

No 283

December 2015 - January 2016

Telstar

STOWUPLAND NEWS



**Happy Christmas
to all our readers**





Chairman's Column

Keith Welham, Stowupland Parish Council

December 2015/ January 2016

As I write, we don't yet know the decision of MSDC members on the planning application for 175 houses. The view of the vast majority of those responding to the consultation is clearly that the development should not be permitted. There has been one letter of support but that was from someone who does not live in Stowupland. If the application is turned down the applicants may go to appeal on this refusal, just as they did on the last. Under current planning legislation, applicants have a right to appeal any refusal but it is sad that the owners of land in our village are putting residents to such uncertainty and, indirectly, to the cost of defending the appeal. I feel that it is my duty, both as Chairman of the Parish Council and as your elected District Councillor, to do all in my power to ensure the strongest possible action against these two proposals.

Many residents have asked me why the councils can't just 'make the development go away'. If only that were possible. Stowupland residents need to have the opportunity to plan ahead and it would be much easier to do so without the cloud of such a huge unwanted development hanging over us. But that threat makes it even more important that we all get involved in the Neighbourhood Plan and, please, can every resident ensure that they complete the questionnaire when they receive it. Please make sure you return it too.

We now have a full complement of parish councillors. We welcomed John Spitzer to the Council at our November meeting. It may have appeared doom and gloom back in May when we had a number of vacancies on the Council but we have some new young councillors in a strong body of community spirited individuals who will serve Stowupland well for the next few years at least.

We hosted the Suffolk County Emergency Planning conference recently. Over 100 delegates attended and heard from a range of speakers including our own Cathy Welham, who spoke about the Stowupland Good Neighbours, and Jerry Voden, who explained how the village went about producing an Emergency Plan. Their presentations were much appreciated by delegates as they gave practical examples of community volunteering.

I'm pleased to see that the Safer Route to School is now looking certain to go ahead. Hopefully work will be carried out during the Easter or Summer school holidays. It's important to avoid exam times when working near the

school. There are just a few issues to clear up in respect of the length of the route that will run behind the village hall and down to Freeman school. Also, the precise detail of the surfacing material has not been agreed. It is important to have a surface that accommodates walkers and cyclists safely and suits the rural environment of The Green. We don't want a stark asphalt or concrete finish.

Work is progressing well on the village website and by January it should have reached the stage where it includes lots of information for our own village residents and people living further afield. Have a look on www.stowupland.com and let us have some feedback. We plan to have links to local clubs and organisations so if you are a member of a group which has its own website, let us know.

Finally, although it's only the beginning of December, may I wish every reader and their family a very Happy Christmas and a peaceful 2016.

Keith Welham

Afternoon Tea + Conversation = Good Ideas.

We are seeking to discover how we can help the Parish Church grow in serving the needs of people in this community.

As part of this process we would welcome your thoughts and contributions.

We therefore would like to invite you to share afternoon tea and your thoughts with us as we plan.

When: Saturday 30th Jan

Time: 3pm - 5pm

Where: Stowupland Village Hall

For more details or queries please contact: Anne Doubtfire (01449 770363) or Sue Hayter (01449 613710)

Holy Trinity Church, Stowupland

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District Councillor's Report

Keith Welham

December 2015

The leaders of Suffolk and Norfolk County Councils, all the district and borough councils in Suffolk and Norfolk and the Local Enterprise Partnership are discussing the framework of a proposal to central government for devolution of powers. Exactly which powers and the form of an over-arching authority which might then be the link between central government and the individual elected councils is not known. The earlier Suffolk only bid, which has now been dropped in favour of a bid for powers covering Norfolk and Suffolk, set ambitious targets such as 70,000 new homes by 2031, 65% of pupils to achieve 5 A* – C grades at GCSE by 2017 and 7,500 new apprenticeships by 2025and make cost savings.

Lack of housing and lack of a 5 year supply of land for housing remains a major concern. The application for 175 homes in Stowupland will be considered by the Planning Referrals committee on 18 November. The appeal against the refusal of the earlier application for 190 homes is scheduled for April/May next year. On the brighter side, permissions have been granted for two small housing developments on brownfield sites in Stowmarket: 23 affordable homes on the former Jokers night club site and 14 apartments and an office building off Creeting Road, adjacent to the station.

I have had two bids for funding through the District Councillors Award Scheme (both from organisations within Stowupland) so that leaves most of the £5,000 allocated to me still available. I am sure that there must be other groups in Stowupland which would benefit from some financial assistance for setting up a new community project or extending the work of an existing community group. Applications can be made by contacting MSDC or, I would prefer, to me in the first instance so that I am aware before the bid goes in.

It will surprise nobody to hear that MSDC is carrying out another management review. Phase 1 proposals will include changes to the senior management structure and will be implemented in the very near future. Due to the departure of one of the strategic directors, some temporary changes are already in place.

Grants of up to £20,000 are available to help council tenants move out of their council owned property into a home of their choice. The aim is to allow tenants to become homeowners for the first time and free up a council property for new tenants.

It is hoped that, as in previous years, Christmas trees will be able to be left at the village hall for collection. Please look out for details.

I hope you all have a happy Christmas; best wishes for 2016.

Keith Welham

District Councillor for Stowupland Ward

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Parish Council Report

from Sandy Smith

November meeting 2015

The meeting opened with 3 members of the public in attendance. The matters of report from the previous meeting included the Clerk reporting that the work on the pothole in Rendalls Lane has now been completed.

She also advised that she and Councillor Welham had met with Kes Cullimore and John Jennett at the High School this week. The school are currently working on their travel plan and Kes is following up on some information regarding the footpaths and cycle routes into the school. She has been in contact with Nigel Bigham from Sustrans, a nationwide charity that promotes travel on foot, bike or public transport. It was agreed that once the draft travel plan had been written, it would be shown to the Parish Council for comment before it is published. The school are hoping to redevelop the bus and staff parking areas. They are currently working on plans and budget costs to put forward to SCC. This would include better drop off and pick up points for parents. John Jennett reported on the ditch that runs between the school field and Steeple View. He advised that under the new car park there is a large holding tank for the water that is collected. It has a vortex valve and water is released slowly into the ditch and it is hoped that this will stop the ditch from flooding. The school also have a new maintenance contractor based in Stowmarket for all the groundworks on site and they have agreed to keep the ditch clear. Councillor Welham requested that the contractors should cut back the hedge beside the ditch and John Jennett agreed to this request. He also asked about the works to the existing drainage problem and was advised that a new pipe was to be run from the footpath behind Steeple View to the school road to run alongside the existing drain. Mr Jennett was going to contact the contractor to see why this had not already been done. It was also agreed that Bosch could do some work on the school premises as part of their equipment testing within the village and that Councillor Welham would introduce the Bosch Supervisor to Kes and John. It was a very positive meeting and another one is to be scheduled for later in the year.

The Clerk has also written to the owners of 3 Columbyne Close regarding the overgrown hedge but nothing has been done as yet. She has also reported the overgrown footpath in Thorney Green Road and also the drainage outside no 14 Thorney Green Road to SCC. However, they advised that the problem relating to the ditch is the responsibility of the landowner so she will be contacting them about this. The Clerk advised that she is still awaiting a response from Phil Wright about the markings outside the Crown and the Horse and Rider signs for Gipping Road. The owner of the farmhouse has confirmed that the

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overgrown tree in Birch Close was not on their boundary so the property owner has been asked to check their deeds. The Police will be speaking to the owner of a vehicle that is parked on the grass verge at Columbyne Close as this is deemed to be part of the public highway and should not be parked there. The Clerk reported that it is hoped that someone from the Local History Group will take on the role of Parish Recorder as the current Recorder is leaving the village. She has received correspondence from the Planning Inspectorate advising that they have agreed the exchange of land for the safer route to school. The Clerk, Councillor Voden and a member of the Village Hall Committee have met with SCC regarding the route that crosses village hall land. An amendment is to be made to the route and confirmation required in respect of the maintenance of the footpath once it is in place. SCC requires some clarification on the ownership of the footbridge. The Clerk advised that the £200 agreed at last month's meeting, was not sufficient to carry out the work required at the Play Park and she has since been in touch with members of the Parish Council to gain permission for the additional expenditure.

The Chairman reported that Councillor Carter has run along the edges of The Green with a hedge cutter where Bosch had left material to die. He has also cut back brambles that had started to grow. The residents of Kelvedon House have asked that brambles be allowed to re-grow up their sidewall to deter intruders. The Council may wish to consider moving the mound of soil near Kelvedon House to infill a low area of The Green. Bosch contacted the Chairman to ask about carrying out further work. On their first visit they trimmed along the boundary nearest the high school but there are still brambles there. Bosch could remove these and cut back the bushes, which have grown out into The Green in some areas. The low spot where there are 2/3 trees surrounded by bushes and brambles could be tidied leaving just the trees; the school would welcome this. Bosch could also cut back the laurels in the cemetery and remove the basal growths around the limes – referred to in the tree survey report. They will also be asked to cut back around Waterworks Cottage. This work is best carried out over the winter. He advised that the missing finger post at the footpath near Stone Bridge has been replaced. The Chairman and the Clerk are to judge the questionnaires and pictures that the children from Freeman School have completed on their ideas for new equipment for the Play Park. The working group can now prepare the grant applications.

The Chairman reported that individuals made over 250 objections to the Gladman application for 175 homes. The Planning Referrals Committee will decide the application on the afternoon of Wednesday 18 November following an inspection of the site by committee members on the 16 November. The planning officer's report recommends refusal. It is worth noting that SCC highways consider the applicant's traffic assessments to be based on out of date information. The same should now apply to the earlier application, which was refused and has now gone to appeal.

John Spitzer put himself forward for the vacant post of Parish Councillor. He has lived in Stowupland for just over a year and, prior to this, he had lived in Stowmarket for 14 years. He has been involved in community projects with the church and school as well as various charity works including the setting up of the John Peel Centre. He currently works with Victim Support and has worked in the past at MSDC. He was warmly welcomed to the Parish Council.

The floor was then opened to the Public. Mrs Bloom was pleased that the hole in Rendalls Lane had been filled although she was not too sure how long it would last, but felt that the whole of the road needs to be looked at. It was agreed that it was particularly dangerous for small cars, motorcyclists and cyclists alike particularly in the dark. She advised that some fencing had been repaired by Water Run Cottages. She queried the timescale given for the laurels to be cut back in the cemetery but was assured that Bosch were testing their equipment to destruction point and therefore would keep the machinery running full time. She was also concerned about the proposed possible closure of the railway crossings at Cardinals Road and at Haughley and it was suggested that Councillor Green should be asked about this at the next meeting.

The Allotments Sub Committee reported that following the annual renewals, there were 7 plots still vacant. The Community Events Sub Committee advised that the community quiz will be held on Friday 20 November with the Bingo the following Friday. They are currently planning the Christmas parties to be held at Steeple View on 8 December and at Jubilee Court 2 days later, both to commence at 2pm. The Finance and Policy Sub-Committee recommended the adoption of the Parish Risk Assessment policy and this was approved. Following the monitoring of the HGV's along Saxham Street, the Transport, Traffic and Safety Sub-Committee advised that all but 4 of the Lorries had permits but none of the 4 had any Company names on their vehicles making it difficult to trace them. They will carry out further monitoring in the near future. The Cemetery and Churchyard Sub-Committee have made an amendment to the Stowupland PCC Maintenance Agreement and this will be returned to them for them to agree before the Parish Council will sign it off. A group of Parish Councillors will meet on 13 November to look at the state of the paving outside the Church Hall, which has become very uneven. This area may need to be taped off until a contractor can relay the concrete. The tree survey has identified areas of maintenance that need to be carried out in the cemetery, some within a 6 month framework and others within 12 months. It was agreed to seek tenders for the most urgent of the work to be carried out during the winter whilst the leaves are off the trees. This will be looked at in more detail when they have the next cemetery inspection on 5 December. The Footpaths Sub-Committee were concerned about the length of time it has taken SCC to come back to them about taking some responsibility for the track between the end of Trinity Walk and the footpath through to the Primary School. Signed declarations were passed to SCC a number of years ago reporting the use of this track as

a footpath over a period of 40 years as the original footpath was incorporated into the school playing field and trees have now grown along it making it impassable. The Clerk will get back to SCC about this matter. Councillors Voden and Brand and John Cummins had a meeting of the Emergency Planning Group and reported that they are currently updating the Emergency Plan. The Neighbourhood Planning Sub-Committee is still in the design stage of the next questionnaire. Councillors Voden and Bruce will be attending the next SALC meeting on 3 December but there were no representatives sent to the SALC AGM as it clashed with the date of the Parish Council meeting.

The next item on the agenda was the Councillors Reports. Councillor Carter asked the Chairman for feedback on the matter of the Stowupland Falcons scheduled football match on the Green on Remembrance Sunday. He reported that when he walked back from Church at around 12.30pm, he found the football club setting up the nets ready for a match that they intended to kick off at around 1pm. He advised them that all matches played on a Sunday had to be finished by midday and this was an agreement that had been made between Stowupland Falcons and the Parish Council. Some of those who were in attendance were extremely unhappy about this and they were advised that if they did not abide by this agreement, they risked losing all rights to play on The Green on Sundays. The Club admitted that there had been a mix-up over the times for the match.

Councillor Spitzer was concerned about the potholes on the edge of The Green along Thorney Green rd where parents drop off their children for school. He was advised that this was in hand with SCC who intended trialling a new edging along a stretch of this road that was used by the parents as a drop off/pick up point. Councillor Bickerdike reported that no provision had been made for pedestrians at the roadworks in Church Road and Councillor Bruce also advised that she had observed one of the workers putting up a road closed sign at 10.30am when the road was actually still open which caused confusion for road users. Councillor Voden advised that although bollards had been placed around a hole in the pavement, there were no lights in situ, making it very dangerous at night. All these concerns are to be fed back to SCC. Councillor Jennings advised that she is still working on the village website.

The Clerk advised that she had attended a course on Emergency Planning and had received some good information on recruiting volunteers to assist with the emergency planning process.

The Chairman reported that Roger Stearn has accepted defeat in the Walker Cup and has agreed to hand over the trophy. This will take place at The Retreat at 8.00 pm on Wednesday 16 December. The grass-cutting contractor has been unable to cut every area of The Green so far this month and some may need to be left until the spring. The most important areas and strimming work has been

done and, overall, The Green is very neat and tidy. If ground conditions improve before the end of November, the contractor will return and complete the work.

The Police were unable to attend the meeting but sent in a report advising that around 8 October, there were a number of break-ins to sheds/outbuildings in the Stowupland area. They continue to investigate these along with others in a broader area of Mid Suffolk. If anyone wishes for crime prevention advice, then the Parish Clerk will pass Stefan's details on. They also have things like shed alarms, that can be useful, but less so for the allotments as they are a bit isolated. PCSO Ben Ellis leaves them on the 13 November to join Cambridge Police as a PC. They are sorry to lose Ben, and even more so in that with the current budget cuts etc, he will not be replaced. They will aim to have a bit of a redistribution of SNT staff to make sure that all areas are covered and are not affected by staff reductions.

The Suffolk County Councillor was also unable to attend due to work commitments but sent in a report offering a vote of thanks to the Falcons football club for changing the time of kick off for the match on Remembrance Sunday. He also reported that the village 'gateway' costs have been agreed and he hopes that the work will commence before too long.

Amongst the correspondence received was a request for a relative to carry out the burial of some ashes in the Cemetery themselves as they felt that the amount being charged by the funeral directors was too expensive. This request will be refused. Stowupland Falcons have asked for a donation from the Parish Council as well as some local clubs towards the purchase of a community defibrillator to be sited at the Village Hall. It was agreed to contribute £300 towards this providing the Parish Council had no responsibility for the ongoing maintenance costs and were happy about the security of the positioning of the machine.

The meeting closed to the public at 9.30pm.

Sandy Smith

MULTI CHARITY CHRISTMAS CARD SHOP

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November Meeting

It was a great pleasure to welcome Sarah Doig with her talk about entertainment in the second half of the 16th century. This was a time of increasing interest in the writing and playing of secular music. Noble families took musical education very seriously; Queen Elizabeth I played the lute and virginals and enjoyed dancing. Everyone danced and to refuse a dance was considered bad manners.

Printing presses and education increased literacy and reading was widely enjoyed, with broadside ballads providing entertainment and news. Poetry writing was popular and plays were written, most famously by Shakespeare and Marlowe. They were performed in the courtyards of inns as early theatres had an unsavoury reputation, but new theatres were gradually built outside the City of London. Most of the audience stood; performances were in the afternoons, as there was no lighting; female roles were played by boys.

Sports were not only for recreation: hunting, wrestling and archery kept men trained and ready for war. The wealthy had deer parks, with horses and dogs for hunting; there was hawking too. Football was enjoyed by the working classes, though it was really ‘camping’, an extremely violent game. There were bull and bear baiting, cockfighting, cards, dice, chess, alehouses, taverns and – to our great surprise – sightseeing. The royal palaces and The Tower of London could be visited, all for the payment of gratuities.

Sarah’s talk was vividly illustrated with detailed paintings and woodcuts of the time and greatly appreciated by us all.

Musical Evening with ‘Shipshape’

A big ‘Thank you’ goes to all who supported the evening, all who donated raffle prizes and all who helped behind the scenes. ‘Shipshape’ provided a wonderful entertainment, with traditional songs and tunes, jig dolls and information about the instruments. As a bonus, we raised some funds too!

Would you like to be the Local Recorder for STOWUPLAND?



The Suffolk Local History Council runs a Local Recorders Scheme throughout Suffolk. We administer a network of volunteers to ensure that the 'present' is adequately recorded at local level for the 'future'.

A Local Recorder will note significant happenings in their parish and collect their local parish magazines, leaflets, election pamphlets and newspaper cuttings. At the end of each year, they are asked to submit a short report summarising the activities of their parish. The reports are deposited at the Suffolk Record Office and available to future researchers together with the collected items.

If you are interested, please look at the Recorders Pack by visiting www.slhc.org.uk, click on Recorders, and then click on Recorders Pack in the text on the left hand side to acquaint yourself with the guidelines of the scheme. You do not need to be a historian; you do not need any qualifications other than an interest in your parish. In return you will receive a copy of the SLHC Newsletter and be invited to the annual conference specifically for Local Recorders. To volunteer to help in this important work, please contact recorders@slhc.org.uk

What's in the Loft?

As the decorations come out and are later put away again, please keep an eye open for anything that might be of interest to us. Photographs and documents are treated with great respect and can be copied and returned.

Talking Point

We asked what became of the Stowupland water mill. Neil has kindly provided the following background:

'Early maps of the course of the Gipping Navigation and Ordnance Survey maps show a watermill immediately downstream of the bridge across the river on the site of the later gun cotton works and now the ICI factory. The course of the navigation bypassed the original course of the river at this point, the original stretch of river forming the mill race and mill pond. This stretch has since been filled in.

'The mill on the Stowupland side of the river (the river being at that time

the parish boundary) was owned by Mr. Pearl Cross. Subsequently it was owned by his brother Henry and then Henry's widow Sarah Cross and daughter Elizabeth. On 17th July 1852 William Freeman records in his diary going swimming at Miss Cross's mill.

'The mill was sold by the Cross family in 1860 when a Henry Wicks was miller there and it was described as a mill of four floors with three pairs of millstones.

'It is uncertain when milling ceased but the mill would have been severely damaged in the 1871 explosion at the nearby gun cotton factory.'

The mill building was used for the early experiments in guncotton production, in the mid-1860s.

For our next 'Talking Point', and thinking about Steve Williams' book (see below), we have been wondering about some village names:

Broomspath Road, Felix Road, Reeds Way and Rendall Lane. How did they originate? You may know some of the answers!

Programme

Dec 2nd *'Cakes, Ale and Partying: Feasting and Fundraising in Medieval Suffolk'* by Kate Jewell

The title says it all! A little seasonal fare to add to refreshments will be appreciated.

There will be no meeting in January.

Feb 3rd *'Do you Wonder where you Wander?'* by Sue and Steve Williams

Details of the findings that went to make up Steve's book about Stowmarket street names. Copies will be available.

We meet at 7.30pm, in the Village Hall. Visitors are always welcome and refreshments are available. Admission is £1 for members, £3 for non-members.

We look forward to seeing you.

STOWEPLAND HOLY TRINITY CHURCH

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Holy Trinity Church Letter

Revd David Swales

Dear Friends,

One Christmas in school assembly I told the children a rather absurd little off-the-cuff story about Albert's Birthday Party. His parties were such fun, and so full of goodies, that everyone eagerly awaited them. And the house was always packed. Finally, one year, there wasn't room for everyone and it was decided that someone would have to wait out in the garage. The person who got the push was.... Albert.

The children were quick to see the point: we have banished Jesus from the celebration of his own birth; there's such a lot to fit in that somehow there's no room for the Birthday Boy himself. Our varied services this month are a way of saying loud and clear that for us He is at the centre of the party. Indeed, worship is the Real Party. And you're invited.

But isn't the vicar expected to grumble about people 'missing the real meaning of Christmas'? So what is that 'real meaning'? Well, if I had to put it in a few words it would be: God is with us. By being born as one of us, God, so far beyond our reach, reached out to us. In the Baby of Bethlehem we suddenly see God Almighty within our grasp:

He came down to earth from heaven

Who is God and Lord of all...

Perhaps the words of our carols are too familiar. It is when a person reaches out to take Jesus – Baby, Man, and Son of God – into their arms and into their hearts that these well-worn phrases become a reality. Every day thousands of men, women and children are discovering with joy what it means to say, 'God is with me'. If you haven't (or if you need to re-discover it) then I pray that, this Christmas, you will.

Oh Holy child of Bethlehem,

Be born in us today.

Your friend and vicar, David

Everyone is welcome at our special seasonal events: Children's Christingle; Carol Service; Crib Service; Midnight Communion; Christmas Morning Service; and carol services at Steeple View and Jubilee Court. So please come – and bring friends and neighbours too.

Holy Trinity Church

Vicar: *Revd David Swales* Tel: 01449 675503

Curate: *Revd Chris Hood* Tel. 01449 677257

Churchwarden: *Mrs Ann Doubtfire* Tel. 01449 770363

Mrs Sue Hayter Tel. 01449 613710

Church Email: holytrinityuk@hotmail.com



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Services in December 2015

Dec	4th	9.30am	Parish Communion
		4.00pm	1st@4 CHRISTINGLE SERVICE
Dec	13th	9.30am	Morning Worship & ✧ Trinity Starz ✧
		6.30pm	Evensong (B.C.P.)
Dec	14th (Mon)	10.30am	Carol Service at Steeple View - <i>All Welcome!</i>
Dec	16th (Wed)	2.00pm	Carol Service at Jubilee Court - <i>All Welcome!</i>
Dec	20th	9.30am	Holy Communion (B.C.P.)
		6.30pm	Candlelit Carol Service
Christmas Eve (24th)		4.00pm	Crib Service
		11.30pm	Midnight Communion Service
Christmas Day (25th)		10.00am	Family Service & Communion
Dec	27th	11.00am	Benefice Morning Prayer at Wetherden

Services in January 2016

Jan	3rd	9.30am	Parish Communion
		4.00pm	1st@4 Service – <i>church with a difference!</i>
Jan	10th	9.30am	Morning Worship & ✧ Trinity Starz ✧
		6.30pm	Evensong (B.C.P.)
Jan	17th	8.00am	Holy Communion (B.C.P.)
		9.30am	Morning Prayer (B.C.P.)
Jan	18th (Mon)	10.30am	Songs of Praise at Steeple View - <i>All Welcome!</i>
Jan	24th	10.30am	Christian Unity Service at the URC
		6.30pm	Parish Communion
Jan	31st	11.00am	Benefice Communion at Stowupland

(B.C.P. = *Book of Common Prayer*)

Holy Trinity Church (continued)

A PRAYER:

Give us, our Father, this Christmas time, peace in our hearts, that we may create peace in our homes, and help spread peace in the world, for Jesus Christ's sake, Amen.

THE CHILDREN'S SOCIETY:

Come and enjoy our Christingle Service, in aid of the above, to be held in Holy Trinity Church on Sunday, 6th December at 4.00pm. A warm welcome is extended to you all.

As usual, I shall be collecting House Boxes from 1st January. Any problems please contact me on 770730. Many Thanks!

Janet Burton Parish Co-ordinator

SHOEBOXES:

Thank you for the generosity of everyone who filled shoeboxes for Romania. We sent off over 100 boxes from the three churches. Many thanks, *Nancy*.

CAROLS BY CANDLELIGHT:

The collection at the Carol Service will again go to The Church Housing Trust. The CHT is dedicated to the rehabilitation and resettlement of homeless people of all ages and backgrounds on a long term basis, supporting over 60 projects including hostels, day centres, winter shelter, women's refuges and mother & baby care. Please come along, bring your friends and families, and give as generously as you can.

CAROLS & MINCEPIES:

Come along and sing your favourite Carols and Christmas Songs at the Annual Carols and Mincepies evening on Friday 18th December at 7.00pm in Church Hall. There will be mincepies, sausage rolls, tea, coffee and squash also a raffle and retiring collection. All proceeds from the evening will be donated to The Diabetes Centre at Ipswich Hospital.

Snacks and sweets will be on sale. Refreshments available all day. See page 17.

CALLING MUMS, DADS AND CHILDREN:

You are all warmly invited to the following events :- The CHRISTINGLE on 6th December at 4.00pm ; The CRIB SERVICE is on Christmas Eve at 4.00pm where the children hear the Christmas story and help make the Crib; and the ALL-AGE FAMILY SERVICE on Christmas Day at 10.00am which is followed by a short Communion for those who wish to stay.

STEEPLE VIEW & JUBILEE COURT:

The residents warmly invite you to join them for their Carol Services, at Jubilee Court

on Wednesday, 16th December, and at Steeple View on Monday, 14th December at 10.30am (which is followed by a short Communion for those who wish to stay).

CHRISTMAS PLOUGHMAN'S LUNCH:

The popular annual Christmas Ploughman's Lunch will be held on Tuesday, December 15th in the Church Hall from 12 noon – 1.00pm. This will be a 3-course lunch, in the Church Hall; there will be a seasonal raffle. Further information from Ann Parsell on (672592).

BEETLE DRIVES:

Come along and enjoy some fun in a friendly atmosphere at the Beetle Drive that will be held on Tuesday 26th January at 2.30pm in the Church Hall. All are very welcome to join us.

FOOD BANK BOX:

If you would like to donate items for the Food Bank to help those in need of a helping hand over Christmas, there is a box at the back of the church for you to leave your items. Thank you.

CHURCH HALL HIRE:

Please remember that the well-appointed Church Hall is available for hire at reasonable rates, and would be ideal for children's parties and small groups/meetings. For more information please contact John & Ann Parsell on 01449 672592. Thank you.

Telstar is also available as a link on the Parish Council website:

www.stowupland.org

CLUB CONTACT DETAILS

Book Group:	Patricia Hodgkins	01449 672127
Baby and Toddler Group:	Liz Purnell (Email liz@rllmuk.co.uk)	07810 442424
Bowls Club:	Susan Boorman	01449 614673
Country & Western Dance:	Winston & Janet Adams	01206 501866
Dance Club:	May & Paul Durham	01449 672601
Local History Group:	Marion Harris	01449 770895
Short Mat Bowls:	Pam Fayers	01449 770080
Sprts & Social Club:	Mark Campbell	01449 614390
W. I.	Judy Clarke	01449 615386
Community Events	Keith Welham	01449 673185
Mobile Library:		07721 879855

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Countryside Rambler

Brian Ward

I have never known an autumn to be so mild; normally it's scarves and woolly socks by now but I have been rambling in almost summer gear and still overheat after a few miles. I must confess it is enjoyable but very un-seasonal. I recently walked with a small group of friends around the Coddenham area and was surprised at the terrain; it was hills and valleys with meadows and woodland with evidence of deer and badger everywhere. If you go to Coddenham and find the red telephone box look inside and you will be quite surprised!! The village store serves hot drinks and provides somewhere to sit, which is most welcome after a long walk.

I have been to see the Starling murmeration at Minsmere and Lopham Fen, you can only marvel at this late afternoon display. At Minsmere the many onlookers even gave a standing ovation as the thousands of birds descended into the reeds to roost after their aerial performance. I often walk along the River Deben at Woodbridge, either from Melton end starting from the car park opposite the Wilfred Bridge Pub (convenient for food and beverages upon our return) or from the Kyson Hill National Trust car park and walk along the river towards Woodbridge. The footpath is tarmac for most of the way and is suitable for buggies. As you walk along look out for the tea hut cafe on your left, it's open seven days a week and serves hot food and drink. At high tide the ducks and the wading birds come quite close, pushed with the rising tide. Expect to see Black Tailed Godwit, Curlew, Redshank and many more shore birds.

I have recently witnessed over one hundred Golden Plovers at Rutland Water all roosting on the shallow scrapes, also five elegant Bewick Swans at Lackford Lakes. These Swans have yellow patches on their bills, not the orange of our Mute Swans, and they resemble a goose in flight with their shorter necks. They may have flown from Arctic Siberia to overwinter in the U.K. This Swan was named after the famous bird illustrator, Thomas Bewick. Look out for other winter visitors that may appear locally; the Fieldfare and Redwing love windfall apples and the Waxwing will be found on rowan and other berry bearing shrubs. Once seen these birds will always be remembered.

I love winter with its frosty mornings and snow is even better. "No thanks" I hear you say, but what is winter without these things, so wrap up, don your wellies and get out and enjoy it. I hope to bump into some of you over the festive break; if I don't, may I take this opportunity to wish you all a merry Xmas and a good rambling year in 2016.

Challenge 14

by Karen Hamilton

I am writing this on the eve of Guy Fawkes Night. On November 5th I, along with 14 others are flying off to India, to the home of the Dalai Lama, for a trek in the lower regions of the Himalayas. After landing in New Delhi we will catch an overnight train to Pathankot then, after a three hour coach trip to Dharamsala, we will be trekking about 14K a day, camping each night in the remote mountains. At the end we get to visit one of the modern Seven Wonders of the World - the Taj Mahal. I am excited and nervous but now I just can't wait to get started.



This is my 14th challenge in 14 months, which I am doing to raise money for Cerebra in memory of Sam and Jessica's half brother Thomas. Thomas was born with Cerebral Palsy and died when he was still a baby. Cerebra is a charity that helps children like Thomas. He would have been 14 this year, hence the 14 challenges. My previous challenges have included a spinathon dressed in a pink monkey onesie, a mile swim in Alton Water, a bungee jump, a triathlon, a muddy obstacle race, 5k and 10k runs and giving up chocolate for far too long!

If you would like to donate money to Cerebra please go to the charity page at <http://uk.virginmoneygiving.com/SomeoneSpecial/Tinker>. You can find out more about Cerebra here: <http://w3.cerebra.org.uk/>

Kind Regards
Sam and Jessica's Mummy



Village Hall Management Committee

Reg.Charity No 304822 — Jerry Voden VHMC

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The Village Hall is situated on Church Rd and is available for Clubs, Groups, Private Parties and Weddings. Facilities include;

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Stowupland Village Hall update

Jerry Voden VHMC

Hello from the Village Hall Management Committee, another busy month in the hall with bookings and functions going well.

As we move into the Christmas season it is time to look at the year's events and achievements. The village hall garden has been rebuilt and replanted which has tidied up the car park area. It is planned to repaint the front entrance and replace the missing letters over the front door of the hall and replace the curtain rails in the main hall and bar area. How the letters above the door disappeared is this year's unsolved mystery, they will be expensive to replace but it was agreed that the hall looks incomplete without them over the entrance.

New smaller tables have been purchased; this has given us greater scope for use at jumble sales and for regular groups using the hall.

The Committee are still looking for a volunteer secretary, as always this is urgent as other members of the committee are doing a dual role. We meet once a month and the role is mostly correspondence and minute taking.

Please get in touch with Jerry Voden on 01449 770334 if you feel you can help or would like to know more about the hall and committee work

As with all volunteer organisations nothing gets done without a lot of work from the committee over the year. Twig King and Hugh Blanch, our caretaker and booking secretary, who ensure that the hall works smoothly on a day to day basis, are a prime example of the commitment needed to keep things running successfully.

To all our regular users in the week, thank you for your continued support, and at weekends to those who book the hall and the bar staff who cover the bar shifts on a regular basis, thank you.

It just remains for me to wish everyone a happy Christmas and New Year, and If you would like further details of what the hall has to offer please call our booking secretary Hugh Blanch on 01449 612156.

December Dates

Tues	1	Coffee Morning	10.00am	Jubilee Court
Wed	2	Baby & Toddler Group	9.30am	Village Hall
Wed	2	Book Group	2.00pm	
Wed	2	Open Church	2.00pm	Holy Trinity Church
Wed	2	Local History Group	7.30pm	Village Hall
Thurs	3	Short Mat Bowls	7.30pm	Village Hall
Sat	5	P.C. Cemetery & Churchyard Sub. Com.	10.00am	The Churchyard
Sun	6	Country & Western Dance	7.30pm	Village Hall
Mon	7	Afternoon Fellowship - Carols	2.00pm	URC Chapel
Mon	7	Dance Club	7.30pm	Village Hall
Tues	8	Mobile Library	9.30am	Jubilee Court
Tues	8	Mobile Library	9.55am	The Green
Tues	8	Coffee Morning	10.00am	Jubilee Court
Wed	9	Baby & Toddler Group	9.30am	Village Hall
Wed	9	Open Church	2.00pm	Holy Trinity Church
Wed	9	Neighbourhood Plan Sub. Com.	7.30pm	URC Chapel Hall
Wed	9	W.I. – A Tudor Christmas	7.30pm	Village Hall
Thurs	10	Parish Council	7.30pm	V.H. Meeting Room
Thurs	10	Short Mat Bowls	7.30pm	Village Hall
Sun	13	Country & Western Dance	7.30pm	Village Hall
Mon	14	Dance Club	7.30pm	Village Hall
Tues	15	Coffee Morning	10.00am	Jubilee Court
Wed	16	Baby & Toddler Group	9.30am	Village Hall
Wed	16	Open Church	2.00pm	Holy Trinity Church
Wed	16	Walker Cup presentation	8.00pm	The Retreat
Thurs	17	Short Mat Bowls	7.30pm	Village Hall
Sun	20	Country & Western Dance	7.30pm	Village Hall
Mon	21	Dance Club	7.30pm	Village Hall
Tues	22	Coffee Morning	10.00am	Jubilee Court
Wed	23	Open Church	2.00pm	Holy Trinity Church
Sun	27	Country & Western Dance	7.30pm	Village Hall
Tues	29	Coffee Morning	10.00am	Jubilee Court
Wed	30	Open Church	2.00pm	Holy Trinity Church

January Dates

Sun	3	Country & Western Dance	7.30pm	Village Hall
Mon	4	Dance Club	7.30pm	Village Hall
Tues	5	Mobile Library	9.30am	Jubilee Court
Tues	5	Mobile Library	9.55am	The Green
Tues	5	Coffee Morning	10.00am	Jubilee Court
Wed	6	Baby & Toddler Group	9.30am	Village Hall
Wed	6	Book Group	2.00pm	
Wed	6	Open Church	2.00pm	Holy Trinity Church
Thurs	7	Short Mat Bowls	7.30pm	Village Hall
Sun	10	Country & Western Dance	7.30pm	Village Hall
Mon	11	Dance Club	7.30pm	Village Hall
Tues	12	Coffee Morning	10.00am	Jubilee Court
Wed	13	TELSTAR DEADLINE DATE for February issue		
Wed	13	Baby & Toddler Group	9.30am	Village Hall
Wed	13	Open Church	2.00pm	Holy Trinity Church
Thurs	14	Parish Council	7.30pm	URC Chapel Hall
Thurs	14	Short Mat Bowls	7.30pm	Village Hall
Sun	17	Country & Western Dance	7.30pm	Village Hall
Mon	18	Dance Club	7.30pm	Village Hall
Tues	19	Coffee Morning	10.00am	Jubilee Court
Wed	20	Baby & Toddler Group	9.30am	Village Hall
Wed	20	Open Church	2.00pm	Holy Trinity Church
Wed	20	W.I. – Nutrition	7.30pm	Village Hall
Thurs	21	Short Mat Bowls	7.30pm	Village Hall
Sun	24	Country & Western Dance	7.30pm	Village Hall
Mon	25	Dance Club	7.30pm	Village Hall
Tues	26	Coffee Morning	10.00am	Jubilee Court
Tues	26	Beetle Drive	2.30pm	Church Hall
Wed	27	Baby & Toddler Group	9.30am	Village Hall
Wed	27	Open Church	2.00pm	Holy Trinity Church
Thur	28	P.C. Finance & Policy Meeting	7.30pm	V.H. Meeting Room

Thur	28	Short Mat Bowls	7.30pm	Village Hall
Fri	29	Coffee Morning	10.00pm	URC Chapel
Sat	30	Afternoon Tea, hosted by Holy Trinity (tea + conversation = good ideas)	3 – 5pm	Village Hall
Sun	31	Country & Western Dance	7.30pm	Village Hall

If you wish to attend one of the events listed, and would like help with transport, please contact Good Neighbours on **07591 539621**

February Dates

Mon	1	Dance Club	7.30pm	Village Hall
Tues	2	Mobile Library	9.30am	Jubilee Court
Tues	2	Mobile Library	9.55am	The Green
Tues	2	Coffee Morning	10.00am	Jubilee Court
Tues	2	Beetle Drive	2.30pm	Church Hall
Wed	3	Baby & Toddler Group	9.30am	Village Hall
Wed	3	Book Group	2.00pm	
Wed	3	Open Church	2.00pm	Holy Trinity Church
Wed	3	Local History Group	7.30pm	Village Hall
Thurs	4	Short Mat Bowls	7.30pm	Village Hall
Sun	7	Country & Western Dance	7.30pm	Village Hall

Future Events in 2016

March	25	Community Bingo		
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Diary Dates

Contact Marion by email: marion@astronomer.plus.com or Tel: 01449 770895

For contact details for clubs / groups etc. See page 19

Stowupland W.I.

The October meeting opened with president Colleen welcoming members and visitors. "Jerusalem" having been sung and the business dealt with, everyone concentrated on making a greetings card under the supervision of Ann Wilding, an expert at these particular cards. She had brought all the necessary materials and members could choose from four designs on the Christmas theme - star, bauble, sledge and cracker. Then we decided what colour paper ribbons for that design; there was a wide selection... Following the numbers on the pattern, the ribbons were folded in half lengthwise, cut to size and held in place on the back of the card with sticky tape. The front of the card then showed the finished design. There were varying results but, in the main, quite acceptable and there were optional decorations for the finishing touches. After all that effort, tea and biscuits were most welcome! The competitions having been judged, and there were lots in both categories to be judged, the results were as follows:-

Enamel - 1st. Maureen, 2nd. Mandy, 3rd. Mary C.

Flower - 1st. Mary C, 2nd. Judy, 3rd. Anna

With a reminder that November is the Annual Meeting when we hear of the year's happenings, our financial status & elect the 2016 committee, Colleen closed the meeting.

The Walkers Cup

Old Newton have, somewhat reluctantly, accepted that Stowupland walkers setting out and returning to The Retreat outnumbered those who set out from Old Newton. The cup will be handed over at The Retreat on Wednesday 16 December at 8.00. If you were one of 'our team', please come along if you can. Anyone who would like to celebrate a Stowupland sporting victory over Old Newton will be very welcome to attend.

Stowupland Bowls Club

Bill Cook

Stowupland Bowls Club held their AGM on the 1st November. Bob Garland stood down as chairman and we would like to take this opportunity to thank him for his service and continuing support to the club.

It was decided to paint the club house during the closed season and we are looking for volunteers to help complete this, please Contact Sue if you wish to help.

We are also looking for volunteers to help look after the green and grounds during next season. This involves helping for approx 2hrs per week. We are hoping to create teams of helpers on Mon, Wed or Fri mornings between 9am - 11am. Duties will involve cutting the green, looking after the flowers, cutting the boarders and cleaning the benches. If you have time to help on any of these days, please contact Bill Cook (01449 673965).

DURING CLOSED SEASON

Meadlands have rollups on Monday from 12.00 until 14.00 and Wednesday afternoon from 2.00PM until 4.00P.M.

Mid Suffolk leisure Centre have rollups Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday Mornings from 10.00am until 12.30pm and Sunday evenings from 6.30 pm until 8.30 pm

In aid of the The Children's Society

Phone 01449 614003 (Home)

07900640441 (Mobile)

We are grateful for all donations whether they are clothes/ shoes or bric-a-brac you no longer need. Unfortunately we had to close the furniture warehouse down, we could not get volunteers to run it on a regular basis; we are restricted to taking small furniture which will fit into the shop

**Shop opening hours
Monday to Saturday 10am to 4pm.**



November and December Update

November and December update. How lucky we are to live in Stowupland. As I write this on the first day of November the sun is shining, it's really warm, and there is no wind – perfect for admiring the splendid autumn colours as I walk the dog around the footpaths up by Saxham Street, Rendalls Lane and the Gipping Back Road. By the time you read this I'm sure the weather and scenery will have changed, and we will be planning Christmas and winter activities.

Loving where we live is one of the reasons some of us are helping to produce a Neighbourhood Development Plan for the parish. Our plan will help protect the things we all love about living here, and guide new development so that it is where we want it to be and how we'd like it to look. Many parishes around the country have already done this, or are actively doing it now.

The Neighbourhood Plan Group has been busy trying to finalise the questionnaires and get them ready for printing and distributing. It has taken a little longer than we anticipated, but it will be worthwhile to get a detailed snapshot of what people think and their aspirations for the future of the village. There is a separate questionnaire designed for the younger people in the village too – if you need more than one in your house please get in touch. We can supply a code number for each person to complete the questionnaire online.

It would be really helpful to have the questionnaires completed online, but if that isn't possible please fill them in, or drop them off at the advertised drop-off points (keep an eye out for our banners, and notices on drop-off points), or hand them to our collectors. We know it's not the best time of year with dark evenings, and preparations for Christmas, but we need to crack-on and get another vital piece of evidence completed. We really need your help with this.

We also hope to start on the character assessment of the whole parish, so that we have evidence that our policies are soundly based when we submit the plan to Mid Suffolk and the independent Examiner. So you may see us out in twos and threes with clipboards and cameras recording what each part of the village is like. If you want to help in any way please contact the Parish Clerk, Claire Pizzey.

Jackie Ward

Chair, Stowupland Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group

Stowupland Community Speed Watch

As the winter months are fast approaching, I thought it was time to remind everyone how important it is to ensure that your car is in good working order. Vital points to check are:

Tyres - make sure there is sufficient tread on your tyres, including the spare (if fitted). Make sure also that they are inflated to the correct pressure.

Lights - check that all your lights are working. That means, side lights, headlights (both on dip and main beam). Please also ensure that your headlights are adjusted correctly. Indicators are working front and rear and fog lights, front and rear (if fitted). Please also make sure your lights are all clean and your number plate light working.

Wipers - are your wiper blades clean and free from grit? If you have had them on the car since last winter, consider changing them for new ones. This also includes rear wipers. Don't forget your windscreen washers - make sure they are in working order and that fluid is the correct strength for winter months.

Coolant - please make sure you have the correct strength anti freeze in your radiator. You don't want your radiators freezing up!

We continue with our Community Speed Watch/CSW operations and I think it is fair to say that over the last month or so the amount of 'speeders' is down slightly. However, there is no room for complacency so I urge everyone to keep the speed down and remember that in wet and icy conditions. It takes a much further distance to stop. A few weeks ago, we received correspondence about the amount of HGV's using Saxham Street. Whilst carrying out our CSW operations in the area, we also recorded details of HGV's using the road. An email was sent to Suffolk County Council with the details collected and we were informed (after investigation) that a great number of the trucks do in fact, have permits, and those who don't would receive letters informing them of their wrong doing. We will continue to monitor HGV movement.

All that remains for me to say to everyone is have a very Merry Christmas and a Prosperous New Year. Please enjoy the festive season but most importantly, stay safe.

Morris Brand



Mr Allard's CHRISTMAS EVENT



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U.R.C. Chapel

Minister: Revd Chris Wood

Telephone 01449 678173

This year has passed so quickly and we are now thinking about our Christmas celebrations within the Chapel and at home.

The money raised at the Jumble Sale, held on 14th November, was £868.39. What a wonderful result. Thank you to everyone who worked so hard to make this event such a success, and also to those who came and spent.

Our Carol Service is on Sunday 13th December at 10.30am please come and celebrate with us on this day.

We start 2016 with a coffee morning on 29th January 2016 and then the last Friday in the month until November.

There is no service at the Chapel on Christmas day. On Sunday, 24th January 2016 Holy Trinity Church joins us for a united service for the week Christian Unity. This service starts at 10.30am.

Services at the URC Chapel are held each Sunday at 10.30.am and we cordially invite anyone who wishes to join us in our worship. A warm welcome awaits you.

Our speakers for December & January are as follows:

06 December	Steve Campbell
13 December	Veda Berriman – Carol Service
20 December	Clive Herrod
27 December	Irene Martin
03 January	Veda Berriman
10 January	Nichola Glasse
17 January	Irene Martin
24 January	Keith Scarff
	United service with Holy Trinity at the Chapel for the week of Christian Unity
31 January	Revd Chris Wood

7th December is the Afternoon Fellowship Carol Service at 2pm. (please note the earlier date)

This service will be led by the Revd Chris Wood, accompanying the singing will be the choir and music group of Stowupland High School.

It will be followed by tea and mincepies. Please join us for a very enjoyable afternoon. There will be a collection for the Air Ambulance.

The carol service will be our last meeting until 07th March 2016 .We welcome anyone who would like to join us at our meetings (male or female). Come and enjoy the fellowship and also a cuppa.

We wish you all a very Happy Christmas and a Healthy and Peaceful New Year.

Mary Clark

‘HE BECAME POOR THAT WE MIGHT BECOME RICH....’

URC MINISTER Chris Wood

The last five surviving nuns of the Community of St. John the Divine, established in 1849, are being forced to sell their community home because they cannot afford to pay for mounting repairs and increased upkeep costs. For most of their existence they have lived and witnessed within deprived communities first within the East End of London, and more latterly in Birmingham, as well as some working with Florence Nightingale in the Crimean War. Its nuns have each taken a vow of poverty, chastity and obedience, and rise at 5.30am each morning for prayers, with the rest of the day busy with visitors, meetings and spiritual guidance. Throughout their existence they have been known to host ‘quite a flourishing ministry of hospitality’ as well as service to the wider community.

Never heard of them? That’s not surprising, and yet most households will be acutely aware of their contribution to the East End, given that their work and witness inspired the popular television drama ‘Call the Midwife’, about nuns delivering babies amid post-war poverty. Ironically the BBC series is reported to have been exported to over 200 countries generating around £276m in sales, while the community which gave it its birth is struggling financially and having to drastically cut its cloth accordingly.

When asked if the nuns resented the disparity between the BBC apparent profit and their own limited means, one is reported to have said: ‘It would be nice to be thanked in the credits’.

This, in a sense, reflects the role of the Church in a world of plenty,

Continued on page 39

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particularly at Christmas, where John Lewis is reported to generate £500m over the Christmas period, and Slade's Christmas hit raises £500,000 in royalties for the band each year. Yet, increasingly, the true message of Christmas goes unheard by the majority within our nation, with the latest report suggesting that 40% of people don't believe that Jesus actually existed, with a quarter of 18 to 34 year olds believing He was a mythical or fictional character. So much is generated because of the birth of Jesus in the world, yet there is so much poverty of belief, where churches are predominantly struggling to make ends meet, despite offering years of service and witness in communities.

Interestingly, there was an article in the Guardian newspaper recently ('How to spend Christmas' G2 Section 09.11.15) which examined all the different ways that people could both spend Christmas and spend at Christmas from Netflix to Costa to Oxford Street to Len Goodman to eating, and making the point that "Star Wars: the Force Awakes" is likely to dominate Xmas for a generation. Hidden in the article is a lovely but telling phrase: 'Fair play to Christianity – every year, Christians somehow manage to insert themselves into the Christmas conversation', albeit on the periphery of the main stage.

Yet, in truth, this seems to be exactly as it was two thousand years ago where the actual birth of Jesus went fairly unnoticed, except for a busy but caring innkeeper, some working shepherds, and the visit of a few foreign astrologers. Then there were a couple of elderly devout worshippers 'who were drawn to the Temple' when Jesus was presented by His parents. Not many more are recorded as having noticed, leaving most people to go about their normal business, with little thought to the world-shattering event that was going on in their midst.

It might seem strange that the true reason for the season doesn't seem to 'tickle the fancy' of the many who indulge in the spirit of Christmas, and for believers this is both a concern as well as a challenge. We are called to celebrate the birth of Jesus Christ at this time of year in such a way that the message of God's love coming down at Christmas is well and truly shared in the midst of all the other conflicting demands.

The alternative would be to acknowledge, like they did in the 17th Century, that the season no longer reflects the purpose for which it was intended, and therefore ban it, providing Christians with an opportunity to discover some alternative time and way to keep faith alive. How about discussing that over Christmas dinner and see what you come up with?

God Bless

Chris

(Rev'd Chris Wood – minister of Stowmarket, villages and Debenham URC's)

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As we approach the end of 2015, may I first take this opportunity to wish you all a very Merry Christmas and Prosperous New Year. 2015 has been a great year for the Football Club and we hope to end the season in 2016 having further progressed in our adult and youth sections.

In our adult section our 1st team are building a good momentum both in the cup competitions and the league with 6 wins in the past 6 games. The Reserves are unbeaten in the league since the start of the year and only recently suffered a Cup defeat to Bacton on a particularly horrible day with the rain coming down sideways! The A-team continues to develop our younger players and although the results have not been flattering at times, they make steady progress in Division 4.

For our youth sides, we have seen some cracking performances with many now starting to shine. One disappointment was the folding of one of our Under 16 teams. Lack of players has led to that team having to withdraw from the league, but I'm happy to say many are still involved in the Club, refereeing or playing in our Adult A team. It is always a shame to lose a team but pressures at that age are high and once the core of a team is lost, it is difficult to rebuild mid season.

Off the pitch I am sad to announce that Ian Wearing has stepped down from the Committee after numerous years involved as a Manager and serving as Chairman for 5 years, seeing the Adult and Youth club combine together. Ian continues to support the Club and can be seen regularly watching his two sons in the adult teams. It is always sad when we lose a volunteer from football, and the Club and I would like to thank Ian for all his hard work, support and efforts over the years. I'm sure Ian will remain closely attached to the Club and he will be welcomed back to the Committee at any time.

As we look to 2016 our hope is that our Club will continue to grow and keep offering opportunities for all ages to take part in football. 2015 saw the Club take on Disability football, 2 new teams, one boy's and one girl's, offer free girls coaching on a Saturday Morning, and investment in new kit and equipment (including a new set of goals recently installed on our main Adult pitch). We also offer continued free coaching to 4-7 year old boys and football to 19 established teams, and the biggest all 5 a-side in Suffolk in 2015.

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We are limited by our facilities to what more we can offer to the Community currently, but our hope is that during 2016 we can make strides, along with other local Clubs, to really drive forward better football and sports facilities for the whole of the Mid-Suffolk area. I was recently very pleased to host a meeting of the Chairman and representatives of Stowmarket Town Youth, Walsham le Willows, Needham Market and Elmswell youth Clubs. Our aim is to drive forward our collective ideas for improvements in the Sunday league, facilities and future joint Club events. Grassroots football needs investment and facilities to ensure we keep our youngsters engaged in our National game through their entire lives. This benefits their health and wellbeing, helps establish discipline and values, builds lifelong friendships, and also brings communities closer together. I hope 2016 proves to be another year in which Stowupland Falcons FC can continue to do this for the benefit of Stowupland and the Stowmarket area.

As always, come along on a Saturday afternoon, from 2pm, or a Sunday morning 10:30am to support your local club.

Christmas tree collection.

On Tuesday 5th and Tuesday 19th January there will be a collection of real Christmas trees.



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Honours for Jane Gurney



This year Jane Gurney has been recognised for her wonderful work with Target Club. Not only was she named Suffolk Community Hero of the year but she was also awarded a B.E.M. in this year's honours list.

Target Club is a social club for adults with learning difficulties. Jane Gurney was initially invited to speak at one of the club's meetings in 1981 and enjoyed their company so much that she continued to attend their meetings and events in the weeks and months afterwards.

In 1983, Jane became the leader of the Group. Since then, she has gathered a team of regular helpers and plans weekly activities such as music, craft, drama or dancing. She also organises trips, such as to Wolsey Theatre, or performers to entertain the group.

When Jane first started at Target Club, some of the younger members still lived at home with their parents. Over thirty years have now passed and many of those same people are still attending the group on a regular basis.

As one nomination for Jane observed that 'she takes great interest in each and every member of Target Club sharing their happiness, sorrow and joy'. For her support of those with learning disabilities in the area and her incredible service to the Target Club, Jane Gurney is awarded Suffolk 'Community Hero of the Year and a B.E.M. in the honours list. Well done and congratulations Jane.

British Empire Medal Investiture

by Jane Gurney



I had been sent a letter beforehand telling me what I had to do and what to expect. It was a wonderful occasion, held at The Racing Stables, Euston, the home of Lady Clare, Countess of Euston. There were six recipients from various parts of Suffolk who were being invested and we were all allowed to take two guests (I took Dan and our daughter, Rachel). The occasion was also attended by the Lord Lieutenant of Suffolk, several Deputy Lieutenants, the High Sherriff of Suffolk, several Sirs and various Suffolk Council dignitaries --- so we were in elite company! When we arrived at the venue

in the middle of a huge country estate and at the end of a very long driveway an estate worker directed Dan to drop me at the front door before taking the car to the designated parking area away from the house. On the lawn in front of the house a stable girl was holding a magnificent Suffolk Punch mare, done up in ribbons, to greet the guests.

Once inside the house there was a receiving line, before being ushered into the dining room for drinks --- served by a member of staff. So there was drinking and mingling in the beautiful dining room --- delicate china, lovely silverware and exquisite cut-glass, for whatever drinks you chose.

Then we were escorted to the drawing room for the investiture ceremony, where Lady Clare said something about each recipient from their citation before hanging their medal on the pins that had been put in place beforehand. She is a very pleasant, friendly lady, who made everyone feel at ease in her home and spoke without notes, so she had done her homework! The formalities over we had photographs taken and then we returned to the dining room for a buffet lunch. Exquisite delicacies were served to us by waitresses on a variety of platters --- the tiniest salt beef or smoked salmon sandwiches, minute vol-au-vents, cheese croquettes and quails' eggs with a special salt dip, plus other delights. It was all lovely but I had great difficulty holding a drink, a serviette and eating! Once the luncheon was over that was the end of proceedings. For some their chauffeurs came to collect them! In my case I had to go and collect our car as Dan had been drinking alcohol and I had to drive myself home!



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Sometimes it is easier to align everyday life to things beyond our control. At the moment we are under threat from hurricane Abigail; I don't think I've quite reached that yet but as we get nearer to Christmas I am sure you will all understand where I am coming from. It's lovely to see little faces full of joy and expectation but Mums and Dads have worried frowns and much older folks are trying to pacify them all. There are also some people who think it is their right to help themselves to what doesn't belong to them, i.e. someone's purse, wallet, or the goodies under the Christmas tree. It puzzles me to understand how people should think like that. So I urge you all to be extra careful when you are out shopping or even in your own homes. Make sure your belongings and you are safe.

At the moment the weather is being extra kind to us, but if it should stop being kind and turn bad tempered then we need to be careful when out and about. Don't forget that all the Good Neighbours Team are volunteers, and whatever the weather we are faced with it is the same as for you, so you may need to be a little bit patient with us over the next few months if it gets really wintery. On a brighter note, on behalf of the GNT (no that is not short for gin and tonic), I would like to wish you all a very Happy Christmas and a peaceful and healthy New Year.

Wendy Parris (GNT Volunteer)

Coffee Morning

At Stowupland URC Chapel

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Coffee/ Tea and Cakes



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www.stowupland.org

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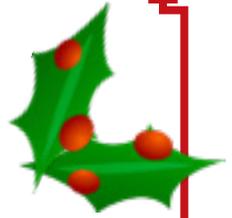
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