leader and Cabinet model’. The proposal is to have the election of the Directly Elected Leader in May 2025 so that it is the same time as the Norfolk County Council Election.

Twenty-seven brand new gritters will be taking to the roads this winter in a £3,238,000 boost to the annual push to help keep Norfolk moving safely during the winter months. Norfolk’s fleet of 58 vehicles treat 2,200 miles of road on each full 3-hour gritting run. All A and B-class roads and some C-class roads are treated with focus on commuter and major bus routes and as far as possible one route into all villages. The A11 and A47 are gritted by National Highways. In addition to the 49 gritting routes there are more than 2000 grit bins that are available around the county for people to use on roads, pavements and cycle paths. Thank you to all of the volunteers that use these grit bins and also thanks to all of the farmers across the County who are on standby to help with snow clearance when needed.

It’s just been over a year since NCC received £49.55m of funding from the Department for Transport (DfT) to improve bus services across the county. There have been huge numbers of improvements already and the latest figures show that passenger numbers have increased throughout the year with the number of fare-paying passengers now exceeding pre-Covid levels. Passenger numbers across the UK fell dramatically during the Covid-19 pandemic with an average drop across the UK of 50.3% but in many cases even more. Latest figures for Norfolk show that overall bus passenger numbers have increased by 18% in the last year with the number of fare-paying passengers now at 107% compared to pre-pandemic baseline figures

Approximately £12m of our funding was allocated to providing new or expanded bus routes and increased service frequencies on key routes, including more evening and weekend services. This has been the focus of the spend in this first year of funding.

New infrastructure to cut congestion. The Norwich Western Link has been given Government backing by approving the business case and committing to funding the road. This much needed new road will connect the A47 to the NDR and some of the benefits are, cutting traffic congestion, reducing journey times, improving air quality in communities and unlocking opportunities for economic growth.

Looking forward to 2024
Best Wishes

Martin



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Glebe Meadow Winter Bash

Saturday 3rd February 09.30

Please book the date in your 2024 diary. Our next volunteering session is planned for the morning of Saturday 3rd February from 09.30. Everyone is welcome.

We'll start with a demonstration of the erection of the flood barrier at Jubilee Hall. It takes about 15 minutes if you're a natural at Lego, ex-military or once you've had a go. The more people able to help in an emergency the better.

The priority in Glebe Meadow is cutting back the sycamore and other regrowth on the banks of the Beck, requiring saws, pruners and rakes. These are sociable as well as productive occasions, so the more the merrier.

We look forward to seeing you in action in Glebe Meadow in 2024!

Peter Grimble

**February 2024 will be the 12th birthday
of the Glebe Meadow orchard**

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Starston Honey

Bees make over 15,000 foraging journeys to collect nectar to make a single jar of natural honey.

Glebe Meadow bees have survived floods and drought and each colony is now looking after the queen in order to survive the winter, ready to expand once again next spring. And the superb honey they have strived to produce would make a perfect gift for you, your family and your friends.



Two kinds of honey are available to buy. If you like set honey, choose the creamy spring honey. If you prefer more runny honey, then try the golden summer honey. They are both delicious!

Just ring me to order – such a bargain at £5 a jar, all proceeds support Jubilee Hall.

Peter Grumble

01379 852819 or 07879 330925

Friends or family visiting with (or without) dogs, but need somewhere to stay?

Our large homely & cosy shepherd's hut in Starston is very dog-friendly (up to two large dogs), and is set in its own ½ acre meadow, with 4' secure fencing all around. Wonderful views and walks, with amazing sunsets & sunrises.

Kitchen, shower, king-sized bed, a/c & under-floor heating, fire pit, loungers, laundry, games and more.



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Love, Kindness and Legacy The Birth of a (Rocking) Horse

It is the year 2004, when a newish grandfather has the urge to make his granddaughter, Devin, a rocking horse. Fuelled by love, he enrolled on a Horse's Head Carving course at the Rocking Horse Shop in Fangfoss in Yorkshire. A few days later, he arrived home, horse head in hand, pleased, with a hint of pride.

Having ordered the rest of the kit, the grandfather assembled the horse's body and legs, which took some time. It was eventually done, although rather square and not yet having the anatomical shape of a horse, but all that was needed was a spokeshave, chisel and sandpaper to shape the horse and then Dobbin, or Shergar, would be born.

Then life changed, the grandfather became an ordained priest and found that his work responsibility and commitment to his parishioners took most of his time, so he did not get into his workshop to finish his project. The square-shaped wooden legs and body, which carried a nice horse's head, was left standing on a bench in the garage covered over, so when time allowed, the job would be finished.

The years rolled on. The grandfather's work as a priest increased. Covid, with its lockdowns, came and went. The horse still stood proud in the garage but, bless him, he did not complain. Then a year ago, a friend visited, asking what lay under the sheet in the workshop. The cover was whisked off and the reasons for the delay in its completion were explained. The friend offered to help the grandfather to finish the horse, an offer that was swiftly accepted, but by the time work started again, the one friend had become two, with a mutual friend, a professional furniture maker, joining the team.

The work of shaping, sanding, and staining progressed well, and now, as Christmas approaches the rocking horse is complete, painted and ready for its mane, tail and eyes to be placed in position. The rocker has been assembled, a travelling crate made and secured to a pallet to transport the horse to Devon to be presented to the granddaughter, who is now aged 21! Could this be the longest gestation period in equine history?

The grandfather is me, the Revd Norman Steer; the fantastic friends are Tim Webster of Pulham St Mary and Graham Rayner of Bush Green. Their intervention, support and willingness to help and to give so much of their time have allowed me to finish what I started in 2004. Their kindness and friendship have given me so much pleasure and joy, and I know that my granddaughter, Devin, will have this joy for the rest of her life. We hope the horse will pass down the family in the future so this story of love and sharing will be a legacy for many more years. I cannot express my thanks enough, and God's blessing, for these two friends.

*A rocking horse is a toy for joy!
For every toddler, girl or boy.*



Dobbin or Shergar - Before and After

Christmas Tree Lights Switch-On

On a cold, dark and foggy December afternoon (Saturday 2nd), many Starstonites and visitors joined in the Christmas spirit and gathered at the Jubilee Hall to watch the Christmas tree lights being lit.

Following a splendid performance on the bagpipes by Philip Astor (resplendent in his kilt) the lights were switched on by the Gibbs family, introduced by our Town Crier, Norman Steer who, as always, was in excellent voice. The tree and the lights are magnificent.

Those present enjoyed mulled wine and tasty food while partaking in the raffle and grooving to the sound of the Starston Allstars playing a mix of Christmas tunes and other songs, with the Tetrahedron Christmas Tree Challenge continuing alongside. A big thanks to the many volunteers and attendees who made the evening special.

Kevin Murphy





Quick Quiz

A Quiz for January - Where were they born?

1. Duke of Wellington
2. Mel Gibson
3. Audrey Hepburn
4. Sandy Toksvig
5. Florence Nightingale
6. Freddie Mercury
7. Che Guevara
8. Russell Crowe
9. Cliff Richard
10. Joanna Lumley

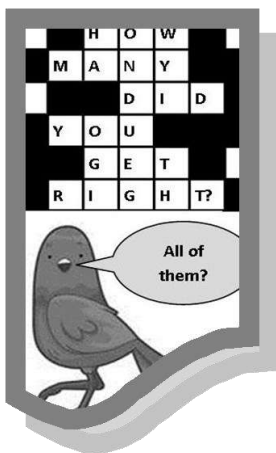
December Answers—Space Quiz

- | | |
|--------------------------------|---------------------------|
| 1. Yuri Gagarin - USSR | 2. Alan Shepherd - USA |
| 3. Valentina Tereshkova - USSR | 4. Vladimír Remek - Czech |
| 5. Helen Sharman | 6. Dennis Tito - USA |
| 7. Richard Garriott - USA | 8. Jeff Bezos - USA |
| 9. William Shatner - Canada | 10. Alexei Leonov - USSR |

Answers to the December Crossword

Across

1. Adjusts
5. Comic
8. Payphones
9. Son
10. Each
12. Ferrules
14. Carboy
15. Kantha
17. Desktops
18. Nets
21. Lym
22. Cacophony
24. Roses
25. Lentils

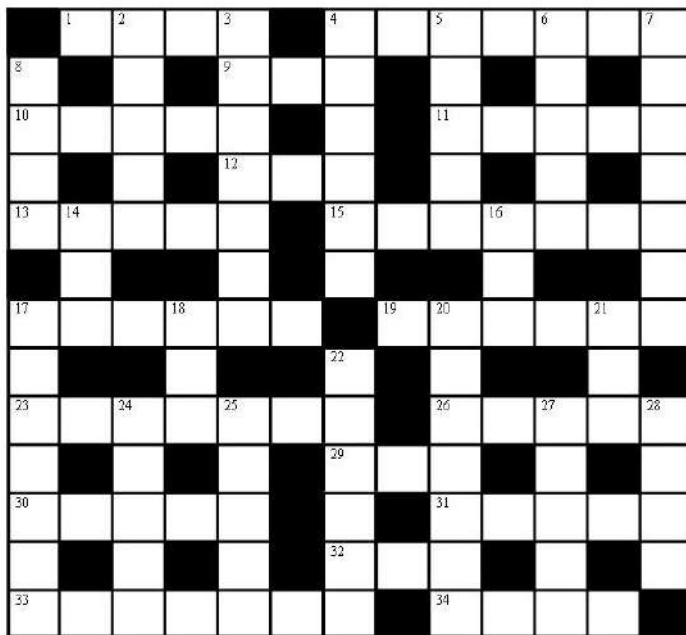


Down

1. Apple
2. Joy
3. Soho
4. Singer
5. Cesarean
6. Mistletoe
7. Canasta
11. Christmas
13. Vortices
14. Coddler
16. Apical
19. Syris
20. Open
23. Oui



January Crossword by Webbe



CLUES ACROSS

1. A type of street (4)
4. Bewildered (7)
9. Useful for hearing (3)
10. Attach (5)
11. A curve in a coastline (5)
12. Short Thomas (3)
13. Court attendee (5)
15. Throat, just behind mouth (7)
17. Looking through a light mist (6)
19. Adobe style Mexican Houses (6)
23. Written in chalk (7)
26. White blood cells found in nodes (5)
29. Short Joseph (3)
30. Seventh astrological sign (5)
31. Spanish Wine (5)
32. Bulge downwards (3)
33. Found around a castle (7)
34. An up and down toy (4)

CLUES DOWN

2. To present (5)
3. Relating to the right side (7)
4. On time (6)
5. Striped animal (5)
6. Slow, sluggish or listless (5)
7. Process of getting rid of harmful substances (7)
8. Pilgrimage to Mecca (4)
14. Of the third age (3)
16. Roadside assistance (3)
17. Someone who interrupts (7)
18. Not well (3)
20. A damaging immune response (7)
21. Round and round (3)
22. Alter slightly (6)
24. Collection of photos or records (5)
25. Australian 'Bear' (5)
27. Temperamental (5)
28. Pile (4)



Benefice Services in January - TBC

	7th	14th	21st	28th	
Dickleburgh	9.30 am HC	9.30 am Morning Prayer	3.30 pm Evening Prayer	9.30 am HC	
Pulham Market	9.30am HC	9.30am Messy Church Methodist Hall	9.30am HC	9.30am Morning Prayer	
Pulham St Mary	8.00 am HC	9.30 am HC	9.30 am Matins	9.30 am HC	
Rushall	Church open for prayer	11am HC	Church open for prayer	Church open for prayer	
Starston	11.00 am HC	11.00 am Morning Prayer	11.00 am HC	11.00 am Morning Prayer	
Thelveton	11am SW	Church open for prayer	11am BCP Matins	11am HC	

All services are subject to change. For up to date information please go to the Benefice Website: <https://www.achurchnearyou.com/benefice/26-107EP/>

For updates on Starston Services contact John Formston 853042 or jformston07@talktalk.net

Starston PCC Secretary: Ruth Cawcutt.

Tel: 01379 852087

Email: rcawcutt1@btinternet.com

Key to Services

HC: Holy Communion

PC: Parish Communion

BCP: Book of Common Prayer

SW: Sunday Worship

CC: Café Church





Starston Parish Council

Philip Astor:	Chairman & Tree Warden	philipastor@mac.com	07753 800594
Janet Broadhurst:	Emergency Plan Co-ordinator	janetbroadhurst@aol.com	01379 853480
Stuart Griffin:	Member	stuart.griffin@live.co.uk	
Andrew Knowles:	Litter Pick Co-ordinator	andrewknowlesSPC@outlook.com	01379 855060
Andy Leitch:	Welcome to Starston Co-ordinator		
	SAM 2 Equipment	andy@startronics.co.uk	01379 423387
Karen O'Keeffe:	Internal Control of Finances	karenokeeffe63@icloud.com	01379 423761
Chris Sparrow:	Footpath Warden	chris.sparrow2211@hotmail.com	

Highways Defects, Village Maintenance, General Enquiries

Libby Alexander: Clerk to the Council and RFO 07943 279946

To contact Starston Parish Council: starstonparishcouncil@yahoo.co.uk

Local Councillors

Martin Wilby	County	01379 741504	martin.wilby@norfolk.gov.uk
Clayton Hudson	District	01379 676259	chudson@s-norfolk.gov.uk
Delme Thompson			delme.thompson@southnorfolkandbroadland.gov.uk

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Ring: **01379 854800**

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Ring: **101**

Safer Neighbourhood Team

Email: sntharleston@norfolk.pnn.police.uk

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NHS Emergency & Urgent Care Services
(Including Emergency out of hours chemist)

Ring: **111**
when it's less urgent than 999

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