



# Stanton Parish Council

# Annual Report 2021

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## Contacting the Council

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Old Bury Road  
Stanton  
Suffolk IP31 2BX

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Email – [Stantonparishcouncil@gmail.com](mailto:Stantonparishcouncil@gmail.com)

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

Facebook - [https://www.facebook.com/Stanton-Parish-Council-771230903004153/?ref=aymt\\_homepage\\_panel](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 Charlie Smith - Litter picker  
(Part time)

## Councillors

| Name                    | Address                          | Email address  | Phone        |
|-------------------------|----------------------------------|--|--------------|
| Francis Hart - Chair    | Sucrerie, Old Bury Road          | <a href="mailto:fjah79@hotmail.com">fjah79@hotmail.com</a>                       | 01359 251668 |
| Phil Smith – Vice Chair | Address in the Parish of Stanton | <a href="mailto:Philsmith64cfc@hotmail.co.uk">Philsmith64cfc@hotmail.co.uk</a>   | 07940 225331 |
| Barbara Smithson        | Address in the Parish of Stanton |  | 01359 250306 |
| Martin Scowcroft        | Address in the Parish of Stanton | <a href="mailto:ms.stanton@btinternet.com">ms.stanton@btinternet.com</a>         | 01359 250600 |
| John Frizzell           | Address in the Parish of Stanton | <a href="mailto:john.frizzell@hotmail.com">john.frizzell@hotmail.com</a>         | 01359 250177 |
| Brian Brown             | Address in the Parish of Stanton | <a href="mailto:browno46@hotmail.co.uk">browno46@hotmail.co.uk</a>               |              |
| Alan Kemp               | Amber Lodge, Duke Street         | <a href="mailto:alan@alankempelectrical.co.uk">alan@alankempelectrical.co.uk</a> | 01359 250216 |
| Alan Shelton            | Address in the Parish of Stanton |  | 01359 252388 |
| Phil Smith              | Address in the Parish of Stanton | <a href="mailto:philsmith64cfc@hotmail.co.uk">philsmith64cfc@hotmail.co.uk</a>   | 07940 225331 |
| David Cleland-Smith     | Address in the Parish of Stanton | <a href="mailto:dclelandsmith111@gmail.com">dclelandsmith111@gmail.com</a>       |              |
| Karen Davies            | Address in the Parish of Stanton | <a href="mailto:Kdz343@icloud.com">Kdz343@icloud.com</a>                         |              |
| Lorraine Frost          | Address in the Parish of Stanton | <a href="mailto:Lfrost63@outlook.com">Lfrost63@outlook.com</a>                   |              |

### District Councillor

Jim Thorndyke, 23 Fordhams Close, Stanton Suffolk IP31 2EE [jim.thorndyke@westsuffolk.gov.uk](mailto:jim.thorndyke@westsuffolk.gov.uk).  
Tel 01359 250271

### County Councillor

Joanna Spicer, Home Farm, Pakenham, Suffolk IP31 2LW [joanna.spicer@suffolk.gov.uk](mailto:joanna.spicer@suffolk.gov.uk) Tel 01359 230800

## Message from the Chairman – Francis Hart

2020 running into 2021 continued to be an interesting year for your council and the community with hopes of coming out of Coronavirus lockdown looking good only to be dashed at the last moment. However I must pay tribute to the hard working doctors and staff of both Stanton and Ixworth Surgeries who have endeavoured and indeed managed to vaccinate a very high proportion of the village thereby keeping Stanton relatively Covid secure.

It did mean that the Funday planned for last year had to be regretfully cancelled for very good reasons and I know Lee Maddox and Colleen Carpenter are already in the advanced planning stages for a return in 2021.

The council did manage to put on the Christmas Tree Lighting albeit in a very scaled back version and my grateful thanks go to Councillor Brian Brown and his hearty band of helpers in ensuring that the village had some focus to the Christmas period along with the Church.

We said goodbye to 2 councillors in the last year Mrs June Miller and Mr Benjamin Gordon.

It should be noted that June stood down after clocking up no less than 50 years of service as a Parish Councillor which earned her recognition in a national publication sent to all parish councils.

With the two vacancies thus generated the council first co-opted Kaz Davies and then Lorraine Frost onto the council, both of whom again bring something new and energetic to the team and we look forward to working with them both.

The housing developments planned for the village are continuing through the approval processes and the parish council continue to be in dialogue with the developers to ensure the best possible outcome to the village as a whole. The old Tripp Batt site has now been fully demolished and we still await to see if the village will gain a mini-market on the site, it had been planned to be complete by Christmas 2020 but the pandemic caused a delay.

I will round this report up by wishing you all a safe and prosperous future as we continue to seek a restoration to normality.

FJ Hart

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.

In February 2020, the Clerk asked Council to pass a resolution that it was eligible to use the General Power of Competence as it met the criteria for eligibility relating to the electoral mandate and relevant training of the Clerk.

The criteria are that at least two thirds of the members of the Council must hold office as a result of being declared elected - The Council currently has 8 elected Councillors - and that the Clerk must hold the Certificate in local Council Administration (CiLCA) and should have received training in the exercise of this power. The Clerk qualified in November 2017.

After discussion the Council resolved that it was eligible to use the General Power of Competence which gives the Council “the power to do anything that individuals generally may do” as long as they do not break other laws.

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

(Reviewed 6 May 2021)

|                                     |   |  |
|-------------------------------------|---|--|
| <b>Planning</b>                     | Planning Applications. Planning Information. Rural Development and Parish Plans   | <b>ALL</b>   |
| <b>Highways</b>                     | Roads and Footways. Hedges and Trees. Street lighting. Street cleaning/litter. Grundle and Road signs.  | Phil Smith<br>Francis Hart<br>Alan Kemp                              |
| <b>Projects and development</b>     | Project Management, Village Hall Liaison. Football Club liaison. Christmas Tree event and Transport issues.   | Phil Smith<br>Alan Shelton<br>Martin Scowcroft<br>Brian Brown        |
| <b>Conservation and Community</b>   | Youth Provision/Development. Community development. Street planting. Village tubs. By-ways/ conservation. Grass Cutting Contract. Garden Competition. | Brian Brown<br>Karen Davies<br>Barbara Smithson                      |
| <b>Environmental</b>                | Litter/Dog Bins. Cemetery. Trees/landscapes/surveys. Allotments and Speedwatch  | John Frizzell<br>David Cleland-Smith,<br>Francis Hart<br>Brian Brown |
| <b>Recreation Ground Facilities</b> | Play Facilities, Open spaces, Sports Area, Conditions of hire   | Phil Smith<br>Alan Shelton<br>Francis Hart                           |
| <b>Assets Management</b>            | Planned/Reactive Maintenance, 5 year plans, Lease agreements, safer neighbourhood   | Phil Smith<br>Alan Kemp<br>Martin Scowcroft                          |
| <b>Finance/Budgets</b>              | Pay Roll. Risk assessments. Insurance. Financial Regulations/Governance. Firework event   | Alan Shelton<br>Martin Scowcroft<br>Barbara Smithson                 |
| <b>Personnel</b>                    | Vacancies/Interviews. Annual appraisals. HR matters. Job descriptions.  | Barbara Smithson<br>David Cleland-Smith<br>John Frizzell             |
| RAF Honington Liaison - Phil Smith  |   |  |
| Stan Coco Trust - Francis Hart      |   |  |
| Speedwatch - John Frizzell          |   |  |
| Village Hall Liaison – Phil Smith   |   |  |

## Report of Council Activity 2020-21

Council achieved the Quality Award in September 2019 after a significant amount of work by the Clerk. The Quality Award demonstrates that a council achieves good practice in governance, community engagement and council improvement. Quality councils go above and beyond their legal obligations, leading their communities and continuously seeking opportunities to improve and develop even further.



The award will be renewed every four years if the Council maintains its consistency.

As COVID unfolded from March 2020 the Council had to adopt its way of working and embraced virtual meetings by Zoom which quickly became part of the norm.

The Village responded magnificently to a request for help with at one stage nearly 25 volunteers being co-ordinated by the Clerk to help residents with medicine collections, shopping, dog walking and general support. Many new friendships were made and continue to this day. It is hoped that the Community spirit evident during this pandemic will remain with us for years to come.

### Councillors

Cllr Karen Davies was co-opted to the Council in January 2021 following the resignation of Ben Gordon.



Also in January, Cllr June Miller finally decided to hang up her Parish Council minutes after a fantastic 50 years dedicated service to the role. This was an amazing achievement by her which received coverage in the Bury Free Press and in the National Councils magazine.

June's attention to detail in all the projects brought to the table over the years has resulted in the Village enjoying some of the best facilities in the area and we are truly grateful.

We wish June the very best wishes in her retirement.

The vacancy was advertised, attracted a good response and a new Councillor Lorraine Frost was co-opted in June.

## 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. 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 were increased in 2020 but 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 have been re 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 old wooden gates which are now the responsibility of West Suffolk Council have been sympathetically replaced recently.

## Flooding in the Village

Suffolk County Council – with the permission of Natural England completed a second Natural Flood Management (NFM) structure (Woody Debris Dam) in the Grundle. The dam has been tested several times since it was installed and is so far working well and keeping the debris away from over running the bottom dam.

There were a few scary moments when prompt action from Lee and Jamie Maddox was necessary to stop the flooding and the Council are extremely grateful to them for coming out in all weathers to help stop any flooding in The Street.



The structures 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.

## Street Cleaning

We are very lucky to be able to afford the services of a street Cleaner and are grateful to Kenny Brown who turns out in all weathers to keep our village looking nice. You may also have seen our Litter Picker Charlie who does a great job on Saturday and Sunday mornings.

Last year's litter pick was cancelled due to Covid but earlier this year - in April, another well organised litter pick was carried out in the Village. It was great to see so many new faces turning out on the day. Thank you to Cllr Barbara Smithson for organising the same.



## Village Tubs

The tubs have again been planted up with plants supplied by Hillcrest nurseries and we will shortly be replacing the lovely pansies with another colourful display. Thanks go to retired Cllr June Miller for planting all the pansies last Autumn.

## Village Maintenance

This year has seen additional expenditure on the Clock tower which has received new LED lights to reduce the carbon footprint and energy bills.

Thanks go to Cllr Alan Kemp for undertaking the labour free of charge.

A new dog fouling bin was installed off Barningham Road and a bench was replaced at Jacobs Close. A new waste bin has been installed in Hepworth Road.



A third defibrillator has been purchased and was installed by Cllr Kemp originally at the Veterinary Practise in Chare Road but has now been moved to the Ashmore Nursing Home in George Hill due to the surgery closure.

Hedgerows have been planted at the allotments after a number of cases of vandalism. It is hoped that eventually the hedgerow will provide a deterrent to persons climbing over the fence.

The cost was met by locality funding from District Councillor Jim Thorndyke.

## 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.

A Play Area Inspector carries out monthly checks to ensure that all the equipment is safe to use. Cllr Phil Smith has also recently qualified in play area inspections.

The tennis court and MUGA have been cleaned regularly and the Village is lucky to be able to offer free tennis courts to anyone wishing to play.

Pavers have been introduced onto the recreation ground adjoining the car park to allow a further 1000 m<sup>2</sup> of parking. The system has been installed on top of the grass and is barely visible. It has already

proved useful when the Vaccination clinic and the football club needed the car park on the same day.



The multi goal fixture has been renovated and upgraded and a project to install table tennis tables has been completed with two tables installed in the Autumn last year having been delayed due to Coronavirus. Again, these are free to use. Year 6 students at the Stanton Primary School were presented with a free table tennis bat to encourage participation.

A £3000 donation has been made to Stanton football club towards a project to install floodlighting on the Recreation Ground to assist with winter time football practise.

A working party is now looking at a much longer-term project to replace the tennis Court and MUGA with a multi sports area in the next 5 years.

## 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. Problems can be reported quickly and easily at <https://www.suffolk.gov.uk/roads-and-transport/highway-maintenance/report-a-highways-issue/>

An application to The County to have Park Farm Drive declared a public footpath was approved and when the Grundle is in full flow, pedestrians can now lawfully use Park Farm Drive as an alternative route as far as the Concrete Bridge.

Council has been working with County Councillor Joanna Spicer this year to make the A143 safer and a proposal to reduce the speed limit to 30mph is currently in the public consultation stages having been agreed by the County Council Highways Team. Our thanks go to Cllr John Frizzell for his work on this project.

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

## Christmas Tree Event 2020

COVID and Government restrictions may have tried to put the dampers on Christmas 2020 but thanks to the sterling efforts of Cllr Brian Brown and his family, the Village had a splendid Christmas Tree with lights in the centre of the Village.

Sadly, there was no carol singing event due to restrictions but the presence of the tree was a very welcome sight for all during what was quite a lonely and isolated time for many who could not celebrate with friends and family.

It is hoped we can be back to normal this year with Carol singing for the big switch on!



## Bonfire & Firework Night

This was unfortunately cancelled last year. It is hoped that the 2021 event will go ahead.

## New homes and Planning

Councillors, along with County Cllr Joanna Spicer and District Cllr Jim Thorndyke are keeping a watchful eye on the proposed developments at Shepherds Grove and at Bury Road (Bloor Homes)

Councillors have met with Bloor homes who have presented their plans to the village. Although the Council is opposed to the number of homes proposed it has been working with the developer to consider their contribution to the Village should planning permission be granted. This could be in the region of £250,000 and a working party will be set up to consider what this money could be used for, should this come to fruition in the future.

Council continues to be proactive in opposing development which will affect the infrastructure of the village or Highway safety in any way. Responses to planning applications are posted on the minutes and publicly available.

The old Primary School site at Bury Lane has now been sold and it is hoped that the Council will be able to take advantage of an offer from the County Council to adopt the old school playing field as a 'Village Green' to avoid any further development there. This project is ongoing.

## 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 out 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.

## Garden Competition

This was cancelled in 2020. It will be held in July 2021

## Accounts

At the budget meeting in November 2020 Council agreed to contribute £8000 from reserves to keep the costs down for families who were suffering from the effects of the Coronavirus pandemic. This resulted in a decrease in Council Tax of 0.8% or £0.60p

The end of year accounts have been finalised and show a small overspend of £396. The accounts are published on the website and available for public view on the following link - <https://stanton.suffolk.cloud/finance/>

## In the Future

A working party has been set up to investigate the possibility of upgrading the tennis Court and MUGA to a full sized multi sports arena with changing rooms for female and disabled participants and possibly a pavilion. This is a long-term project over the next 5 years.

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-2021-22.pdf>

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

## Schedule of Meetings

Council meets on the second Thursday of each month –

### **Dates in 2021-22**

Thursday April 8<sup>th</sup> 2021

Thursday May 6<sup>th</sup> 2021 (Week early due to COVID restriction changes) – Annual Meeting

Thursday May 27<sup>th</sup> 2021 – Annual Parish Meeting

Thursday June 10<sup>th</sup> 2021

Thursday July 8<sup>th</sup> 2021

Thursday August 12<sup>th</sup> 2021

Thursday September 9<sup>th</sup> 2021

Thursday October 14<sup>th</sup> 2021

Thursday November 11<sup>th</sup> 2021

Thursday December 9<sup>th</sup> 2021

Thursday January 13<sup>th</sup> 2022

Thursday February 10<sup>th</sup> 2022

Thursday March 10<sup>th</sup> 2022

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

Extraordinary General meetings may be called to discuss urgent issues.

The Annual budget meeting will be held in October/November 2021

## Annual Community Recognition Awards

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

The event in 2020 and 2021 were cancelled due to Coronavirus. The next one will be held in May 2022.

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.

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.

## About Stanton, West Suffolk

Detailed statistical reports and information on the West Suffolk Ward of Stanton can be found at

[https://www.westsuffolk.gov.uk/Council/Data and information/upload/37-Stanton-ward-report-V3.pdf](https://www.westsuffolk.gov.uk/Council/Data%20and%20information/upload/37-Stanton-ward-report-V3.pdf)

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