

Stanton Parish Council

Annual

Report 2019

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Contacting the Council

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Email – Stantonparishcouncil@gmail.com

Website - <http://stanton.suffolk.cloud>

Facebook - https://www.facebook.com/Stanton-Parish-Council-771230903004153/?ref=aymt_homepage_panel

Staff

Mrs Joy Hart – Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer
(Part time)

Mr Kenneth Brown - Street Cleaner
(Part time)

Mr Dylan Greatrex - Litter picker
(Part time)

Councillors

For an up to date list please contact the Clerk at Stantonparishcouncil@gmail.com

District Councillor

Jim Thorndyke, 23 Fordhams Close, Stanton Suffolk IP31 2EE jim.thorndyke@westsuffolk.gov.uk. Tel 01359 250271

County Councillor

Joanna Spicer, Home Farm, Pakenham, Suffolk IP31 2LW Joanna.spicer@suffolk.gov.uk Tel 01359 230800

Message from the Chairman – Francis Hart

I am pleased and honoured to take on the role of Chairman of your Parish Council and realise I have some very big, experienced and enthusiastic shoes to fill: the experience of Kelvin MacDonald and the enthusiasm of Neil Chapman who both stood down unexpectedly as Councillors and Chairmen but whose contribution to the village cannot be underestimated. I inherited an experienced and competent council with a mix of backgrounds and life challenges.

At the Local Elections in May 2019, two Councillors chose not to stand, John Mann MBE who has served for a very long time with distinction, humour and fortitude and Mrs Claire Jay who only served for a short time yet gave valuable insight and guidance, particularly on NHS matters.

Your council have continued to explore ways to improve the life in the village and the annual report reflects these.

We are encountering financial challenges in creating electric vehicle charging points and I continue to work on your behalf to bring this project to a conclusion.

I am proud to advise you that we now have two Public Accessible Defibrillators available in the village and a third in the pipeline due to be installed at the Veterinary Practise in Chare Road in the summer of 2019. In addition, we are grateful to the residents of Shepherds Grove Park who contributed to and installed one at their entrance on Grove Lane.

We are continuing to engage with the planners and developers in relation to the proposals for development of land surrounding the village to ensure we get the best possible outcome for the village as a whole, being mindful of the impact, and especially on the doctors, schools and transportation links.

I welcome the engagement and contributions to Village life from all of our various village organisations, amongst many others, the Church, the Royal British Legion, Women's Institute, Bowls Club and the Football Club who assist your council in making the village a better and fun place to live.

Lastly, I would like to place on record my personal thanks to the Suffolk County Councillor Joanna Spicer who has guided me on the path of Chairmanship.

FJhart

Francis J Hart

Chair – Stanton Parish Council

Introduction

Stanton Parish Council is an elected body (a corporate body) and a legal entity in its own right, of qualified residents of the Parish granted powers by parliament (Local Government Act 1972 Part 1 Section 2) to represent the interests and opinions of the communities they serve and to speak on their behalf with authority and integrity.

It has the power to raise money through an annual precept which is then collected by the principal Council through the Council Tax. It must act within the law and can only spend, raise or use money if it has a statutory power to do so.

There are few duties but a wide range of powers. The Council must hold at least 3 meetings a year and an Annual Parish Meeting in May and there is another duty to provide allotment gardens if the demand is unsatisfied. In addition, the Council has a wide range of powers which it may use to provide such things as a public clock or a bus shelter.

Stanton has 11 Councillors. All Councillors carry out their duties voluntarily but can be reimbursed for expenses incurred. Councillors do much more than just attend meetings where projects are discussed and progressed and policies, procedures and practices are constantly reviewed – their work involves taking part in parish activities; dealing with varying resident issues and representing Stanton Parish Council on outside bodies.

Electors over the age of 18 years may become local Councillors as long as they are a British Citizen or a Citizen of the Commonwealth or European Union. They must reside in the Parish or within 3 miles of it or have had their principal place of work or have occupied as owner or tenant any land or premises within the Parish. They are either elected at the four yearly elections or can be co-opted after a casual vacancy occurs.

Councillors represent the views and concerns of residents. They must attend meetings when summoned by the Clerk. They must take part in meetings and consider all the relevant facts on matters which require a decision and should report back.

Individual Councillors do not have powers to make decisions. They are required to comply with a code of conduct, in line with the Nolan Principles [8] which includes the completion of a 'register of interests'.

At a meeting of the Council a member must declare a 'disclosable interest' and must not participate in any vote on the matter declared.

A Councillor cannot be appointed to a paid office whilst a Councillor or for 12 months after he ceases to be one.

Stanton Parish Council continually works towards improving community well-being and providing better services at a local level.

Through an extensive range of discretionary powers, we provide and maintain a variety of important and visible local services including allotments, the Cemetery, bus shelters, play equipment, open spaces, benches and litter bins.

The Clerk is employed by the Parish Council as an independent and objective servant to carry out its administration and take action on its decisions. The Clerk is also the Responsible Financial Officer.

The Clerk prepares policies and procedures and gathers information to help the Council make decisions. They have no inherent powers to make decisions unless it is allowed for in Standing Orders.

The Clerk is known as the 'Proper Officer' meaning the person appointed by the Council to do its work. The role is crucial to the continuity and efficiency of the Council. They are not elected and hold a statutory role to give guidance to Councillors and the Chair on decisions made by the Council even if the guidance is unpopular and includes advice and guidance on Governance, ethical and procedural matters.

The Clerk is not answerable to any individual Councillor and must remain objective. Currently the Parish Council does not have an office and Council services are administered from the Clerk's home address.

Appointments to see the Clerk can be made by contacting her directly.

Councillor Areas of Responsibility – 2019-20

Planning	Planning Applications	ALL
	Planning Information	
	Rural Development	
	Parish Plans	

Environmental	Litter/Dog Bins	John Frizzell June Miller Francis Hart Brian Brown
	Gardening Competitions	
	Cemetery	

Highways	Roads and Footways	Phil Smith Francis Hart Alan Kemp
	Hedges and Trees	
	Street Cleaning/Litter	
	Street Lighting	
	Grundle Grid	
	Road Signs	
Projects and development	Project Management	Alan Shelton Martin Scowcroft Brian Brown
	Village Hall Liaison	
	Football Club Liaison	
	Christmas Tree	
	Transport Issues	
Conservation and Community	Youth Provision/Development	Sue Willcox June Miller Barbara Smithson
	Community Development	
	Street Planting	
	By Ways/Conservation	Benjamin Gordon
	Trees/Landscapes/survey	
	Grass Cutting Contract	

	Speedwatch	
Recreation Ground Facilities	Play Facilities	Phil Smith Alan Shelton Francis Hart
	Open Spaces	
	Sports Area	
	Conditions of Hire	
	Electric Charging Points	
Assets Management	Planned/Reactive Maintenance	Phil Smith Alan Kemp Martin Scowcroft
	Five Year Plans	
	Lease Agreements	
	Safer Neighbourhood	
Finance/Budgets	Pay Roll	Martin Scowcroft Barbara Smithson Benjamin Gordon
	Risk Assessment	
	Insurance	
	Firework Display	
	Financial Regulations/Governance	
Personnel	Vacancies	Sue Willcox Barbara Smithson John Frizzell
	Interviews	
	Annual Appraisals	
	Job Description	

RAF Honington Liaison - Phil Smith
Stan Coco Trust - Francis Hart
Speedwatch - John Frizzell
Village Hall Liaison - Alan Shelton

Report of Council Activity 2018-19

Councillors

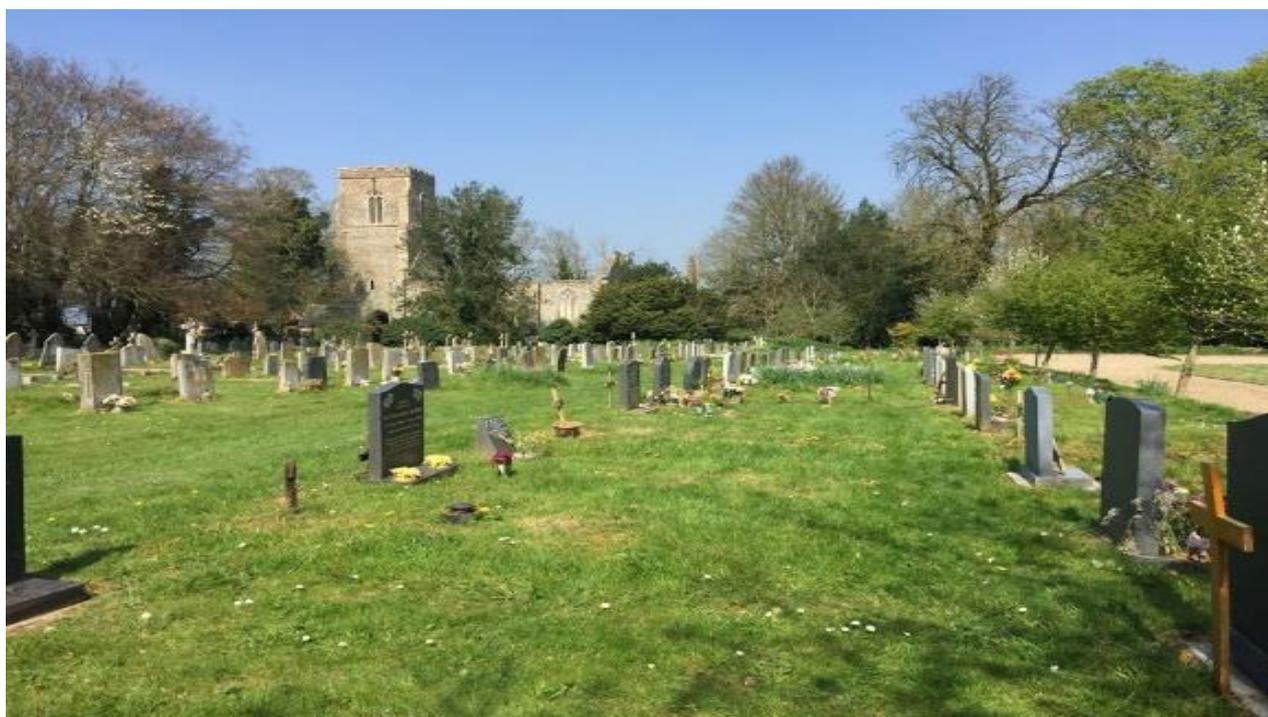
The Council welcomed new Councillors Alan Kemp and Claire Jay to the Council following the resignations of Neil Chapman and Larry Morris during the year. Both Neil and Larry had contributed a significant amount of

work to the Council since joining and they will be very much missed for their enthusiasm and community spirit.

In the elections held on 2nd May 2019, Cllr Claire Jay decided not to stand for personal reasons and Cllr John Mann decided to step down after a phenomenal number of years serving in the Village as a Councillor.

There will be two vacancies advertised for co-option after the election and we are hopeful of getting a good response from the Parish for the vacancies.

Cemetery



The churchyards of St Johns and All Saints have been closed for any further burials or cremated remains except where there are second burials in current graves. The maintenance of these areas is now carried out by West Suffolk District Council.

The Parish Council Cemetery has been opened since May 2016. This is still a relatively new experience for the Council who are learning from each occasion that a burial takes place. We would like the grounds to be a quiet and restful place very much in keeping with the Churchyard of St Johns opposite and therefore the rules remain the same as the St Edmundsbury Diocese rules with each application for burial or memorial being decided on its merits.

Charges have not been increased this year and still remain much lower than the West Suffolk cemetery charges. The charges are used towards the maintenance of the Cemetery and includes the gates which are

in the process of being newly painted, hedge cutting, weed killing on the gravel driveway, bulb planting, grass cutting and the provision of water for the use of visitors laying flowers

The previously planted Spring bulbs really showed off well this Spring and a number of positive comments have been received.

Flooding in the Village



The Natural Flood Management (NFM) structure (Woody Debris Dam) has been completed but the weather has not really tested it due to lack of rainfall over the Winter months. The dam is still in the hands of the County Council and Councillors keep a watchful eye on any debris swept down towards the village.

The Parish Council has also been working with the County Council to identify areas of flooding and as a result gulleys have been cleared in several parts of the village and a ditch cleared behind the houses in Park Farm Drive. The Council continues to be vigilant in reporting blocked drains and would encourage the public to do likewise.

Street Cleaning

We are very lucky to be able to afford the services of a street Cleaner and are grateful to Kenny Brown who continues to turn out in all weathers to keep our village looking nice.

You may also have seen our Litter Picker Dylan who does a great job on Saturday and Sunday mornings.



Another well organised litter pick was carried out in the Village in March when 24 helpers turned out to litter pick the area. It was great to see so many new faces turning out on the day. Thank you.

Village Tubs

The tubs have been planted up by Hillcrest nurseries who will shortly be replacing the lovely pansies with another colourful display.

Village Maintenance

This year has seen additional expenditure on the Clock tower which after nearly 20 years required an overhaul. A maintenance contract for the next 3 years has been put into place.

Work was carried out on the hedge in Bury Lane to reduce decaying and overhanging trees.



Spring bulbs have been planted on the Grass Verge to enhance the entrance to the Village and the Village sign at Old Bury Road.

A bin was replaced in the Play Area and a new bench and Notice Board installed at George Hill. We are very grateful to the Wooderson family for their kind donation towards the purchase of the bench.

Recreation Ground

Councillors keep a regular eye on the play area which continues to be very popular with local children and subject of many compliments. A Play Area Inspector carries out monthly checks to ensure that all the equipment is safe to use.

The tennis court and MUGA are coming to the end of their life in their current condition and the Council, has raised an order for them to be refurbished which will be undertaken in the coming weeks.

An order has been placed for pavers to be introduced onto the recreation ground adjoining the car park. When installed this will allow a further 1000 m² of parking. The system will be installed on top of the grass and will not be very visible but will prove useful when the car park is at capacity.

The footpaths from Fordhams Close to the Village Hall have been repaired and replaced to make them safer to use.

Bonfire & Firework Night

A very successful night was run in 2018. The cancellation of the display at Bury St Edmunds led to a large influx of people from outside the Village. More and more residents of surrounding villages are coming to Stanton as it is good value and a great display.

Again, our thanks go to Kelvin McDonald and the Councillors who turned out on the night to man the gates and take monies. Also, to our regular helpers who have been personally thanked.

Moving forward we do need to get more residents involved in the organisation of this event if it is to continue.

Highways Issues



The Clerk is kept busy reporting signage and pot hole problems and we do encourage the public to do the same directly to the County Council.

The Hedgerow at George Hill was finally cut after a long wait for Highways and at the same time the footpath was 'skirted' which has made this much safer for pedestrians.

A dropped kerb crossing has been approved at the Shetlands entrance off Old Bury Road which will assist wheelchair and push chair users to access the Recreation Ground and Village Hall more safely. This should be installed in the coming weeks.

Council has been working with County Councillor Spicer this year to make the A143 safer and a proposal to reduce the speed limit to 30mph is currently being considered by the County Highways Team after a lengthy

report was submitted when residents raised concerns over speed and especially in the area of the Rose and Crown development which is lacking a proper crossing point..

The results of a speed survey recently undertaken on that stretch have not yet been published.

An additional street light has been installed at the rather dark entrance to the Community Village Hall after requests from users of the hall. This should shortly be completed by UK power networks

The Council is grateful to County Councillor Joanna Spicer for her relentless work to resolve Highways issues.

New homes and Planning

Councillors, along with County Councillor Joanna Spicer and District Councillor Cllr Jim Thorndyke are keeping a watchful eye on the proposed development at Shepherds Grove. A consultation evening took place in February and residents were invited to feed back their views on the master plan. The closing date for comments was at the end of March and so far there has been no feedback from the developer.

Council submitted a lengthy response outlining their concerns which can be found on the website under 'Planning'

Council has very recently been contacted by Bloor Homes in relation to a possible development to the East of Bury Road. No further detail is yet available.

Liaison with residents

The Facebook page is proving to be extremely useful for keeping contact with local residents and the Clerk regularly updates any issues that we become aware of that will help keep residents safe. In addition, the website is being maintained by the Clerk which contains all our current policies and procedures and minutes of each meeting.

The Clerk also utilises a Social media site called 'Next Door' which is another way of contacting our residents and is accessed through email for those who don't have a Facebook account.

Accounts

At the budget meeting in November 2018 Council agreed on a budget which resulted in a small increase in Council Tax (2.41% or £1.70 per annum per Band D property) for all residents.

The extra money will be used in the Special Projects budget which this year has been allocated to the car park extension, an additional defibrillator to be sited North of the Village, allotment fencing and to contribute towards the costs of changing the Speed limit on the A143, should this be granted.

The end of year accounts are yet to be finalised but early indications are a small overspend mainly due to the War Memorial being cleaned and renovated for the 100th year Anniversary of the end of World War One and unexpected repairs to the Clock Tower.

Special Projects

A working party chaired by Councillors and involving other village organisations including the Royal British Legion, Blackbourne History Group and the WI ran a very successful celebratory event for the anniversary of WW1 on Sunday 11th November 2018. The event included entertainment from Honington Wives choir, a soup and desert supper and the lighting of a beacon at 7pm on the evening with the Last Post played by a local trumpeter, Peter Dunsdon.

The War Memorial was extensively cleaned in readiness for the Beacon of Light Event in November. The poppy display by the WI was fantastic!



The Clerk is still liaising with Suffolk County Council in respect of a Right of Way application on Park Farm Drive for residents to use the road when the Grundle is in full flow or access is restricted.

It is expected that the application will be heard at Committee at the end of April.

The Mother and Toddler Group, set up by Councillors has now been taken over by the Stanton pre -school.

The project to increase activities for children has a budget and is ongoing. Anyone wishing to set up a group for children would be welcomed to talk to the Council about financial help to set up the venture.

The Christmas Tree Event at the Church in early December 2018 was very well received and will be repeated again later this year.

In the Future

Council are currently investigating the possibility of installing Electric Vehicle Chargers on the Recreation Ground. It is hoped that this will come to fruition in the coming weeks.

The Group of Stanton Village Volunteers did some really good work and it was a pity that we lost this when Neil resigned. Council are still actively seeking a Co-ordinator to restart this monthly group to do small jobs in the Village and would welcome any volunteers who would like to take this on.

Finally, I would like to thank all the members of the Parish Council who give their time and effort for the benefit of Stanton village.

And especially Joy Hart, our Parish Clerk, Kenny Brown, our Street Cleaner, Dylan Greatrex, our Litter picker and to District Councillor Jim Thorndyke and County Councillor Joanna Spicer for their continued help and support.

Schedule of Meetings

Council meets on the second Thursday of each month –

Dates in 2019-2020

Thursday April 11th 2019

Thursday May 9th 2019

Thursday June 13th 2019

Thursday July 11th 2019

Thursday August 8th 2019

Thursday September 12th 2019

Thursday October 10th 2019

Thursday November 14th 2019

Thursday December 12th 2019

Thursday January 9th 2020

Thursday February 13th 2020

Thursday March 12th 2020

Planning Committee meets as and when necessary. All planning applications are considered at full Council meetings.

The Annual Parish Meeting was held on 25 April 2019

The Annual Meeting of the Council was held on 9 May 2019

The Annual budget meeting will be held in October/November 2019

The full Action Plan for the Council for the coming year can be found on the website

–

<https://stanton.suffolk.cloud/assets/Policies-and-Procedures/Action-Plan-2019-20-Update-Q1.pdf>

The document is updated quarterly as projects are started and completed.

Annual Community Recognition Awards 2019



Coleen Carpenter - In recognition of her efforts in fund raising to assist a local child undergoing medical treatment and a young person with ambitions to volunteer in Africa

The Council presents Community Recognition Awards at the Annual Parish Meeting every year.

The next one will be held in May 2020.

These awards are given to individuals, businesses or organisations to recognise their work or achievements in the community of Stanton, or in some other way their contribution to the life of the Parish.

Anyone can nominate their friends, co-workers or business suppliers of good service to receive an award and Councillors will then consider and decide the award winners for the year.

Last year's awards went to **Coleen Carpenter** in recognition of her contribution to the village through voluntary fund-raising work over a number of years and **Lisa French** in recognition of her work with the children and support to parents of those attending Stanton Pre School.

The award is in the form of a framed certificate which is presented at the Annual Parish Meeting. Nomination forms are encouraged from members of the Parish in January each year with a closing date in April.

In providing the opportunity for residents to nominate our unsung heroes, we hope these awards will help to raise the profile of some of the excellent work being done by the people of Stanton.

Residents are encouraged to use them to thank those that have made a positive contribution in their life and the lives of others!

Further information on the Awards scheme can be obtained from the Clerk.

Appendix A – Receipts and Payments summary

31/03/2018		31/03/2019
61480	Precept	64540
0	Grants	0
37	Bank Interest/compensation	41
3988	HMRC VAT Recovered	4885
2186	Recycling credits	2123
81	EDF Wayleave payment	82
713	Miscellaneous*	2823
85	Allotments	13
5159	Bonfire & Firework Night	7170
0	Recreation Ground Hire	0
1495	Cemetery	1044
75224	TOTAL RECEIPTS	82721
200	S137-Village, Donations, News	200
6013	Clerk salary and PAYE	6037
402	Admin and Stationery	515
354	Phone and Internet	417
492	Training	85
49	Clerk Expenses	0
0	Councillor Expenses	0
36	Chairmans Expenses	0
2055	Insurance	1815
580	Audit	450
285	Room Hire	167
813	Subscriptions	843
0	Legal Costs	0
20130	Loan Repayments	20130
167	Cemetery (Legal and admin)	0
4004	Cemetery (Grass)	1148
65	Cemetery (water)	50
165	Cemetery (Maintenance)	116
5850	Street Cleaner	6186
0	Litter Picker	218
0	Contingencies	0
2120	Recreation Ground (Grass)	2546
5515	Recreation Ground (Maintenance)	7203
5	Allotments	5
765	Water - Clock tower and toilets	1955
511	Electricity	88
2013	Village Maintenance	10085
1372	Village Maintenance (Grass)	1494
2550	Fireworks	2754
4164	Special projects	4649
60675	TOTAL PAYMENTS ex VAT	69156
4385	VAT paid	5937
65060		75093
RECEIPTS AND PAYMENTS SUMMARY		
44008	Balance as at 1st April 18	54172
75224	Total receipts	82721
-65060	less payments	-75093
54172		61800

CUMULATIVE FUNDS REPRESENTED BY (AT 31 March)

Current accounts	63075
Unrepresented debits	minus -1275
Balance c/f	<u>61800</u>

The accounts represent fairly the financial position of Stanton Parish Council as at 31 March 2019 and reflect its receipts and payments during the year

Signed

Joy Hart

Responsible Financial Officer Date 09/05/2019

I certify that the accounts were formally approved at the Council Meeting on 9 May 2019

Signed

Francis J Hart

Chairman Date 09/05/2019

Misc Receipts

Floodlights	122
Village Hall water refund	690
Talk talk refund	31
Donations WI	600
Donations Stan Co Co	750
Donations Fireworks event	160
Donations - Bench	<u>470</u>
	2823

VAT recovered

Q4 (17-18)	1291
Q1	832
Q2	2444
Q3	<u>318</u>
	4885

About Stanton, West Suffolk

Name: Stanton, West Suffolk

Place type: Village

Location: Grid Ref: TL 9666 7334 • X/Y co-ords: 596669, 273348 • Lat/Long: 52.323,0.88438059

District: [West Suffolk](#)

County/Unitary Authority: [Suffolk](#)

Region: [Eastern](#)

Country: [England](#)

Height: 35.5m

OS Explorer map: [230: Diss & Harleston](#)



MAP OF THE PARISH OF STANTON 1