



ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on 16 May 2024 at Stanton Village Hall

The Chair of the Parish Council, Cllr Harvey-Evers, took the Chair for the Meeting.

In Attendance:

Joanna Spicer (Suffolk County Councillor) arrived late due to another APM

Jim Thorndyke (District Councillor)

Parish Councillors Brown, Burdett, Harvey-Evers, Smith and Wright

1. **Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting held on 20 April 2023 were confirmed as a correct record and were signed by the Chair.

2. **Public Forum**

3. **Report of Parish Council Chairman, Councillor Charlie Harvey-Evers**

Councillors - Busy year with a number of Councillors joining and leaving. I would like to thank Cllr Thorndyke for his work as chairman for the last year as he stands down as a Parish Cllr, but continues his role as District Cllr. We have welcomed Martin Wright and Vic Dorling, however Vic has recently resigned due to his other commitments in the village. We currently have 2 vacancies for new councillors and details of the vacancies will be posted on the village website soon for anyone wishing to apply.

Staff - In May last year Fiona joined us as our PC Clerk. She has spent the last year getting up to speed and has delivered impact with refining and updating all our processes and paperwork etc. Early last year we recruited Tina Mardel as our village caretaker. Tina is out in all weathers keeping the village clear of rubbish / leaves and weeds. The village is looking great and we thank her for her continued dedication. We also have our weekend litter picker (name) who concentrates on clearing away any little at weekends.

Annual Litter Pick - We have a Village litter pick arranged for Sat 25th May. Anyone who would like to volunteer for a few hours, please meet at the Clock tower at 9.30. We thank Angie Burrows for taking the lead on this.

Flooding in the Village - The structures in The Grundle are still the responsibility of Suffolk County Council. We continue to be vigilant in reporting blocked drains and would encourage the public to do likewise. We are grateful to the Maddox family for their efforts in clearing debris during heavy rain to avoid flooding problems in The Street.

Village Tubs - Planters in The Street have been filled with summer and winter bedding plants supplied by Hillcrest Nurseries

Recreation Ground - We are lucky to have very good play area facilities on the Recreation Ground which continues to be very popular with local children and subject of

many compliments. Cllr Phil Smith carries out monthly checks to ensure that all the equipment is safe to use. Cllr Martin Wright is also training up to be able to do the inspections. The tennis court and MUGA have been cleaned regularly with the Football club clearing away all the weeds and foliage growing around the edge earlier this year. We are extremely grateful to them for doing this. We are looking to replace the net on the tennis court in due course.

The Public toilets continue to be damaged and vandalised. We try our best to keep them clean and functioning. We will be looking at improvements to these facilities over the coming months.

Highways - The SIDs in the village and on the A143 have been working well. Whilst we will never eradicate the determined speeder, I have seen a noticeable reduction in speed on the A143. We are hoping to make some of the reports from the SIDs available for the public to view on our website. We are looking for someone who can help with managing the mobile SIDs. Please let the Clerk know if you are interested. The parking issues around the doctors surgery in The Chase continues to be an issue. Thanks to all who contributed to the survey and we continue to work with Cllr Spicer as we look at options to improve the situation.

The road junction of the A143 and B1111 will soon be resurfaced and the fallen sign is on a list to be fixed too. We continue to report potholes as and when we find them and would encourage you to do the same on the Suffolk Highways reporting tool.

Village Green - Over the course of the year we have been negotiating with the County Council the lease for the old primary school playing fields to turn it into a "Village Green". I am pleased to say that we are at the final stages of that and the land will soon be available to use. We will be putting up a temporary fence while we wait to hear what is happening with the old school development. Over the course of the coming years we will be improving the area with landscaping and benches etc.

Football club - Under the new leadership of Phil Smith, Stanton football club has gone from strength to strength. The PC has been working with the club to allow them more use of the rec and they now have expanded to 3 pitches that are used on a weekly basis.

Coronation Mugs - After gaining some funding from the Stanton Steamer and Cllr Spicer, Cllr Frost arranged for the children of Stanton to receive a mug to commemorate the coronation of King Charles III. These were well received and we thank all concerned for their generosity and efforts in getting these distributed.

Allotments – Unfortunately last year we had quite a bit of vandalism. The PC was approached for help and 3 cameras were purchased in order to try and catch the perpetrators. Then at the beginning of this year vandals broke in and caused a lot of damage after accessing the allotments from the field behind. The PC worked with the allotment holders and the Landowner who has kindly installed a large metal gate with padlock to prevent access to the field behind allotments.

Fireworks - It was disappointing to have had to cancel the fireworks back in Nov. The ground had got too waterlogged and the risk of injury due to a slip or fall too high. On top of which the damage to the rec would have taken a lot of repair. We are hoping to have the fireworks event on Saturday 2nd Nov this year. The event relies heavily on volunteers

from the village. Without enough volunteers is at risk of not going ahead. If you or anyone you know is able to spare the time to help please get in touch with the Clerk.

Village maintenance - The Queen's Golden Jubilee Commemorative bench situated on George Hill has been renovated and the Clock on the Clock tower has been fixed after it stopped working following a power cut. The white lines around the war memorial have been refreshed and Tina has given the memorial a tidy up prior to the 80th anniversary of D-Day.

Christmas Tree Lights continue to be a popular feature in the village. Unfortunately this year they were cut after they were put up and before the lighting event. Thanks to Cllr Brown, new lights were purchased in double quick time and they were ready for the Lighting event.

Planning - The Bloor Homes development remains undetermined and has been quiet for a while. I suspect this will get reactivated in the coming months. The PC remains concerned about the effect this will have on the infrastructure and services available in the village.

The Copart application (Jaynic) was refused and we wait to hear what the developers will do next.

Portrait of King Charles - has been received and will be displayed in Village Hall

The future - The action plan for the year is published on the village website. We are looking at a number of things including an upgrade to the CCTV at the Rec. The refurbishments of the MUGA and the public toilets and delivering the new "Village Green"

Conclusion - I would like to thank the Parish councillors for giving up their time and energy to the benefit of Stanton Village. Also to Cllrs Spicer and Thorndyke for their help over the course of the last 12 months. Finally to Fiona, our clerk, Tina, our village caretaker and Maisie, our weekend litter picker.

4. **Report of West Suffolk District Councillor Jim Thorndyke:**

The elections in May 2023 resulted in a change to the administration at West Suffolk Council from a Conservative council to a coalition formed between the West Suffolk Alliance comprising 17 Labour, 1 Lib Dem and 1 Green councillor and the 19 Independents together forming the West Suffolk Working Group.

While I retained by place on the Development Control Committee, I have also been given a Cabinet place with responsibilities for planning which includes seeing through the new West Suffolk Local Plan running to 2040 which is thankfully now in its final stages before it's planned adoption in spring 2025. The final consultation closed on the 12 March 24 with around 1,000 responses from 185 interested parties, this is the technical and legal consultation. All the responses have been recorded and the submission consultation document and evidence base will be submitted to the Secretary of State for the independent examination by inspectors which will be carried out later in 2024.

Planning applications are of importance to residents and around 50 applications were made in the year in Stanton. Most applications have been approved enabling people to build extensions, make alterations to their property or carry out works on TPO trees. Not all applications go smoothly however, we still have an application on the land opposite the

Rose and Crown running since Christmas Eve 2019 and which may move forward with progress on the local plan also two large applications on the airfield, one has now been refused and could be appealed or it could come back in a different form, the other is still not ready to go to committee. The airfield has been designated an employment area for the last 35 years.

I am still hoping to the Parish Council and others will start work on a neighbourhood plan for Stanton so we have a real idea of where we are, what the village needs now and also on what is planned for the future.

My locality budget for the year has mostly gone towards a new boiler for the village hall, the remainder helped to purchase the Sunday Stanton Football club team kit. I have a locality budget each year to assist any community groups, if your group may need assistance please contact me.

A grounds maintenance review was carried out in the Autumn. As agreed by Council as part of the budget process we have been able to increase our grass cutting capacity this coming season following the review. This means increased capacity in terms of staff and resources across the District. Following the ban of using Glyphosate by West Suffolk Council last year, the control of weeds was a very big problem with many complaints of the state of the areas being overgrown with weeds. Earlier this year on the basis that nothing trialled works anywhere near as effectively as Glyphosate its use was reinstated but on a more limited scale.

With the Decarbonisation Initiatives fund of a £1 million the first call on the fund was a grant scheme for the upgrading of streetlights owned by the town and parish councils to LED types. Much of St Edmundsbury was converted previously and this scheme allowed almost all lights across West Suffolk to be modified to support energy savings.

West Suffolk Council over view of the last year

- 4.3 million black and blue household waste bins emptied;
- 2495 determined planning applications;
- 839 food safety inspections carried out;
- 236 West Suffolk households assisted with adaptations to their homes through disabled facilities grant at a cost of £1,879,394.

I would like to thank the Community for their support and everyday help in assisting me with my Councillor duties, my thanks go to the Parish Council, Fiona the Clerk and C Cllr Spicer for their help and assistance over the year.

5. Report of Suffolk County Councillor Joanna Spicer

I would like to thank the chairman, members and clerk of the Parish Council for making me welcome at their meetings over the last year.

I want this year to pay a special tribute to Councillor Jim Thorndyke as he has recently stepped down as parish council chairman. I am fortunate to have had the advice and support of Jim for at least 25 years as both district councillor and parish council chairman. I have valued his help and guidance about Stanton matters and when we try to navigate the different responsibilities of our two councils. His continued commitment to "The Steamer" and the village hall are invaluable for the village.

The county council has had a challenging year as we meet our statutory responsibilities caring for vulnerable older people, those with disabilities, children, special education and young people. About 79% of our total annual expenditure is on these services which are provided 365 days a year.

This year we have had to make difficult decisions over the level of council tax and we are making some significant savings involving service cuts and reducing staff numbers. Meanwhile we continue to ensure we have adequate budgets for the fire and rescue service, highways, trading standards, the environment and climate change, school support and libraries. The total budget for 2024-25 is an increase of 8.6% to £752.8million.

Since October 2023 the council has had a new contract for highway services with Milestone and we are cautiously pleased with how repairs and resurfacing is progressing.

We are currently consulting on the proposal from Government for a “Devolution Deal” for Suffolk which will bring investment in Suffolk of £480million over the next 30 years. In return for this new money and devolved decision making we will be required to have a directly elected leader of the county council from May 2025.

The biggest issues I have discussed with your Parish council over the last year are :

- Supporting the purchase of speed awareness devices to help enforce the new speed limit on the A143 by a grant of £4,000 in addition I contributed £5,000 towards the installation of the scheme
- Issues surrounding the transfer of the “village green” at the former primary school from SCC to the parish council and I was able to contribute £2,000 towards the fencing
- Road and pavement repairs – in the village centre and the B1111
- Traffic calming – especially at Duke Street North, Upton Road and Grove Lane
- Footpath and bridleway access
- Forthcoming closure of the A1088 south of Ixworth

6. Report from Phil Smith, Chairman of Stanton Community Football Club

Stanton Football Club was established in 1912 and records show the club played its first game at Bardwell in January 1913. The club has recently made the decision to change its name and will now be known as Stanton Community Football Club. This reflects the desire of the club to become more community focused. We have achieved this in part with the creation of a youth section.

2023 saw the first youth team in Stanton for many years and saw Stanton CFC enter a team of U9's into the Suffolk & Ipswich Youth League. The desire for youth football in Stanton has seen the club expand its youth football and for next season four youth teams will be entered into leagues for competitive football (U9's, U10's, U13's & U16's) with the latter moving over to us from Walsham Le Willows Football Club. The youth section is expanding and we will be looking for more players to build even more teams. We are keen to encourage girls to come along and for us to start girls teams.

Our Men's 1st team has not had the best of seasons but finished the season with some excellent results and we are hopeful of better season next year. We have encouraged some younger players to come and play for the team and their development is very encouraging.

Our Men's Sunday team had a better season and finished mid table in the Bury Sunday League and reached the semi final of the cup losing out to a penalty shoot out.

Off the pitch the club has run a race night and plans to run two race night events per year. These take place in the village hall. On 1st June the club will hold a sixteen team 5 a side tournament at the recreation ground bringing teams to Stanton from across the County. This will conclude with a testimonial game for our retiring player Karl Tarpley who is hanging up his boots after ten years service to the club.

On 21st June Stanton Junior Reds are running a 5k & 10k solstice run around the village.

We are a club that is going from strength to strength. This is due in part, as a result of the support of the Parish Council in allowing us to use the recreation ground for our matches. I would also like to acknowledge the support local businesses have given us in the form of sponsorship.

Moving forward I would encourage members of our community to show their support for the club by supporting our events and would invite you to come up to the recreation ground and show your support for the club when we play games at home.

7. Report from Dan Pearson, on behalf of the Village Hall Management Committee

The hall has undergone ongoing maintenance for the period 2023-2024 with improvements made to the away changing rooms. These improvements included a wall to prevent water from showers spreading into the changing room area, also the shower heads were upgraded.

Over the Christmas period the floor in the main hall was refurbished, which included a full sand and retreatment to protect the floor.

Unfortunately, early 2024 it was identified that we had an issue with the hot water system within the hall and we were losing pressure. Investigations are ongoing and it has been identified that there is leaks from within the boiler itself. 1 of the systems expansion vessels has also been identified to be leaking. A new boiler has been ordered and we are awaiting the installation of the new unit and associated components to enable us to have a fully functioning system again.

At the end of April 2024 Chris Thorndyke a long standing committee member and bookings secretary stepped down from her position, the organizing committee would like to recognize the vast amount of support Chris has given to the running of the hall over her years as booking secretary. In the interim period whilst looking for a new booking secretary Ginny kindly stepped forward. We are also introducing a new booking system which will be online, giving the ability to view a live bookings calendar for the hall. The new system will also allow hirers to simply complete a booking form online.

Looking forward to next year we continue to grow the organising committee for the hall, to share the workload of the running of the hall. We are also looking to introduce a new website to promote the hall increasing the number of hires.

8. Report from Peter Palmer, Blackbourne Local History Society (Stanton)

Following a slight change to the format of the meetings from previous years the society now meets for six months of the year instead of eight months with a break in December and January.

A variety of guest and local speakers have been most entertaining in attraction guests especially when local history is involved. The last meeting in April on the history of RAF Shepherd's Gove was unfortunately for some, oversubscribed.

As is now usual for local community activities, this local history society is in danger of closing unless volunteers are forthcoming to take on the roles of office.

9. Report from Peter Palmer, Stanton Steamer

Now in its 28th year this is the first time since 2008 (16 years ago) that income has failed to reach the approximate £8,000 annual publishing costs.

Reasons:

- Commercial companies are leaning towards setting up their own websites.
- Local trades people are oversubscribed with business and cannot take on additional trade and no longer wish to subscribe.

No charges are made for local community events, charities, or local organisation reports, nor the normal 4/5 pages from the Parish Council. The Steamer continues to provide a vital information service to the community, supports its regular reliable commercial advertisers by removing any service providers, with upheld complaints, from the Steamer. The concern is, if the current trend continues and future estate housing is built the additional publishing costs will be unsustainable. Simply raising the advertising costs is not the answer.

Once again, we are most grateful to all the volunteers that deliver the Stanton Steamer to the 1350 copies around the village.

10. Report from Maureen Johnson, Stanton Charity Café

The Thursday morning Charity Café has been operating in it's present form since November 2021.

The success of this venture is due to the organisers, and the willing, and very generous volunteers who bake all the sweet & Savoury items, and serve them together with a hot drink to our valued customers, including the walking group who visit every fortnight. Several of our cusotomers come almost every week to enjoy the food & drink, the warm, convivila atmosphere and the good company.

We gave all of our profits to local charities and so far have donated the huge amount £8,364.12.

We thank all our team of helpers for their generosity,m and all our customers for supporting us.

Most of our equipment has been donated as weel, such as the teapots, cafetieres, the toaster and many more items.

Everyone is very welcome at the care, so please do come along.

Stanton Charity Café Donations

Date	Charity	Amount
Nov 21	Salvation Army	£211.00
Jan 22	St Nicholas Hospice	£1,000.00
Mar 22	Women's Refuge	£500.00
Sep 22	SARS	£1,000.00
Nov 22	Salvation Army	£307.10
Dec 22	Gatehouse	£358.05
Dec 22	Bury Drop In	£349.20
Feb 23	Dogs Trust	£452.91
Mar 23	St Nicholas Hospice	£261.36
Apr 23	East Anglia Air Ambulance	£318.50
Jun 23	Bury Drop In	£625.80
Aug 23	BLESMA	£524.60
Sep/Oct 23	Suffolk Sight	£470.60
Nov 23	Salvation Army	£751.00
Dec 23/Jan 24	SARS	£351.00
Feb 24	Suffolk Wildlife Trust	£358.55

Mar/Apr 24	RNLI	£524.45
TOTAL		£8364.12

11. Report from Jane Duffield (President), Women’s Institute (Report read out as not able to attend in person)

Stanton WI is one of the most active in West Suffolk. We have a membership of 22 at the moment but we are looking to welcome more members. To this end, we try to be visible in the village, for example at the Summer Show. This year we shall be taking part in the Stanton Primary School Summer Fair too.

The last year has been a busy time for us. We held the Flower Festival at All Saints’ Church last summer, which was a successful and joyous occasion.

It was Stanton’s turn to organise a Group meeting for 5 Wis from this part of the county last month. We had a visit from the Shanty Folk, very entertaining musicians who, as their name suggests, sing sea shanties. Afternoon tea followed, with plenty of cake of course.

Over the year, our meetings are a mix of speakers, visits and activities. The speakers have included a fascinating woman forensic scientist. We were familiar with some of her cases through coverage on national TV. We heard how steel knives are made and what to look for in quality knives. A flower grower showed us how to make professional looking bouquets, and fascinating jewellery and accessories were brought along by a designer/maker. We have made an evening visit to a beautiful local garden and took a trip to Ipswich to see Jesus Christ Superstar. Activities have included quizzes and a chocolate tasting.

In the summer, we had a Safari supper, which involved starters, desserts and coffee at three different houses in the village, with the main course served in the Church Rooms. Good food, good conversation and few people needed to drive! Watch out for us walking the streets again this summer.

Each month, the group makes a visit to a local café or pub, either for morning coffee or lunch, with plenty of time to chat. Anywhere with a shopping opportunity, such as a garden centre, is popular.

The programme for next year includes talks on water supply and the rivers of Britain, metal detecting, leather conservation and Suffolk crime novels Not a mention of jam or Jerusalem!

12. Report from Ian Engall, Stanton Village Trust / Stan Coco Trust

Stanton Village Trust has been raising money for village organisations for 23 years via the Stan Co Co monthly tote. Our objectives are to provide grants to any voluntary organisation within the parish of Stanton for the general purpose of improving facilities within Stanton for all residents.

The Village Trust is a registered charity. Both trusts are overseen by five Trustees. The tote relies on unpaid volunteers to collect the monthly tote subscriptions. Their efforts are very much appreciated.

In January 2023 the tote had a total of 245 subscribers. By December 31 st we had increased that figure to 263. Subscriptions are £1 per month and there are three prizes to be won each month. All surplus funds are for the sole purpose of us giving grants to voluntary organisations within the village. We do not give grants to individuals. Surplus money is invested in HSBC bank and COIF. Detailed financial accounts are available to any subscriber on request to the Treasurer — Ian Engall.

During 2023 the trusts paid out E500.00 to the Parish Council to be used to help fund the Kings Coronation mugs. A further E400.00 was paid to Stanton Folk to cover the cost of banners for their music group.

As at April 2024 our subscribers totalled 253. Sadly we had far too many subscribers who passed away since January 2023 and we had 8 subscribers who declined to renew their membership in January 2024. We have offset these losses somewhat by gaining some new members this year but we would welcome more. If you think you can support the village organisations by joining the monthly tote we would be pleased to hear from you.

So far in 2024 we have made a grant to Stanton Community School PTA to fund waterproof trousers for school pupils to wear when taking part outside in the Field and Forest project. We welcome applications for grants from village organisations.

13. Report from Ivor Bowden (Hon Secretary), Royal British Legion

The branch meets on the second Tuesday of every month at the Cock Inn. We have 56 members, five of whom have joined in the last 5 months. Three of those are currently serving in the armed forces and this allows a very up to date link with current events in the military environment. Equally pleasing is the high number of ladies attending regularly each month, all of whom provide a very real counterbalance to the traditional male membership.

During the year we have a number of events programmed with a view to raising funds for the RBL charity. These include Bric a Brac sales, coffee mornings, fund raising meals based at the Cock Inn including the Christmas lunch and the Annual Dinner, which incidentally is this coming Tuesday and will be set for 32 members and their guests.

We are of course actively involved in remembrance events throughout the year both locally and within the County. This includes the Remembrance Day parade at either Stanton or Walsham le Willows on alternate years. In addition, we parade at the service for the Polish and Czech pilots' memorial at Wretham Church and the Festival of Remembrance at the Apex on the Friday of Remembrance weekend.

Speaking of remembrance, our year ended tragically in 2023 with the loss of our much-loved Hon Secretary on December 29th. Brian Bartrum had served in the RBL for over 40 years holding almost every post at Branch and County level and given selfless service to the charity throughout. He was our Hon Secretary for over 20 years and he is an impossible act to follow. He is sadly missed.

Moving forward, we like all organisations, seek to build up membership especially amongst the young but recognise this will need a completely different mindset and may well involve a variation of digital or social media identity. In the meantime, the Stanton Branch continues to thrive.

14. Presentation of the Community Recognition Awards for 2024

Community Recognition Awards for 2024 were awarded to the following:

Karen Archer (Individual) - Nominated by Chris Britton and Pat Rolfe

In recognition of her cheerful, friendly and outstanding service delivering post and looking out for elderly and disadvantaged residents.

Karen Archer has been a post lady in Stanton for many years and in that time, I have never known her to be anything but cheerful and smiling. Nothing has ever been too much trouble and she always has time to check on elderly and disadvantaged residents.

I have even known her to attend a funeral, on her day off, for a departed person to support that person's family in their hour of need.

Of all the kind and nice people in Stanton, she is the one person who really stands out.

FLP Motors (Business) - Nominated by Brian and Mary Brown

In recognition of their loyal, friendly and helpful service to their customers.

FLP Motors is one of the most helpful garages. They are a professional business and an asset to the community. They have a friendly management and staff with considerable knowledge.

Fish and Chip Shop (Business) – Kasim, Onur and family – Nominated by Beryl Ryle and Irene Garnham

In recognition of their popular and welcome service to their customers.

The Fish and Chip Shop provide a popular and welcome service to the village. They are always friendly and their shop adds to the attraction of Stanton Village.

15. **To receive issues from members of the public present** – there were no issues raised.
16. **Meeting concluded at 8.20 pm**
17. **Date of next meeting** – the next Annual Parish Meeting is scheduled to take place on Thursday 24 April 2025.

Signed by:

Chairman: _____

Date: _____