



Starston Parish Council

Mrs Libby Alexander (Parish Clerk) 25 Hill Farm Road, Long Stratton, Norfolk, NR15 2WA

Tel: 07943 279946 e-mail: starstonparishcouncil@yahoo.co.uk

Minutes of STARSTON ANNUAL PARISH MEETING **held in the Jubilee Hall at 7.30pm, Thursday 23rd May 2024**

Present: Cllr P Astor, Cllr C Sparrow and DCllr C Hudson

Members of the public: 5

Clerk to the Parish Council: Mrs Libby Alexander

1. To consider accepting apologies for absence.

Apologies received from Cllrs A Knowles, K O’Keeffe, K Ward, J Broadhurst, S Griffin and CCllr M Wilby in advance of the meeting were accepted.

2. Chairman’s Welcome and Report (See Appendix 1 for full copy of report.)

Cllr P Astor welcomed everyone to the meeting. He gave an overview of events that had occurred in the community and activities undertaken by the Parish Council during the year. Cllr Astor thanked his fellow parish councillors for all that they do in their various positions of responsibility. He particularly thanked Andy Leitch, who had stood down, and welcomed new Councillor, Kate Ward, who had joined the Council.

3. To receive reports on matters of interest to the parish from the District and County Councillors.

Cllr C Hudson gave a verbal report on behalf of South Norfolk District Council.

CCllr M Wilby was not in attendance but had provided a report prior to the meeting (See Appendix 2 for full copy of the report).

4. To approve and sign the Minutes of the last meeting held on 22nd May 2023.

Approved as a true and correct record of the meeting.

5. To discuss matters arising from the Minutes of the last meeting.

There were no matters arising from the Minutes of the last meeting.

6. Reports from organisations and groups active in Starston (See Appendix 3 for the full copies of the reports.)

(i) Parochial Church Council

Mrs R Cawcutt read the PCC report.

(ii) Starston Jubilee Hall

Mr P Grimble read the Jubilee Hall report.

(iii) Glebe Meadow

Mr P Grimble read the Glebe Meadow report.



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(iv) Community Speedwatch

Mr H Websdell read the Community Speedwatch report.

(v) Pigeon Post

Cllr P Astor read the Pigeon Post report in the absence of Mr M Bartlett.

(vi) Starston St Margaret's Tower Ringers

Mr H Websdell read the St Margaret's Tower Ringers report.

(vii) The Starston Youth Club

Miss M Jenner-Ludbrook read the Starston Youth Club report.

(viii) The Starston Charities

Mr Julian Taylor read the Starston Charities report.

(ix) The Starston Pealers

No report had been provided; however Mrs R Cawcutt reported that the Starston Pealers had reformed last year. The group met every Tuesday at 2.00pm in the Jubilee Hall and played a wide range of music. There were now 6 or 7 regular ringers but new members were always welcome.

7. Any Other Business

None.

Meeting closed at 8.45pm



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Appendix 1

Starston Parish Council Chairman's Annual Report, May 2024

Welcome to this, the third Annual Parish Meeting that it's been my privilege to chair. In both of the previous years there had been major historic, national events to celebrate – and everyone who participated will recall that Starston more than played its part.

This past year has been quieter – notable more for the way the rhythms of village and country life have gently ticked over. I for one have got no complaints about that.

That's not to say, of course, that the lives of all those who live in the village have been uneventful. Many families will have experienced their own grounds for joy and celebration. By the same token, there have been many cases of personal tragedy and loss, which have often touched the community deeply. I've recently returned from the cemeteries and memorials of Northern France and Belgium, and I'm happy to repeat the oft-quoted sentiment: "We will remember them."

On a happier note, there has been the inevitable churn that occurs within any community, as some residents move on, and the life of the village is refreshed as new people move in.

One of the consequences of time passing is that, after one year, new residents become eligible for membership of the Parish Council. This year, following the sad departure of Andy Leitch from the Council, we were delighted to co-opt Kate Ward as a Councillor at our meeting on Monday; Kate shares the enthusiasm that we all feel for this special community, and will, I know, bring to bear her own valuable skill set.

Otherwise, the membership of the Council remains reassuringly unchanged, although there have been a few changes in roles. We decided on Monday that it would be appropriate to reinstate the position of Vice Chairman of the Council, and unanimously concluded that Andrew Knowles was the obvious candidate. After all, Andy has more than proved his mettle with his supervision of the annual litter pick. Andrew also now leads on meeting and greeting new residents to the village, and ensuring they get a comprehensive welcome pack.

Chris Sparrow has taken over responsibility for monitoring our wonderful network of footpaths, and Janet Broadhurst is currently in the process of passing on to Chris her encyclopaedic knowledge of all matters footpath-related.

During the past year, Norfolk County Council has invited all parishes to assess their policy on conserving and enhancing biodiversity: did we need to produce a Biodiversity Action Plan, for example? The Parish Council replied that we are genuinely proud of our positive record on biodiversity – the extraordinary range and variety of habitats and species that we can boast. That is certainly what I see on my regular walks. And it is very much a tribute to the stewardship of our local farmers and land managers.

Janet continues to lead on the Parish Council's emergency plan – and I would ask anyone who has not done so to give Janet or Libby their contact details, and inform them of any help that they might be willing and able to give if the worst comes to the worst.

Fortunately we have been spared anything too disruptive this past year. But the risk of flooding within the village remains a real and pronounced concern, with large amounts of water flowing down Railway Hill, in particular, becoming all too regular.

I was pleased to meet the senior Highways Officer for Norfolk on site recently. He did note that the drainage system was not designed for extreme storms; and surprise, surprise, there are



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budget restrictions. At the very least, though, I trust that the drains – many of which can become really clogged up – will be jetted and cleared more expeditiously. He knows I have his number... Persistence can pay off, as evidenced by the fact that the recent spate of potholes in the village are being addressed more timeously – at least I hope so,

Those of you who go along Low Road will have noticed the appearance of a number of sturdy wooden posts identifying it as a so-called Quiet Lane. There are no binding provisions, I'm afraid, in terms of a speed limit, but nonetheless we do hope that the initiative – a joint one between the Parish Council and Norfolk County Council – will encourage motorists to slow down for the benefit of pedestrians, cyclists and horse-riders. I should thank our County Councillor, Martin Welby, for ensuring that the scheme, which was actually coming to an end, was extended for our benefit.

I'd also like to thank more generally our two District Councillors, Clayton Hudson and Delme Thompson, for the regularity with which they attend our meetings, and the thoughtful approach they adopt towards our affairs.

And finally, on behalf of the whole village, can I thank my fellow councillors for the time and commitment that they give for the sake of the community. And warm appreciation and thanks must go too to our Parish Clerk, Libby Alexander. Once again over this past year she has served us well, and kept us right as regards procedure, budgetary and financial issues.

We are all very mindful that we have an important duty towards the community, and I like to hope that we are both accessible and responsive to any issues that residents might raise.

PHILIP ASTOR



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Appendix 2

County Councillor's Annual Report 2024

At Norfolk Council I am on the Infrastructure and Development committee and Chairman of a members working group.

This winter has been the wettest on record for South Norfolk and all of the villages and Harleston that I represent have been badly affected by flooding. Flooding is very worrying for residents, can be dangerous and can happen very quickly so it's vital you know who to contact if you or your community is affected. To report flooding call the Flooding Hotline for Norfolk on 0334 800 8013 or report online at www.norfolk.gov.uk/flooding or if you are in immediate danger call 999.

During the winter months our team of gritting vehicles are on standby; this year we have 27 brand new vehicles so with 14 introduced last year we have 41 gritters equipped with all the latest auto-salting and satellite navigation technologies. This means we can operate more efficiently and economically and contribute to our Net Zero target. Each full gritting run covers 2,200 miles and can be done in 3 hours.

Update on NCCs three major infrastructure projects. The Herring bridge (third river crossing) at Great Yarmouth has recently opened and made an instant impact for access into Gt Yarmouth especially for the port area which is seeing big expansion in the offshore wind energy sector. Work has started on the Long Stratton bypass and is expected to take about 18 months to construct, so improving the A140 and improving the quality of life in and around the Long Stratton area. The Norwich Western Link which joins the Broadland Northway (NDR) to the A47 has been awarded government funding for the construction and is now going through the planning approval stage.

Local infrastructure is being supported through our popular Parish Partnership scheme. Just over £1m is due to be spent on 118 highway schemes, including vehicle-activated speed signs, bus shelters and new footpaths. First launched in 2011, the scheme invites communities to bid for cash to make much-needed improvements. This year NCC will put in £470,000, and the Safety Camera Partnership £44,000. Town and parish councils match-fund that money to pay the remaining cost of all the schemes – a contribution of about £485,000.

NCC has signed up to a county deal with central government. This means that Norfolk will get devolved powers and will be able to have more influence over funding allocations to the county. It also means that there will be an election in May 2025 for a directly elected leader for Norfolk.

NCCs Bus service improvement plan has so far increased the number of bus passenger journeys in Norfolk by 16% on last year. The £49.5m grant from central government has so far been used to launch 12 new bus routes and increase services on 32 others. With the £2 bus fare cap in place till later this year it's a good time to use the bus. We have also secured funding, working with First Bus to secure funding for 70 new electric buses with all of the needed charging infrastructure, which are being rolled out across the city of Norwich.

My local members budget this year has supported a drainage scheme in Pulham Market and two road safety schemes in Harleston.

Looking forward to all of the events planned in 2024 and better weather.

Best Wishes,
Martin



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Appendix 3

ST MARGARET'S CHURCH STARSTON

Annual Report of the Parochial Church Council For the period 1 January 2023 to 31 December 2023

**Incumbent
The Reverend Carl Melville
The Rectory
Station Road
Pulham Market
Norfolk
IP21 4TE**

**Independent Examiner
Mr Ben Adams**



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BACKGROUND:

St Margaret's Parochial Church Council has the responsibility in promoting within the ecclesiastical parish the whole mission of the Church, Pastoral, Evangelistic, Social and Ecumenical. It also has maintenance responsibilities for the Church, the only Grade I listed building in this beautiful village, and the graveyard. Starston is a rural parish, covering approximately four miles in length and 1.5 miles in width. There are approximately 350 residents, some of whom do not live permanently in the village.

PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL:

Members are elected at the Annual Parochial Church Meeting in accordance with the Church Representation Rules.

Rector:	Reverend Carl Melville (Installed 26 th September 2023).
Wardens:	Julian Lombe Taylor (JLT) and John Formston.(JF)
Elected Members:	
PCC Lay Chair:	John Formston
Safeguarding Representative	Rev. Norman Steer (NWS)
Deanery Synod Reps:	Rev. Norman Steer and Mrs Ruth Cawcutt (RC)
Treasurer:	Acting Treasurer John Formston
Secretary/Electoral Roll Officer:	Mrs Ruth Cawcutt (Flower, Cleaning and Church Opening Rotas)
PCC Members	Ms Sheena Duncan (SD) (resigned November 2023) Mr Bryan Hanner (Verger). (BH) Dr Edward Libbey (EL) Mr Herbert Websdell (Tower Captain of Bell Ringers) (HW) Mrs Julie Websdell (JW) (deceased 8 th March 2024) Ms Margaret M Griffiths (MG) (resigned November 2023)

RECTOR'S REPORT

Since my arrival at the end of September 2023, I have been getting to know each of the churches, schools, communities and people. I have seen the sharing of the Gospel in all aspects of our life together in our villages, with churches at the heart of each of those communities. The welcome I have received from church and community has been overwhelming.

We face many challenges ahead, including financial pressures, fundraising, building care and maintenance, growth in number and the increasing difficulty of sharing the Gospel in our world. However, the joys and opportunities far pass the number of challenges and, although we must face and work through challenges, we must keep our eyes fixed on the joys.

I have no doubt that we will grow. I know this because I have seen God at work in so many ways. Our Lent sessions helped us thrash about some of our hopes and dreams for the future, and the Jesus Shaped People programme will help us grow our vision.

Of course, behind all of this is a whole army of people who give their time, energy, money and skill for the everyday running of their church. People who clean, provide music, welcome, cook and cater, sing, arrange flowers, donate, worship, fill in forms, arrange meetings and care for others. A huge thanks goes to each and every person who dedicate their lives that the body of Christ can function.

I am very much looking forward to the future and look forward to continuing to seek out God's blessings in our benefice.

Revd Carl



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GENERAL: (RC)

The PCC are very grateful to The Revd's Carl, Norman, the Benefice Ministry team and to both churchwardens for their hard work ensuring that the weekly services are held in St. Margaret's church.

Thanks to Julian Taylor and John Formston for their hard work as Churchwardens and to Bryan Hanner as Verger. Thanks to John Formston, acting Treasurer and Ruth Cawcutt, Secretary, who diligently give a great deal of their time to such important duties. The PCC are indebted to our organist Mr. Paul Grimble, who steadfastly plays the beautiful organ at all services.

The PCC has met 6 times throughout the year. The Annual General meeting for the year ended 31st December 2022 was held on 16th April 2023.

St Margaret's has a section included within the Starston Village website and events are notified within the Pigeon Post the local village magazine.

Special Services and Celebrations:

A Hunters Dinner was held on 23rd January, in the Jubilee Hall this raised £526.00 and followed by a Burns Night Supper held on 18th February and this raised £388.50.

The Mothering Sunday Service was held on 3rd Sunday in Lent, posies were distributed to those present and also to several people within the village who were unable to get to church.

The Coronation of His Majesty King Charles III was held on 6th May 2023. There was a commemorative service held in the church and was decorated with flowers, this was followed by the Starston Village celebrations.

The Annual Fete was held on 5th August on the Glebe Meadow during the heaviest downpour of rain, it should be noted that it was wettest August since 2010. The organising party had obviously followed the weather forecast and erected the marquees together, creating a very large covered area, so that none of the people attending got wet at this event and an amount of money in excess £900 was raised for church funds. Three members of the Starston Youth Club visited the church on this day, along with their grandmother, The Rev. Norman showed them around the church and was able to explain the leaflet 'Albert and the Angels' in more detail.

Battle of Britain Service - this moving service held on 10th September, led by the Revd. Norman Steer was well attended, with standards being paraded and the bagpipes played by Mr Philip Astor. Harvest Festival was held on 1st October at 5.00 p.m. followed by a supper at the Coach House, Starston Place with 30 people attending and our grateful thanks to Julian and Philippa Taylor for hosting. The Annual Service of Remembrance was held on Sunday 12th November. The Christingle Service was held on 17th December with decorated oranges being distributed to all those who attended. The most memorable sight was the Rev. Carl being dressed as an inflated orange! The Service of 9 Lessons and Carols took place on 18th December, at which the reformed group of handbell ringers opened and closed the service which was followed by mince pies and mulled wine. A presentation was made to Ms. Margaret Griffiths, our former Treasurer, and Ms Sheena Duncan, in acknowledgement and thanks for their many years of hard work for the PCC, Margaret as Treasurer and Sheena as our former Organist. Both Margaret and Sheena run the group of handbell ringers, reformed in 2023 following their ill health and the Covid restrictions imposed. The handbells belong to Starston Church and currently are kept with John Formston and Ruth Cawcutt at their homes, when not in use. There are 4 cases of bells valued at several £000s.

The church was again open on Saturday mornings

General Services: During the year there were 3 Funerals, 1 Interment of Ashes, 1 Wedding. 1 Baptism. Sunday Worship is conducted from the BCP. Holy Communion is celebrated on 1st and 3rd Sundays in the month. On the 2nd and 4th Sundays a Churchwarden led morning service is held. When there are special services i.e., Mothering Sunday, Battle of Britain, Remembrance Service, Harvest Festival these are prepared and usually arranged by the Revd. Norman Steer as appropriate for the occasion.



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TOWER BELLS: (HW)

Our gratitude is also expressed to the Tower Captain, Herbert Websdell. There is now a full team of ringers a very healthy increase from previous years. A Special Peal was rung to commemorate the Coronation and it should be noted that the Tower Captain HW had also rung at the Coronation of Queen Elizabeth II! The PCC are most grateful to all of those who give their time to ring for the services.

FABRIC: (JLT)

General: The Quinquennial Survey completed in 2022 is still awaiting attention, the shortage of funds is the reason for most of the work still being outstanding, although it is hoped that with the promise of a legacy due to St Margaret's we will be able to replace the broken and worn-out heating system. The remaining items will receive attention when funds are available. JLT and JF will take advice and will advise the PCC of the requirements.

CHURCHYARD –Mr Julian L Taylor (JLT) and Mr Bryan Hanner (BH)

General: Maintenance and grass cutting of the churchyard is an ongoing situation, it had cost £1,240 for 2023 and we are grateful to the Parish Council for their grant of £500.00, towards the upkeep of the churchyard. Grass cutting has been done throughout the year with the help of Julian and Philippa Taylor keeping the north end of the churchyard tidy and Mr Roger Smith dealing with the lower end of the churchyard for which he is paid.

Gates to the South Entrance of the churchyard: The work is in hand to replace these gates and we are most grateful to the three anonymous benefactors who are having this work done

Norfolk Wildlife Trust: An area of grassland has been set aside to comply with the Norfolk Wildlife Trust's request.

Churchyard Safety: Notices should be displayed at the entrances to the churchyard advising the general public of their and our obligations when entering the churchyard.

TREASURER'S REPORT: (JF)

General: The Lay Chairman and Churchwarden, JF was acting Treasurer until November 2023. The accounts for the year ended 31/12/2023 need preparation for presenting to the Independent Examiner, together with the finalising of the accounts for year ended 31st December 2019, 31st December 2020, 31st December 2021. 31st December 2022. It can be seen from the following figures that we have again been unable to pay our Parish Share in full. The PCC has made the commitment to replace the broken heating system in the church, at a cost in the region of £15,000 for this item alone. There is also the cost of removing the pews from the north aisle and providing a suitable access for the disabled that need consideration. Although from the figures it shows we are solvent, we need to ensure we have sufficient funds replace the heating.

Gift Aid: I am happy to report that progress has been made in preparing our submission to HMRC enabling us to reclaim the Gift Aid on donations from our collections, unfortunately we have lost the Gift Aid on the year ended 2019 due to Covid and the fact we have been unable to establish from HMRC, why the figures submitted were incorrect. For the years 2020, 2021 and 2022 a sum in the region of £2,400 should be received from HMRC. Submissions for 2023 are being prepared for submission. When we have a Wi-Fi connection the Parish giving Scheme, operated by the Diocese will operate more effectively.

Bank Account No.1 as at 9th January: £2,351,52 with £112 in cash, awaiting paying in. This account is used for, paying our day to day running expenses – Diocese, electricity, grass cutting, insurance etc.

Bank Account No. 2 as at 9th January: £5,414.78. This account is used for the Fabric of our building, projects etc.

Charitable Giving: During the year we made charitable donations of £450.00.

Parish Share 2023: Our Parish Share for 2023 was £9,645, and we have paid £2,400.00 to the Diocese.

Fund Raising: Monies for the maintenance and Financial Obligations of the church are met through collections; savings, direct giving and various are raised from fund raising events. Fund raising events have resulted in approximately £2,400 being raised.

Future Fund Raising: A Concert postponed from October 2023 due to flooding, is due to be held in February, as well as the Annual Burns Night Supper. A St. George's Night Supper and quiz is being held on 20th April 2024. A date has been fixed for the Annual Fete, which will be held at Starston Place by kind permission of Julian and Philippa Taylor 20th July at 4.00 p.m.. The Harvest Supper will hopefully take place on 6th October. It should be remembered that the PCC are of an age that Fund Raising, as done in previous years, has become a physical strain for the members.



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ELECTORAL ROLL (RC):

There are 19 names on the Electoral Roll at 31st December 2023. To the present date the number is 17.

DEANERY SYNOD 2023 (RC):

RC volunteered to represent the PCC at the APCM held in April 2023. Three meetings were held during the year (February/July/October).

SAFEGUARDING OF CHILDREN AND VULNERABLE ADULTS – Reverend N W Steer/Julie Woolterton

NWS reported that Starston have nearly completed the exercises on the education Portal. One member of the PCC is recovering from a knee operation and did not manage to join other PCC members, who did not possess a computer but have completed the task on my computer. As soon as this member is able, I will be visiting him and we can conclude the training necessary for membership of the PCC. There is still the outstanding question of the Starston Youth club where one member is due to renew his DBS but Reverend Carl is due to speak with Ann Leitch when able. Depending upon this conversation action by the church will be taken or in terms of Safeguarding the church will cease to have responsibility for this. Meanwhile I am on the end of a phone if anyone has a problem and I will deal with the request as a priority. Prior to this forth coming APCM I have attended three complaints within the Starston parish and I have dealt with them and no further action has been required. Difficulties regarding members of the PCC doing the training with regards to presenting Julie the Administrating officer receiving certificates have occurred but hopefully this has been rectified.
Reverend Norman Steer Safeguarding Officer

HEALTH AND SAFETY: (JLT)

The Procedures Manual is currently being reviewed.

A Fire Point gathering area notice is located on the southern pathway to the church. Fire extinguishers are located within the church.

Lay Chair of St Margaret's Parochial Church Council

Date: _____



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JUBILEE HALL & GLEBE MEADOW REPORT FOR ANNUAL VILLAGE MEETING

23 MAY 2024

1. The Jubilee Hall continued to be a focus of Starston's community throughout 2023, most notably when the village came together at the Hall and on the Glebe to celebrate the Coronation of King Charles III and Queen Camilla on 6 May. On 5th August, the village fete was hosted at the Hall and on the Glebe, and was also enjoyed by many from the village and elsewhere. On Saturday 2nd December, many Starstonites and visitors gathered at the Jubilee Hall to watch the Christmas tree lights being switched on. Other events, such as the Burns Night celebration in February, were held.
2. As well as one-off events, the Hall has hosted the Warm Welcome initiative, which has continued following its initial phase to provide an occasion that brings people together to enjoy food and company. As well as Warm Welcome, other users throughout 2023 included the Starston Youth Club, Art Group, the reinvigorated Hand Bell Ringers, the Board Games Group and various private events.
3. Under the invaluable direction of our trustee Peter Grimble, the maintenance of Glebe Meadow was undertaken with the help of many volunteers in the mowing team and work parties. 2023 saw the earliest and biggest crop of good hay had so far, and hay bale income was the highest yet. A good relationship was formed with South Norfolk's new tree officer Hugh Coggles, and tree surgery was undertaken by Treemenders. Repairs to the footbridge were undertaken. A new 'pontoon type' safe working area for the bee-keepers tending the apiary has been installed. It was another very good year for the bees. The Green Cupboard in Harleston has proved an excellent outlet for the honey, alongside sales through local events and direct from the bee-keeper.
4. Work on the Environment Agency (EA) Beck Project continues and a meeting was held in January with the Water Board and the EA to discuss the proposals. Further work will be undertaken by these parties to refine the design and secure funding. Subject to consultation within the village and the agreement of the Hall, work would proceed in 2024-25.
5. The Trustees and Management Committee have worked to ensure the safe, efficient and financially sound operation of the Hall and Glebe, dealing with the various matters that arise: lettings, maintenance of the building and the Glebe, health and safety issues, accounting and so on. A new hire charging structure for the Hall was put in place from April 1 2024, and details are available on the village website



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6. Our thanks and appreciation are extended to trustees, members of the Management Committee and to the many other volunteers without whom the Hall and Glebe could not perform its vital role in the life of the village.

Kevin Murphy, Chairman, jubilee Hall Trust



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STARSTON COMMUNITY SPEEDWATCH

Nothing to report!

I intended to retire as co-ordinator on January 1st 2023, advertising in the Pigeon Post. As there was no response I continued until 30th June. Since the 30th June 2023 there has been no speed watch. The traffic through the village continues without check apart from a policeman who sometimes attends.

This is my last plea; please can someone take over as co-ordinator. At 91 I have done my bit.

Regards

H Websdell
Coordinator



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Pigeon Post Report for Annual Parish Meeting - 2024

The Pigeon Post team of volunteers continues to produce and distribute a monthly 28 page magazine which is delivered free of charge to every household in Starston. It is also sent out to around 50 people by email and is available on-line on the Starston Village website. The magazine provides a mix of local news, feature articles and reports of events in and around Starston and is a valuable communication channel for a widely spaced out village.

Pigeon Post is an independent not-for-profit magazine. Our main income is from selling advertising space and, not surprisingly, that is a fluctuating income. Once again we are pleased to have successfully applied for a grant of £100 from the Parish Council.

Two new monthly editors joined the team during the past year, Kathryn Gates and Mark Spiers, so together with Christina Greathead and myself there are now four of us to share the monthly job of assembling the magazine. In addition I must pay tribute to Crossword & Quiz Editor Chris Doughty, Advertising Manager Liz Stacey, Treasurer Mandy Carter and Distribution Organisers Brian and Christina Greathead, together with all the volunteers who deliver the magazine around the village.

This is an excellent team but, like all teams, it needs someone to manage it and deal with the necessary admin month by month. That is the role of the Co-ordinating Editor, the role I am currently filling. It is not a difficult job, but it does involve a commitment of 2 or 3 days around press date each month.

At the end of 2023 after several years in the job Sue Moore stepped down as Co-ordinating Editor, a role she performed with great sensitivity and commitment even though for much of that time she no longer lived in Starston. As the year end was approaching and no replacement for Sue had been found, I agreed to return to the team for just one year to allow extra time to find a permanent Co-ordinating Editor. This year is my 13th year managing the magazine but I, in turn, will be stepping down at the end of 2024.

We have now been seeking a replacement Co-ordinating Editor for nearly three years but without success. Pigeon Post has been running since March 1991 and it is very sad that it may not continue but, like all community activities, it needs someone lead it. If no one is willing or able to do that then the magazine cannot carry on.

We have to be realistic – after all this time it seems unlikely that anyone will step forward but you never know and miracles do happen. However, it would be irresponsible to rely on miracles so, while we still hope for the best, we are preparing for the worst and are making contingency plans to close down Pigeon Post at the end of the year in which case December 2024 would be the last edition.

Michael Bartlett
Co-ordinating Editor



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STARSTON TOWER RINGERS

In the past I have stressed that we needed more people to become ringers so the ancient craft continues. At last my wish has come true and we now have more ringers than bells. During 2023 I trained four new ringers, all are now able to ring when required. Unfortunately, we have lost one of our experienced ringers.

Ringling times: Practice Wednesdays 19.00-20.00
Sunday Services 10.30-11.00

Visitors are always welcome, ringers or non-ringers.

I intend to continue teaching and ringing until at least October 2026, to achieve 80 years as a ringer, or go on even longer.

Regards

H Websdell
Tower Captain



Starston Parish Council

Mrs Libby Alexander (Parish Clerk) 25 Hill Farm Road, Long Stratton, Norfolk, NR15 2WA

Tel: 07943 279946 e-mail: starstonparishcouncil@yahoo.co.uk

Starston Youth Club Report 2023

There were lots of fun packed activities for the Starston Youth club in 2023.

In addition to the 3 main annual events, the Easter Egg Hunt, Fireworks Party and SYC Christmas Party, another four events were held – “The Hangout” (games at the Jubilee Hall (including table football, table tennis, pool/snooker, giant Jenga); building a bug hotel, parachute games; a Camp Out on the Glebe Meadow and the Tetrahedron Christmas Tree Challenge. Each year the programme of events is developed from Starston children’s ideas

This was the eighth year of Starston Youth Club which continues to provide a meeting place and activities for many children in the village. This year was our first Camp Out when tents were erected on the Glebe, and 14 children and accompanying adults gathered around a glowing camp-fire. Marsh mellows were toasted, music and laughter echoed across the meadow. The event was supported by a guitar playing member of the Starston All Stars, as well as seating donated by the Jubilee Hall Trust in the form of straw bales. Bacon rolls, American style pancakes and hot drinks were available in the Jubilee Hall early the following morning.

Our new local District Councillor, Delme Thompson, supported the Camp Out with a gift of marsh mellows, sweets and drinks, in addition to awarding SYC £250 from his Ward Fund for a giant Connect Four and a 5 metre colourful parachute for team games. A four-person tent was donated to SYC and another loaned to us, enabling some members of one family to enjoy their first experience of camping.

During the year the SYC was challenged to create a tetrahedron Christmas tree. It took the skill and time of lots of young people (and some adults!), and was subsequently admired by those attending the Starston Christmas Tree Lights Switch On at the beginning of December 2023.

For details of the 2024 SYC programme, please see the Youth Club page on the Starston village website – <https://starstonvillage.co.uk/starston/13235-2/>

There are 19 households in Starston actively involved with SYC either through their children or grandchildren. As all SYC activities are shown on the village website, so family visits to relatives living in Starston can be co-ordinated with events for children in the village.

Brian Barton, Janet Broadhurst, Jonathan Cobbald, Amanda French, Ann Leitch, Dominika Was
SYC Organising Team.



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Starston Charity Report year ending 31/12/2023

The trustees met on Dec 10th 2023 and decided to make a Christmas distribution of £60 to 8 people. We were also able to help an individual who had applied to the Charity for assistance during a period of hardship.

As at 31/12/23

Current account: £7,504.15p

Premium Acc: £77.93p

The trustees are Julian Taylor, Chairman

Bryan Hanner

Debbie Griffin

Sarah Willett

I would like to recommend to the meeting that Bryan, Debbie and Sarah are re-elected for the year ahead.

I make the plea each year to be informed of any person in the village being in need of support; please will you or they contact me so that the Charity can look to give support.

Julian Taylor

14/05/2024