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ASSINGTON GREEN CLARE COWLINGE THURSTON END and WICKHAMBROOK

PARISH PUMP

No 394 parish.pump@gmail.com April 2026



Louise! What a star you have been over many years!











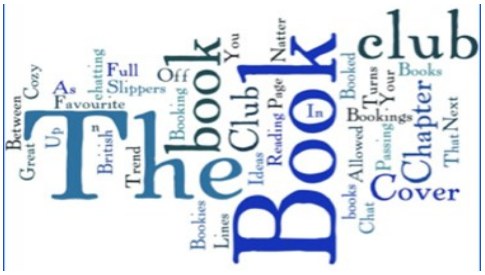
Louise (Lulu) Mackrill
I would like to pay tribute to our dear Louise who after many, many years has decided to retire . She must have graced many tables and inspired many cooks among our readers. We are very, very grateful for her support and helpful comments over the years. So thank you and enjoy whatever you decide to do now please.
Lots of love from us all





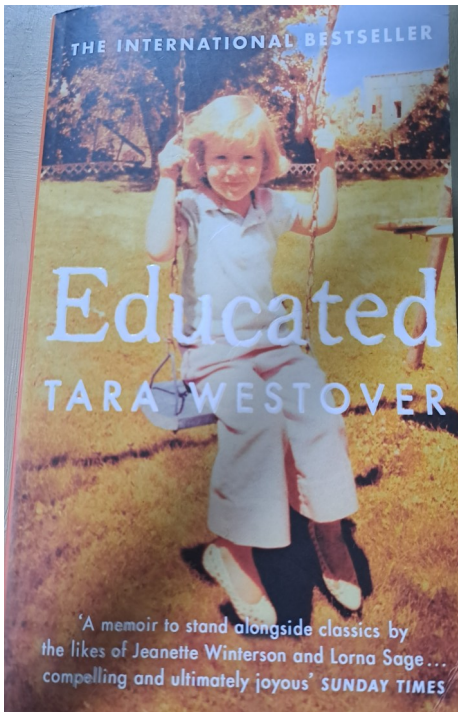




We had high hopes for **Tara Westover's** widely acclaimed memoir, 'Educated', and we were not disappointed. This is a very moving, and at times shocking, account of the author's journey from her fundamentalist Mormon roots in rural Idaho where she never sets foot inside a school. to achieving a doctorate from Cambridge university. Whilst her childhood offered some fascinating insights into a world far removed from our own frames of reference, it was her deep personal struggles to wrest control of her own life, told with such honesty and eloquence, which really gripped us. 'Educated' is a compelling story of family love, loyalty and loss, and the transformative power of education.

The author's extraordinary upbringing takes place in a remote 'jagged little patch of Idaho' at the foot of a mountain, Bucks



Peak, nicknamed, The Princess. Imbued as she is with anthropomorphic qualities, her 'watchful presence' is a reassuring constant for Tara who grows up 'a part' of the 'rhythms of the mountain'. There are some beautifully vivid descriptions of The Princess as her landscape changes through the cycle of the seasons. In contrast, we noted it is very much left to the imagination of the reader to conjure a mental picture of the human characters in the book as there is tantalisingly little descriptive content on their visual appearance. .Tara's father rules his large family with a will of iron, fortified by a blind faith in the power of God, 'if you ask, the Lord will tell you'. Banned from going to public school because her father believes she will be 'brainwashed by the government', Tara spends her summers bottling fruit and every winter rotating supplies, whilst her brothers and father bury rifles and fuel, all in preparation for the End of Days – when the World of Men fails her family would survive. Her mother works as an unlicenced midwife and creator of herbal remedies. From an early age Tara works in her father's treacherous junkyard 'scrapping' alongside her brothers as members of 'the crew'. His anti -government fervour extends to the 'Medical Establishment' and when horrendous accidents befall 'the crew' they are treated at home by their mother's tinctures and salves. Her mother is believed to have a 'divine calling from the Lord' to be able to cure others, so according to her father 'every injury, every near death…was because we had been chosen…God had orchestrated all of it so we could denounce the Medical Establishment and testify of His power'.

As Tara gets older there are some very dark moments in the book when she recalls being a victim of an elder brother's increasingly violent outbursts. She decides that a way out is to teach herself to pass the exams necessary to gain a place at college. From then on doors are opened into further study through awards and scholarships, including at Cambridge and Harvard. Although some of us thought it a bit hard to believe all this is possible without any educational foundations at all, we were prepared to set aside our scepticism for the sake of the bigger picture which must focus on how someone with her background, through sheer grit and determination, can achieve such heights. What really drew us in was how being educated completely transforms her – she becomes 'a changed person, a new self'. All her years of study were to purchase for herself the privilege of seeing and experiencing 'more truths than those given me by my father, and to use those truths to construct my own mind'. But with this comes conflicts with her parents which have far reaching consequences. Knowing her own mind means she is ready to confront her parents about her brother's violence and the abuse she suffered at his hands. Not only do they fail to validate the reality of her traumatic memories, they call it a 'betrayal' to her family to ever talk about these things – she has been 'taken by Lucifer' and needs to make Atonement. She makes the decision to cut off from her parents. A haunting poignancy and sadness comes with her realisation that 'the breach between her father and herself was at last too vast to be bridged'. There is a great depth to her writing as she describes the painful unravelling of her mental health and the existential journey she takes to create her new self, for her own sake and not out of vengeance towards her father, 'because of me, not because of him. Because I needed it, not because he deserved it'. Some thought the book was a bit overwritten and repetitive, but this in itself could be seen as a reflection of the ongoing process of working through her past traumas and losses. There is a sense she has still not finished this process. Perhaps when she can physically walk over her father's threshold, and be in his presence, yet still retain 'custody of her own mind', her journey will be complete. 'Educated' is a well written, very interesting read, and definitely an eye opener, which we would recommend to others. We were glad we read it and gave it 4 stars. Next time we are reading a collection of short stories, First Person Singular, by Haruki Murakami. We meet once a month on Monday evenings in and around Stansfield and if you would like to join us please contact annedennis1@live.co.uk 07557357362.

Wickhambrook Local History Society

The Wild West came to West Suffolk last night when **Geoffrey Robinson** gave a talk about Buffalo Bill and his fascinating life. Geoff got interested in **Buffalo Bill** when he visited a museum in Cody, Wyoming, while on holiday in the USA and started to research the life of **William Frederick Cody,** 1846-1917.

Cody got his nickname in his early life when he supplied buffalo meat to wagon trains crossing America, killing more than 4,000 in 1867 which made him famous. He became a celebrity of his day and books and plays were written which spread his fame. He began reciting monologues about his adventures as he could not act, and this grew into outdoor shows with horses, Native Indians, guns and exciting chases in an arena. Such was his popularity that he toured Europe, coming to England in 1887 and meeting Queen Victoria. He credited himself with bringing her out of mourning with his show!

The logistics of touring with hundreds of performers and many animals must have been very difficult, and special trains with 150 carriages were used. He brought his show to Southend, Colchester, Bury St Edmunds, Ipswich, Lowestoft, Great Yarmouth and Norwich in September 1903. The venue in **Bury St Edmunds** was farmland where British Sugar now stands. Two shows a day were held in each place. When he died he had a state funeral, such was his fame and his lifespan took in many events of the growth of the USA into a modern nation. The talk ended with a short black and white silent film of one of the shows. Amazing! The Edwardian audience must have thrilled at the spectacle of performers of many nations, the costumes, guns and horses.

Wickhambrook Women's Institute

This month saw members revealing their artistic side with an evening of





art inspired and led by committee member **Michelle Parsons**. Michelle introduced us to the artist **Elizabeth Blackadder** whose paintings of flowers and cats were well known. We were given a short task to draw outline of a flower without removing pen from paper. We then chose our best result to colour in with poster paints. For half an hour or so there was complete silence in the hall as we all concentrated on our works of art. The results were all very pleasing and it was the quietest our members have been in a long time **From: Wendy Mansfield** <wendym05@btinternet.com>

Clarification & Apology – Planning Application DC/25/1871/HH

We apologise sincerely for any upset and hurt caused by the publication of an article in our magazine in February 2026

In the February 2026 edition of the Parish Pump, the report from the Stansfield Parish Council meeting referred to the planning application DC/25/1871/HH at Laurel Bank Farmhouse as a "new house-in-waiting".
This was inaccurate. The application is for a 1.5 storey ancillary outbuilding only (with two garages and log store on the ground floor), with no residential intent or potential for conversion to a separate dwelling.
I apologise unreservedly for the inaccuracy and for any distress caused by the timing of that report, which appeared in the same edition as the front cover obituary for a long-standing community member. I regret the impact on the applicant and his family.

Peter Thompson (The Publisher)



Hawkedon Church

The following services will be held at St Mary's Church, Hawkedon during April: Easter Sunday, 5 April at 9am.
Morning Prayer with hymns
12 April 9am said BCP Holy Communion
26 April. 11am Morning Prayer with hymns and special music
All very welcome.
Many thanks and best wishes, Heather Tilbury
Phillipshtapr@dircon.co.uk
01284 789 250/07774 275656





PLEASE NOTE THE *POST CODE* ABOVE HAS BEEN CORRECTED FROM PREVIOUS ISSUES

IPHEION identified by Rosemary, Christina and Carol. Thank you

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You can donate to our pantry by following this link www.tinyurl/Clare Community Pantry

Rector's Ramblings – April 2026 (A Journey Back and the Path Ahead)



One of the great joys of being your priest is the opportunity for occasional reflection, often sparked by the simplest of things. I've just returned from a short break to Newquay in Cornwall, somewhere I hadn't been since I went there with my parents .The last time I stood on the cliffs overlooking Fistral Beach was nearly forty -three years ago, and yet as I walked the familiar coastal paths, I was struck by the dance between change and constancy—a theme that feels particularly poignant as we enter April and prepare for the glory of Easter.

Newquay has certainly moved on since the early nineteen eighties. The skyline is now punctuated by modern architecture and sleek glass balconies designed to catch every drop of Atlantic light. Where I remembered modest, lace-curtained guesthouses, there are now stylish hotels and vibrant street art. Perhaps it is simply because I am an adult now, looking beyond the immediate allure of sandcastles and mint-choc-chip ice cream, but the town feels renewed; it brims with a creative, entrepreneurial spirit that I didn't see as a child.

It is easy to feel slightly adrift when the landmarks of our memory are replaced by the "new and improved." Yet, as I stood by **Huer's Hut** - that iconic, white-washed lookout that has watched over the bay since the 14th century - I realised that the essence of the place remains untouched.

The Atlantic still thunders against the rocks with the same timeless rhythm. The sharp tang of the salt air, the haunting cry of the gulls, and the stubborn grit of the sand underfoot are exactly as they were four decades ago. Even in a world that moves at a frantic pace, there are "permanent things" that the passage of time simply cannot erode.

This experience remains with me as I prepare to begin to lead our Benefice's annual journey through Holy Week. Our lives change - often faster than we would like. We grow older, our families evolve, and many of the people we shared our first holidays with have now died. At times, the world can feel unrecognisable compared to the one we knew as children. We face new challenges and modern anxieties that my grandparents could never have imagined.

But the "shoreline" of our faith remains steadfast. On Easter Sunday (5th April), we celebrate the ultimate "permanent thing": the Resurrection of Jesus Christ. Just as the tide inevitably returns to the Cornish coast, the promise of new life and hope returns to us every spring.



Easter tells us that while change is inevitable, and, as we know through the lens of Good Friday, sometimes deeply painful, it never has the final word. The light of the risen Christ is the same light that shone on that first, world-changing morning, and it is the same light that guides us today in 2026.

Whether you are currently navigating a season of great change or seeking comfort in the familiar, remember that the heart of our faith is a story of renewal. I look forward to seeing many of you at our services as we celebrate this "Greater Love" together.

May the peace of the Risen Lord be with you and your families this April.

Mark
The Revd Mark Woodrow
(Rector)
The Revd Dr Karen Smith

Monthly rainfall mm 2024/2025 (Please note the change in units: inches to mm) Also please welcome our new contributor Robin Stokes from Barrow

2025	Jan	Feb	March	April	May	June	July	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Nick Burton- Stradishall	55	31.5	11	22	20.5	23	39	25	47	60	118	41
Tina Lee- Stradishall	45	32	9	25	19	27	30	33	46	63	101	46
Sam Slater- Stansfield	46	30	5	23	21	20	54	24	41	54	99	45
Rod Taylor- Stansfield	64	35	13	25	26	29	59	26	48	59	114	43
Jay Gridley-Hundon	59	26	11	21	26	29	22	25	38	77	122	54
Victoria Pakenham -Fenstead End	73	33	8	21	30	32	32	20.5	43	58.5	98	52
Elaine Plumpton - Great Saxham	63	42	6	23	17	38	51	26	60	58	119	49

2026	Jan	Feb	March	April	May	June	July	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Nick Burton- Stradishall	91	71										
Tina Lee- Stradishall	81	65										
Sam Slater- Stansfield	100	57										
Rod Taylor- Stansfield	96	84										
Jay Gridley-Hundon	116	105										
Victoria Pakenham -Fenstead End	90	65.5										
Elaine Plumpton- Great Saxham	94	82										
Robin Stokes - Barrow	84	93										

St Nicholas Hospice Care's Sunset Walk and Cycle Ride

The sunset walk returns to **Bury St Edmunds** on Saturday, 20 June, bringing together families, friends and colleagues for an evening of remembrance, reflection and community. Walkers can choose between 10km and 15km routes, or take part virtually from anywhere.
Before heading out, participants gather in the Abbey Gardens for entertainment, warmups and refreshments and creating a lively festival atmosphere. Along the route, live music,
supportive volunteers and thoughtful moments of reflection make the evening one of laughter and remembrance. Many walkers honour loved ones by decorating remembrance hearts, which are displayed at the Hospice, a reminder of why the event matters. Sponsored by Greene King, the walk supports the Hospice's mission to ensure no one faces dying, death or grief alone. Sign up at: stnicholashospice.org.uk/news-community/events-listing/sunset-walk/





Cyclists invited to support St Nicholas Hospice Care

St Nicholas Hospice Care is welcoming cyclists of all ages and abilities to take part in two special fundraising challenges this year: the St Nic's Cycle Ride and the London to Paris Bike Ride.
The St Nic's Cycle Ride, taking place on May 10, brings together riders from across West Suffolk, Thetford and local villages for a friendly and community-focused day out. With routes suited to families, casual cyclists and more experienced riders, it's a much-loved event that continues to grow. Every mile cycled helps fund important services offered by the Hospice. Registrations opened on February 20, and the event is kindly sponsored by Atkins Dellow, with support from Maglia Rosso Cycling Centre.
For those looking for a bigger challenge, the London to Paris Bike Ride offers a memorable journey from capital to capital, organised in partnership with Discover Adventure. There are three opportunities for you to take on this incredible challenge in 2026, 10 – 14 June, 22 – 26 July and 9 – 13 September. Pick the July date and you will be arriving in Paris the same day as the iconic Tour de France.
Registrations for the London to Paris Bike Ride close about three months before each ride, and places are limited. Find out more and register for either event here: https://stnicholashospice.org.uk/event_categories/

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Stradishall Parish Council News

A meeting of Stradishall Parish Council took place on Monday 2nd March 2025. **County Councillor Bobby Bennett and District Councillors Karen Richardson** and **Marion Rushbrook** attended the meeting along with 4 members of the public. Items on the agenda included approving final information for the internal audit of the Parish Council's accounts and a review of the budget.

Public session

The following issues were raised during the public session:

The urgent need for pedestrian crossing warning signs along the A143. Cllr **Bobby Bennett** said that she should be able to cover most of the cost and asked the Parish Council to submit a request for the money.

Reports from County Councillor Bobby Bennett

Cllr Bennett spoke about:

County council elections which are now taking place in May 2026. There has been a boundary change but Stradishall still falls within Clare decision.

Proposals for a Forest City between Cambridge and Haverhill are in the news at the moment with a public meeting being held in Haverhill.

A new special needs school and Centre of Excellence which is going to be built on the former Horringer Court site in Bury St Edmunds.

Suffolk Highways is working hard to repair potholes which have got worse because of the recent wet weather.

Reports from District Councillors Karen Richardson and Marion Richardson

District Councillor **Karen Richardson** spoke about the next District Council elections in 2027. District councillors will not be able to give any locality funding until after the County Council elections on 7th May. The new Local Plan needs to be completed in 30 months, but West Suffolk Council is confident that they can complete it in time.

Annual Parish Meeting

Stradishall's Annual Parish Meeting will take place on Monday 11th May 2026 at 8pm in Café 33. This is a village meeting, not a parish council meeting, and residents of Stradishall are warmly invited to attend. Why not come along and find out more about what is happening in Stradishall and meet your local councillors and representatives from other village organisations? There will also be an open discussion about any issues raised by members of the public.

Do you find yourself struggling to decide what to eat for dinner each evening?

Feel Good Suffolk has partnered with the online meal planning service Five Dinners which was created by celebrity TV chef Theo Michaels. Every household in West Suffolk can become a premium member of Five Dinners for 2026 at no cost to them. They won't be asked for any bank details which means they won't be charged for using the service.

Once registered, they will receive a meal plan every week, tailored to their needs and preferences. This can be personalised for low calories, child friendly, low cost, vegetarian, gluten-free, quick and easy and more. Alongside the meal plan, members receive a shopping list for the week ahead which automatically adjusts for the number being cooked for.

You can find out more at https://feelgoodsuffolk.co.uk/healthy-weight/five-dinners.

Better Recycling for Suffolk

From 2026, every council in England will start to collect a core set of materials. This means that more materials will be collected at the kerbside in your household bins, including glass bottles and jars, drinks cartons such as Tetra Pak, plastic bags, wrappings and films. Food waste will also be collected separately. Households will be getting a new wheelie bin to use alongside existing ones. For homes where space is limited, residents may get a smaller box or sack instead. Households will also get a small food caddy to use inside the home and a larger one to store food waste outside.

For information about when the new bins will be delivered, visit https://www.westsuffolk.gov.uk/bins/better-recycling/

To find out more about Better Recycling visit https://www.suffolkrecycling.org.uk/recycling-composting/better-recycling/whats-changing

Dates of future meetings

Meetings usually start at 7pm and take place in Café 33.

Monday 11th May 2026 - Annual Meeting of Stradishall Parish Council followed by the Annual Parish Meeting at 8pm.

Monday 6th July 2026

Monday 7th September 2026

Monday 2nd November 2026

Monday 11th January 2027 - one week later because of the Christmas break.

Monday 1st March 2027

Contact details for Stradishall Parish Council

Tel: 07880 686069

Email: clerk@stradishallparishcouncil.gov.uk

Website: https://stradishallparishcouncil.gov.uk/

Joanna

The Bansfield Benefice

The Bansfield Benefice is the collective name for the Parishes of Cowlinge, Denston, Lidgate, Ousden, Stansfield, Stradishall and Wickhambrook in the Diocese of St Edmundsbury and Ipswich, Suffolk, United Kingdom.

Services for April 2026 DRAFT

https://www.bansfieldbenefice.org.uk/services/

Date	Time	Church	Details
03 Apr	10:00 am	Wickhambrook* (Good Friday | Walk of Witness)	Celebrant: Methodist church Organist: [-] Liturgical colour: -
03 Apr	02:30 pm	Lidgate (Good Friday | Stations of the Cross)	Celebrant: - Organist: [-] Liturgical colour: -
05 Apr	10:00 am	Stansfield (Easter Day | HC)	Celebrant: Revd Eve Bell Organist: [] Liturgical colour:
12 Apr	10:00 am	Ousden (Second Sunday of Easter | HC)	Celebrant: Revd Eve Bell Organist: [] Liturgical colour:
19 Apr	10:00 am	Wickhambrook (Third Sunday of Easter | HC)	Celebrant: Revd Barbara Sherlock Organist: [] Liturgical colour:
26 Apr	10:00 am	Stradishall (Fourth Sunday of Easter | HC)	Celebrant: Revd Eve Bell Organist: [] Liturgical colour:

Year A

*Walk of Witness - From the Wickhambrook Memorial Social Club car park to the Methodist church.

HC = Holy Communion; CW = Common Worship Order One; BCP = Book of Common Prayer; SOP = Songs of Praise. MP = Morning Prayer; CWOT = Common Worship Order Two [Organist's initials] Elder; PB = Paul Bevan

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CLASP Charity No 1029710 SPRING NEWSLETTER 2026 www.clasp-clare.co.uk email contact:secretary@clasp-clare.co.uk

Volunteers' Social Evening It was lovely to welcome over 50 of CLASP's volunteer force to a social evening at the end of January held in the Old School Community Centre. There was an opportunity to circulate and socialise with volunteers from the various branches of CLASP who rarely get the opportunity to meet in person. Having badges with names and volunteer roles on helped and it was great to hear the stories of volunteers and think of the number of local residents whose lives are supported by our charity's efforts.

Nick Clarke gave a warm welcome to everyone and personal thanks to each set of volunteers; minibus drivers and assistants, those who support at the Saturday fundraising table sales, the CAR-AID drivers and the Wednesday Lunch Club volunteers. A special 'thank-you', along with a gift of flowers, was given to Jackie Scaplehorn who has filled the role of Welfare Officer for many years. She has ensured that birthdays for Lunch Club attendees are remembered and has kept in touch with those who are ill, in hospital or no longer able to attend. Also going out of her way to support in practical matters such as liaising with the doctors' surgery and family members, as well as attending funerals and memorial services on behalf of CLASP. Rebecca Simmons has agreed to take over the role from February.

Valentine's Day Fund Raiser This was a highly successful evening . Many thanks go to Paul Reeves who organised, and rehearsed with, the musicians to produce a wonderful evening of live music. The church was full and the candlelight and music created a special atmosphere. Feedback from those who attended has been very positive and early calculations indicate the event will have raised over £1500



Town Hall Quiz Evening Clasp is very grateful to the organisers of a very successful quiz evening held in the Town Hall on 17th January. We were chosen as one of the recipients of their event along with the Primary School and received a donation of £800.

Charity Run for Clasp Ben Luxon chose to raise funds for CLASP when challenged to complete a 10km run by his friend Rob. He successfully completed the challenge on 21st February and has raised £786 so far via his *gofundme* page. (Fundraiser by Rob Lee : Ben and Rob - 10km Hyde Park Run - 21st February 2026.) Our thanks and congratulations go to Ben for supporting us in this way.

Fund-raising through the Co-op

We have been nominated to be one of the Co-op's local charities this year. If you have a Co-op card, please use the links below and register CLASP as your chosen charity. We currently have 768 people registered. CLASP is participating in the EasyFundRaising website If you join the scheme, CLASP receives a donation every time you shop via registered suppliers. Please have a look at the website and consider joining the scheme as an easy way to support CLASP financially. Fundraising | Charity Fundraising Online | You Spend Online, Brands Donate | Easy fundraising

First-Aid Training

The committee is in the process of organising First-Aid training sessions for any volunteers who would like to attend. The training will take place in the Baptist Church Hall and dates will be sent out when they are confirmed.

Updates on the Future Priorities for CLASP **These priorities were listed on our last newsletter.**

Fundraising for a replacement minibus – budgeted at £5,500 a year

Update: we have received a sizeable legacy donation which will support our funding of a replacement minibus in the future. Nick Clarke, Rob Eyre and Colin Williamson are also pursuing other relevant grants for which the charity may be eligible.

Work with Clare Young Persons Initiative to offer opportunities to teenagers

Update: this initiative is ongoing and Rob Eyre and Paul Reeves represent CLASP at relevant meetings.

Search for sponsorship opportunities from local businesses and individuals

Update: Nick Clarke and Sue Rouse have successfully approached several local businesses who are willing to offer sponsorship to CLASP.

Enrol a replacement CarAid Co-ordinator

Update: we are delighted to welcome Karla Greenwood to her role as Car-Aid co-ordinator. Karla has taken to the role with great enthusiasm and is continuing to ensure that this vital service continues to offer support to local residents attending medical appointments.

Enrol further volunteers for all services offered by CLASP – this works best by personal introductions – please pass this newsletter on to friends and speak positively about your own volunteering role.

Update: we are recruiting a few new volunteers, mainly through word of mouth and friendships. There remains a need for Car-Aid drivers (especially in Hundon) as well as assistants and drivers for the minibus.

CLASP COMMITTEE MEMBERS Below are their names, roles and contact

Nick Clarke	Chairman	**07876 561 781**
Stella Byrne	Vice-Chair, Day Centre Manager, Publicity	**Contact via the secretary**
Sue Rouse	Secretary	**secretary@clare-clare.co.uk**
Karla Greenwood	Car-Aid Co-ordinator	**07724 698 283**
Colin Barrable	Treasurer	**Contact via the secretary**
Liz Knight	Fund-Raising	**fundraising@clasp-clare.co.uk** **07980 948 167**
Colin Williamson	Minibus Co-ordinator	**07842 141 281**
Rebecca Simmons	Welfare	**Contact via the secretary**
Paul Reeves	IT and Website	**Contact via the secretary**
Rob Eyre	Town Council Representative	**Contact via the secretary**

The Churchyard, with its daffodils & primroses, made a beautiful blanket of colour.
After a frosty start, the sun broke through to provide a lovely relaxed afternoon of tea, coffee, & conversation in Poslingford Church. Villagers were treated to an irresistible array of puddings, lots being homemade. So plentiful that many people took extras home to share with their families. The afternoon also offered generous donations to help restock the Community Pantry. For April, we are excited to announce "BANGERS & BINGO". Bring a contribution for the Community Pantry, in exchange for a Bingo ticket. Malcolm & Dave will be cooking sausages with a roll, at a cost of £1.
As always, there will be plenty of tea & coffee to keep everyone refreshed. But you are more than welcome to bring your own drink.

Bangers & Bingo

Saturday 11th April

at 2pm

St Mary's Church, Poslingford

Bring a contribution for the Community Pantry, to exchange for a Bingo ticket.

Freshly cooked sausages in rolls - £1

Tea & coffee supplied



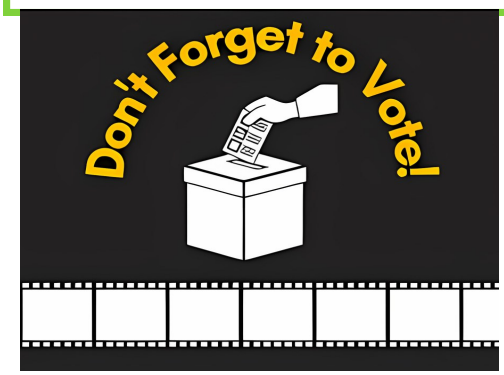








Polling Already Underway in Stansfield!



Not content to wait until May to exercise their right to vote, film fans in Stansfield were flocking to the polls at the opening Cinema in Stansfield screening of 2026 - on Friday 20th March. It was a joyous evening filled with laughter and a few tears for the truly wonderful film 'I Swear'. During the event our annual audience poll was also launched – A much anticipated event, hot on the heels of the recent BAFTA and Academy Award ceremonies. Our regular patrons had been invited to suggest some titles for this year's programme. These have now been whittled down to a shortlist of four films, all very different from one another. And the voting has begun! The four films on offer are: '**A Real Pain'** (2024); '**Wilding'** (2023); '**All We Imagine As Light'** (2024) and '**The Big Sleep'** (1946). Access to online voting is being given via the Stansfield Village Hall and Cinema in Stansfield mailing lists and via Facebook. If you would like to participate but are not able to access these platforms please contact us via phone **01284 789 192** or email: friends@stansfieldvillage.org.uk and a link will be provided or access to in-person voting arranged.

Our next screening on **Friday 17th April** will be **The Go-Between**, the 1971 classic starring Julie Christie and Alan Bates in the memorable adaptation of L P Hartley's novel of the same name. A beautiful period drama with themes of illicit passion and innocence betrayed against a backdrop of a stultifying and hypocritical Edwardian society. Another opportunity for in-person voting will be available during this event and polling will close at the end of the evening. Thank you to all those who have participated so far – please do join us and have your say in shaping our programme for 2026.

Dolly Whilems.









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Car Aid is part of Clare Liaison and Support Project and exists to provide a free service for the people of Clare and the surrounding villages who need to visit a hospital, health centre, their doctor, dentist, optician or physiotherapist, but have difficulty in organising or affording transport.

The service is provided from a pool of voluntary drivers who use their own cars to transport their clients to and from their medical destination. All drivers, each of whom have been DBS checked, are reimbursed according to the destination visited.



"I've met some very interesting people while driving for CLASP and enjoy the conversations we have"

"I love the opportunity to offer a few hours a month to support members of my community in a practical way"
(Car-Aid Drivers)

We are keen to recruit some more volunteer drivers in order to continue to provide this service to Clare and surrounding villages such as Hundon, Ashen, Wixoe and Stoke-by-Clare.
For further information please visit our website www. clasp-clare.co.uk or contact
Karla Greenwood - Car Aid Coordinator
on 07724 698 283

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Tiling	
Spring cleaning	
All those other jobs you've been putting off for ages	



Lilylife
Home Maintenance
07863 624733
To Do List : Smashed

Portia and her lambs and calves

Our breeding ewes have been moved to **Melford Hall** ready for lambing to start on the 15th March. All of our ewes have been crutched: this means we shear the wool from around the vulva and udder, which is done primarily to improve hygiene, prevent flystrike, and ensure newborn lambs can easily find the teats. Our first set of twins were born on Mother's Day, a healthy ewe and ram lamb. Calving is coming to an end and we are looking forward to getting all the calves and cows back out onto grass. We are preparing to drill our spring oats with the linseed following on around mid April. It's been lovely to have the sunshine back - may this weather continue being kind to us though lambing.
Portia













TGA have been manufacturing and supplying the highest quality mobility equipment nationwide for over 40 years. Based in **Sudbury**, we have recently refurbished our showroom to ensure we are offering the very best products and support to the local community. Stocking everything from walking sticks, rollators, bathroom and personal care products, household and kitchen aids, rise and recline chairs, beds, plus a huge range of new, used and ex-display mobility scooters.
Everything is available to see and try, we are proud of our new light, spacious and relaxed showroom. Visitors can browse without pressure or talk to one of our friendly team. We have everything from products to help put your socks on to being able to roam the countryside in a robust off-road mobility scooter.

We supply everywhere from the **National Trust, Forestry England**, even all of the products for the recent Thursday Murder Club movie. We work with and support charities such as **Parkinson's UK, MS Society and MS-UK.** We even supply all of the scooters for hire at events such as the **Suffolk and Hadleigh Shows**.
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Daniel Stone



Our Emma Pettit caring for one of our customers

Problem Page

with Carol Reay-Glover



CAROL is a trained counsellor living locally who can offer advice on personal problems, such as relationships, divorce, child issues, employment, depression - or general worries. Email her in complete confidence at carolreay1@icloud.com

Dear Carol
I can't keep pace with computers and things and it's getting worse.
I can email, which I am doing now. But that's about all. And I wouldn't email if I didn't have to. There was none of this when I was growing up. I don't 'check' my emails as a man at the hospital said to me. It's so annoying. Now even at the doctors they ask if I've got the app. What?! I wouldn't know an app if it danced around me and hit me in the face.
I am having to renew my driving licence and that's what made me write to you. My grandson helped me get started but now it's all gone beyond me and I'm in a muddle and I don't know what to do.
I feel like it's all too much for me.
E

Dear E,
I am willing to bet that many readers of this are nodding in agreement, so don't feel alone. The pace of change around us is very rapid and we can so easily feel overwhelmed. I hear that you feel it's too much for you.
All the major services like health and the DVLA (driving licence authority) do cater for people without access to, or the ability to work, technology. So do call the DVLA and explain your issue and ask for their help. If you were interested in learning more about computers just at a basic level to get by there are some great beginners course too. I can email you details.
I understand if not. In which case I think the way with this E is for me to encourage you to ask for help whenever you need it. Respect your own feelings and ask for assistance. Your grandson sounds very able. Call him back to help you too.
The world has to work with human beings not machines and so many people will relate to your struggle. Do ask for assistance and know you are not alone.

Carol



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Stop press: Jane Eyre in a small village church at Cowlinge

We have just this minute emerged from the performance of *Jane Eyre* by young players of This is My Theatre in our Cowlinge village church. To say we are blown away by the talent that shaped and lit up the evening is to put it mildly. The acting was outstanding, the audience rapt, riveted even, especially by the interplay between words and music. For the players had fine singing voices which they used to great effect as musical counterpoint to the action onstage. Such a special evening, enjoyed to the full, and to be repeated, we hope, before too long. **Margaret.**



Date for your diary

Stansfield Plant Sale
Saturday May 16th
at Stansfield Village Hall
12 noon till 2 pm

*****



Stansfield Village Hall Charity No 304939



Rip van Winkle Narcissi

Gracie's illustrations

Local Artist & Illustrator
Hi!

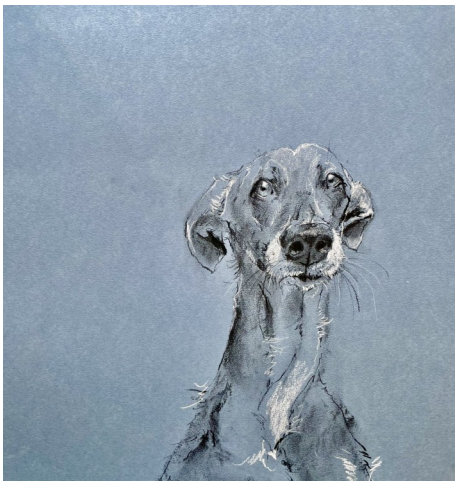
I'm Gracie, an illustrator, Earl Grey tea and book lover based in Poslingford…



although you'll often find me sketching away in the local cafe SmallTown in Clare - feel free to say hello if you spot me!

I specialise in hand drawn, expressive illustrations using water colour, ink, pencil and charcoal. My work captures a whimsical, classic style that feels both nostalgic and fresh, brimming with character and gentle humour, and drawing inspiration from the natural world and from quietly extraordinary moments that happen in real life. My friendly animal characters have been licensed on to a range of products including greeting cards, stationery, wall art, jigsaw puzzles and calendars, all of which have been stocked in places such as Waterstones, John Lewis and TKMaxx. I'm so excited to continue developing my ideas and business further. Commissions are a wonderful aspect of what I do. My books are currently open for pet portraits, home or wedding venue illustrations, stylized family portraits and much much more, so if you have an idea; get in touch! I'd love to work on more bespoke projects. Examples and more information can be found on my website www.gracietapner.com

You can also find me at various local craft fairs this year, the first being the Clare Craft Market on 9th May, and then again at the Lavenham Summer Craft & Foodie Festival on 30th August. It would be lovely to see some of you there!



Hugo's Day Out



Something strange was going on. I'd had a very long grooming session. Then I was taken for a special bath. Worst of all I wasn't allowed to go for muddy walks. Pavement walking is a bit boring. Much prefer walks in the fields or going to help open the Church at Stradishall. And then I was woken up very early and had to get in the car for a long journey. I hate my Dad's driving which I think is too fast. We arrived at a huge place where there were hundreds of dogs. What was going on? I saw my aunt from my first house. You have to watch her because she eats all the food when you aren't looking. The woman who lives in my first house was there and she started grooming me again. There were lots of dogs that were the same breed as me. We are quite rare - Petit Basset Griffon Vandeens.
Soon I was led onto a green carpet with lots of others like me. I had to stand on a table and some old man looked at me very carefully. I was told to run around the ring and then we all lined up. The funny old man gave me a rosette. I was third, though all my gang said I was the best. And that means we can come back and do it all again next year.

By Beaujon Anton du Beke aka Hugo Please note his Dad and Mum are Mr and Mrs Pfizer!



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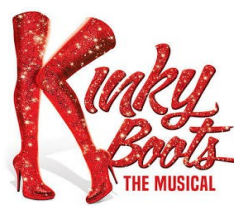


Helen and Ellie

Wednesday: Willow Tree Farm Shop 9am to 1pm
Thursday: Coggeshall Market Hill 1.30 to 4pm
Long Melford1.30 to 4pm
Friday: Clare Market 7.30 to 10am
Lavenham 11am to 1pm
Depden 2 to 3pm

No Martin this month boo hoo!

Unfortunately Martin is unable to write his usual inspiring article, due to medical treatment in London. He is blending pleasure with pain (not too much of the latter we hope) with a visit to the London Coliseum. We hope all goes well Martin, and we expect a glowing critique of ***Kinky Boots*** **The Musical** in your next article.





St Margaret's Church in Cowlinge



Easter fun and chocolate at Cowlinge church

Plans are underway to repeat this Easter weekend our highly successful Easter-egg Hunts that the children enjoyed so much last year. This year there will be two Hunts for the children. These will take place on Easter Saturday, 4th April, between 2.30pm and 4.30pm in and around Cowlinge church. The entry fee is £4.00 per child. Everyone is welcome, as always, and we look forward to the excitement of the hunt.



A tiny person hunting Easter eggs at Cowlinge church



I fell in love with this so it is in twice!

	PARISH COUNCILS - WHO'S WHO in YOUR VILLAGE?		
Parish Council	**Chair**	**Vice Chair**	**Clerks**
Denston	Jeff Fellows jefffellows.crown@gmail.com 01440 820 310	N/A	Jeff Fellows
Hawkedon/ Thurston End	Rotating	Rotating	David Jarrold dmj1800@icloud.com
Poslingford	Martin England martin.england@poslingford-pc.gov.uk 01787 278413	Marc Allison marc.allison@poslingford-pc.gov.uk 07958337282	Chris Turner clerk@poslingford-pc.gov.uk 07814246204
Stansfield/ Assington Green	Rex Barnes rexstansfieldsoc@gmail.com 07778 058425 www.stansfield.onesuffolk.net	Andrew Pallett andrew.pallett.spc@btinternet.com 01284 789434	Annie Lines stansfieldpc@outlook.com.
Stradishall	Ian Hutchinson clerk@stradishallparishcouncil.gov.uk 07970717116	Ed Hollingsworth https://stradishallparishcouncil.gov.uk/	Joanne Kirk clerk@stradishallparishcouncil.gov.uk 07880686069
Clare	Rob Eyre rob.eyre@clare-suffolk.co.uk 01787 277 559	Paul Bishop paul.bishop@clare-suffolk.co.uk,	Davina Neale clerk@clare-suffolk.co.uk
Cowlinge	Linda Aston lindaaston555@gmail.com	Jane Nesham	John Barnett 01440 783 903
Wickhambrook	Mike Lavelle mike.lavelle@wickhambrook.org.uk	Vacancy	Hilary Workman 07508 039 810 parishclerk@wickhambrook.org.uk

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Diane Fraser
cambridge.rscds@gmail.com

or have a chat with Helen Smith 01440 783278
or Pauline Broad 01440 783215

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Half page	£275	£150	£85
BACK PAGE			
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	12 months	6 months	3 months
Eighth page	£ 165	£ 90	£50
Quarter page	£255	£ 140	£80
Half page	£ 420	£ 230	£125

Denston Village Hall 100 Club Quiz night STEFAN, TREASURER 01440 820675
the next one is in 2026. Thanks Stefan

Parish Pump
COPY DEADLINE:
All contributors & advertisers to submit copy no later than the 18th of the month. Please note the change.Thankyou

STANSFIELD Parish Council

Stansfield Parish Council have again held the parish portion of the council tax rate at virtually the same amount for the coming year, starting April 2026. Householders will pay just over £1 a year more on a Band D property. This represents a 1.16% increase in the amount of precept Stansfield is asking for. At a meeting of the Parish Council in March it was reported that Suffolk County Council rate increase, in contrast, would be 2.9%.

"Skilful sourcing of less expensive methods of running the council, such as telephone contracts and software systems, by our new Parish Clerk, Abbie Lee, is helping us to keep parish expenses as low as possible ," said Chairman Rex Barnes, and Abbie was thanked for this by all the councillors at the meeting.

"We are able to keep the parish rate low despite rising costs and inflation also through the help of volunteers. This is especially so with the maintenance of the **old Chapel Graveyard**, various seats and flower tubs in the village. We would like to thank individual volunteers, as well as those from the Good Neighbour Scheme and the Bloomers, for their hard work", Rex commented.

Speeding in Stansfield. Concern was again expressed about the speed of some vehicles in the village, especially down Plough Hill. The Clerk is investigating the cost of various options to remind drivers to slow down, including a flashing speed indicator device, as well as *"gates"* to the village welcoming drivers but asking them to slow down and take care. Suffolk County Council representative Bobby Bennett said she would try to offer help from her locality budget.

Village Assets. A list of things residents have told the parish council that they value in Stansfield is to be published on the council website. The pub, the Village Hall and grounds, the old telephone box and village water pumps, as well as various footpaths and views from them are included. Checks are starting to find out if any of these items can be listed as official Assets of Community Value, which, if any come up for sale, would provide a period of grace for a possible purchase to be organised.

Village Spring Coffee Morning
Residents tied labels onto a line of ribbon with more suggestions for this list… again the views, footpaths, wildlife and the peacefulness of the village were greatly valued. **Potholes and the state of the roads** also figured in the comments on the ribbon, with one description calling them a National

Good news for Stansfield residents For third year running!

Disgrace! This has been passed on to Suffolk County Council (SCC) Highways Department. Our SCC representative, Bobby Bennett, asked residents to use the online Reporting Tool to report any new potholes as they appear. She said SCC were repairing them faster than ever but more were constantly appearing.

The event was organised by the Parish Council with the help of the Good Neighbour scheme and volunteers who have prepared a full report

Village Tidy Up. Volunteers are being sought to help with the annual village Spring tidy up. Would you be willing to walk a small stretch of the roads through the village and pick up litter? Guidelines and picking sticks, bags and tabards, have been donated by West Suffolk Council for permanent use in the village, and are available from Cllr. Andrew Pallett on 01284 789434 or the **Good Neighbour Helpline 07827 128511.**

Village FUN DAY - advance notice: Date confirmed: Saturday August 15th



12noon -3pm
Welly Wanging, Egg and Spoon Races, Table Competitions, café with home-made cakes etc. And lots more to be announced later… **Next Meeting of Stansfield Parish Council is on Wednesday May 13th 2026 7pm at the Village Hall.**

Coffee morning

Two lucky residents took home prizes. Justin Ball won the raffle hamper and Roy Elder took home a giant fluffy bunny





What a vibrant village Stansfield is!

…exclaimed one of the 80+ residents, friends and family who attended the Village Spring Coffee Morning

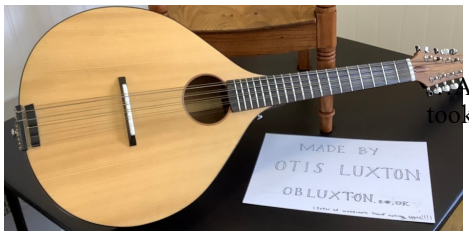
Volunteers from the village and the Good Neighbours Scheme served up coffee, teas, squash, savouries and delicious home -made cakes galore to a crowd who enjoyed the displays, games and most of all the chance to chat with fellow residents



Elsa, aka Josie, the Snow Queen appeared to run the workshop for children to make Mothers' Day and Easter Cards. She has worked in Stansfield for a number of years now

Made in Stansfield! What an amazingly varied collection of items are hand-made in this tiny village of around 220 people some of which were on show at the event





And tw
took home







Wickhambrook Parish Council News

Hilary is on holiday so there will be no article this month





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Saturday 11th July

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Mary Cleaver

Family law is not just about legal rules—it is about people, relationships, and building a stable future

Family law is often associated with courtrooms and conflict, but in reality much of modern family law in England and Wales is focused on **helping families resolve issues constructively** and with as little stress as possible. One area that has seen important recent attention is how separating couples manage arrangements for their children.

When parents separate, the law places the child's welfare at the centre of any decision-making. This means that questions about where a child lives, how much time they spend with each parent, and how major decisions are made should always be guided by what is in the child's best interests—not simply what feels "fair" to the adults involved.

In recent years, there has been a growing emphasis on resolving these matters outside of court wherever possible. Processes such as mediation and collaborative law encourage parents to work together to reach practical agreements. Not only can this be quicker and more cost-effective, but it often leads to better long-term outcomes, particularly where parents need to maintain an ongoing relationship for the sake of their children. Court proceedings are still available where agreement cannot be reached, or where there are concerns about safety or wellbeing. However, judges increasingly expect parties to have at least considered alternative dispute resolution before issuing an application. This reflects a broader shift towards reducing conflict and promoting cooperation.

Another key development is the increasing recognition of different family structures. The law continues to adapt to reflect modern life, including blended families, unmarried couples, and the role of extended family members such as grandparents. While not all relationships have the same automatic legal protections, there are often ways to safeguard important family connections with the right advice.

For many people, the legal landscape can feel confusing at what is already a difficult time. Seeking early guidance can make a significant difference—not only in understanding your rights, but in finding a constructive path forward that minimises stress for everyone involved.

As local family solicitors, we regularly support individuals and families through these situations with a focus on clarity, empathy, and practical solutions. Whether you are considering separation, need advice about child arrangements, or simply want to understand your options, having the right support can help you move forward with confidence.

Family law is not just about legal rules—it is about people, relationships, and building a stable future. With the right approach, even challenging transitions can be managed in a way that protects what matters most.

Mary

squiggle

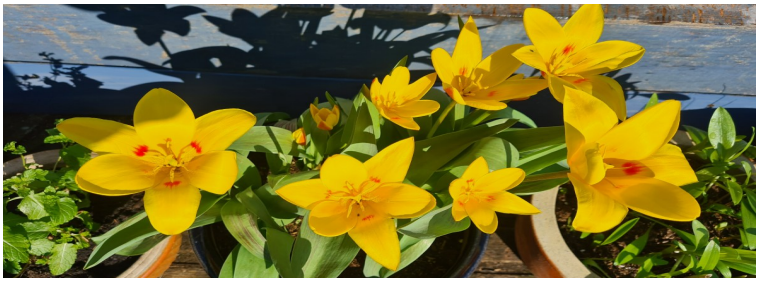


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Jeff's wine



I would like to add some further notes on tasting.
The essence of this is to further enhance the pleasure of drinking and understanding the many complexities to be found in the purchasing and consumption of wine.
Colour. The colour of the wine is called the robe. It is used as an indicator of when the wine was made and a time when it should be drunk.
The following should be used as a general guide to colours,
White Clear. Very young wine
Yellow. Young
Straw. Ready
D Yellow. Old
Rose. Pink. Ready
Pink/Yellow Past it's best
Red. Purple. V young
Red. Ready
Red/Lighter. Mature
Brown/Red. Vintage wine at its peak.
Burgundy vintage wine becomes the colour of Suffolk red bricks
As a general rule dark wines are usually better than light coloured.
Taste. Everyday wines usually have one/ two predominant flavours to them whereas serious wines have many different constituents. One of the more interesting facets in this regard is how much good wines change even as they are being drunk.
As everyone's palate is different then the taste we perceive is our response to the wine. So one must always express one's opinion on the wine. The fact that friends may disagree only shows that palates are interpreting the tastes differently. No one is wrong - in fact both are right as both are valid opinions.
There are only four flavours, acidic, bitter, salty and sweet. So when we taste we are looking for a well balanced wine between those flavours. So for instance a White is a balance between fruit and acidity whereas a Red is fruit, acidity and tannin. The latter in a young wine causes us to purse our lips. Too much of any constituent means there is little balance and therefore it is not a good wine. Great wines combine all parts into a harmonious whole. The list of scents/ flavours of wine are almost endless. Here are a few of the more common ones.
Fruit. See above but blackcurrant is usually associated with Cabernet Sauvignon, Cherries, Apples, soft fruits etc
Vegetable. Mushrooms, composting veg, grassy
Game. Game, meat
Others. Toast, dried hay, coffee, petroleum
Temperature. In addition to all of the above the temperature at which the wine is served is another key element. Bottles straight out of the fridge cause the wine to close up. I once had a bottle of White Burgundy served to me just like that and the waiter also then put it straight into a wine bucket. When I asked for another bottle I was told that " all of my customers want it like that." I said that his customers were wrong and I wanted it to be 14'. The old adage of being served at room temperature was long before central heating so as a guide try the following, Fine wine, Bordeaux 16', Burgundy 15', for Good wines R or W 15', Beaujolais (or similar) 11-12', Rose 11', White 10', Champagne 8', Dessert 6'.

Best. **Jeff**

New city in East Anglia

Forest City1. As most people know there is proposal to build a new city between Haverhill and Newmarket Our team at Parish Pump had, some time ago, decided to avoid ' political ' issues in our publication. Instead now we are proposing, where appropriate, to put in examples of links (in this case for and against) so that people can do their own research

Proposer's case:

https//www.forestcity.uk.neighbours

Opposer's case:

https//you.38degrees.org.uk/p/ForestCity

Who is who in our local church benefices?

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	(Assington Green)			
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	POSLINGFORD			
SUFFOLK HEIGHTS	HAWKEDON	The Revd Clive Fairclough	01284 615828	Mrs Heather Phillips Mr David Taylor
SUFFOLK HEIGHTS	(Thurston End)	As Hawkedon	As Hawkedon	As Hawkedon

Puzzle Time



Puzzle 11

Radius, Anvil and Clavicle

Carey or Morrison or Parsons

Uncle Vanya author

A terrier from North of the Boarder

What is the name of the ship?

A ***Delphic's Quest*** prize pen will be awarded to a randomly drawn correct entry each month. To enter, please submit your answer to **delphicsquest@gmail.com** (feedback also welcome.) The closing date for submissions is 16th April 2026.

Answer to Puzzle 10: Pavarotti
[The letters are found in the names as indicated – ie Puccini Intro, Vivaldi's 4 th, Second Overture, Principal Alto, Mid Interlude, Central Choir, Beethoven's 4 th, Final Movement and Verdi's Finale]

Congratulations to **Lucy Tovey** of **Wickhambrook, Greyhound** who claims her second pen!



Yours to win!



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West Suffolk District Councillor for Denston, Stansfield, Hawkedon, Brockley, Wickhambrook, Stradishall, Clare, Hundon, Cavendish, Stoke by Clare, Kedington and others Bobby Bennett
bobby.bennet@suffolk.co.uk

West Suffolk District Councillor for Whepstead Wickhambrook Denston, Stansfield, Brockley, and Hawkedon
Sarah Pugh sarah.pugh@westsuffolk.gov.uk

West Suffolk District Council for Clare, Kedington & Hundon ward
Cllr Nick Clarke -
nick.clarke@westsuffolk.gov.uk
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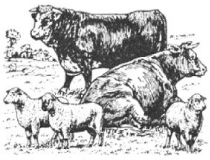
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Choose what makes you happy



Our homes support residents to fill their days with activities they enjoy, from crafting, baking, and gardening to laughter-filled outings. Highlights include visits to Thetford Forest, Felixstowe Beach, Fordham Garden Centre *and other local spots. For quieter moments, residents can enjoy afternoon tea with loved ones or relax with a book in our landscaped gardens. Community is at the heart of our homes, with local schools and groups joining for storytelling, carol singing, dance classes, and shared activities that create meaningful connections across generations. Fulfilling lives and dreams*

Our wishing tree is another way we like to support residents to live fulfilling, active lives. When a resident hangs a wish on the tree, we'll do everything we can to try to grant it. It might be something small like revisiting a beloved place or engaging in a hobby



from their past, or it could be something completely new. We recently fulfilled a 90-year-old Newmarket care home resident's wish with a heartwarming trip to Meow Cat Café, where she was reunited with her love of cats and left feeling really happy.

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