

Minutes of the Sturmer Annual Parish Assembly held at Sturmer Village Hall on Tuesday 04
April 2023 at 7:30pm

1. Welcome from the Chairman

The Chairman welcomed all in attendance and thanked everyone for joining the evening
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2. Minutes of Annual Parish Assembly April 2022

The minutes were approved and signed as an accurate record; Proposed Cllr David
Porth, Seconded Cllr Alan Carter
.....

3. County & District Councillor's Report

County Cllr Peter Schwier annual report - **APPENDIX A**

District Cllr Diana Garrod report – **APPENDIX B**
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4. Chairman's Report

Cllr Diana Garrod report – **APPENDIX C**
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5. Clerk's Report & Woodlands Hotel update

APPENDIX D
.....

6. Presentation from "Guest Speakers"

APPENDIX F TO APPENDIX M
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7. Date of next Annual Parish Assembly – T.B.C.

8. Chairman to close the meeting – Close – 20:55

Signed.....Date.....

APPENDIX A

Essex County Council - Hedingham Division

Cllr Peter Schwier – 2022/23 Annual Report

It is now almost two years since I was elected to Essex County Council; serving the residents of all the villages – and 33 parish councils - that make up the Hedingham division has been a real privilege. The year that has passed since your last annual meeting has gone very quickly but has proved extremely busy and filled with activity and achievement.

The passing of those two years also means we are half-way through the current four-year term, and we are starting to see many positive outcomes from the ambitious work the county council set in train back in May 2021.

The following is a small sample of the key numbers, landmarks and achievements from a busy year – many are necessarily Essex-wide but, where possible, I have tried to focus purely on issues relevant to our local communities.

Budget / Council Tax 23/24

In the toughest and most uncertain and inflationary financial climate the county has known for many years, ECC agreed a budget which prioritised support for adults' and children's social care, road maintenance, improving infrastructure and helping people with the cost of living.

Over the course of the next year, the county council will spend a total of £2,281m (gross) and £1,164m (net) through its revenue budget – 7% higher than had been planned last year, as a result of inflationary pressures

There will also be £275m of capital spending in 23/24.

Budget points of note include:

- £58m increase in the adult social care budget
- £7.5m extra to deliver 340 additional school places
- 9% increase in fees for foster carers
- Community supermarkets to be rolled-out – providing essential household goods at lower cost for hard-pressed families
- £200m spending on climate change remains in place, with new and existing cycle routes and active travel schemes are also being built and maintained to enable people to walk and cycle.

Highways

The council will be spending nearly £145m on highways maintenance and sustainable transport over the coming year and, as ever, will prioritise the areas by severity of need.

By way of context, the county looks after:

- 5,100 miles of carriageway;
- 4,000 miles of footways / cyclepaths;
- 130 miles of safety barriers;
- 131,000 street lights;

- 14,000 illuminated highway signs;
- 80,000 non-illuminated signs;
- 36,000 items of Public Rights of Way infrastructure.
- **7,002 – the number of potholes repaired in Essex over the course of 22/23 so far.**

Over the last year, in terms of calls to our contact centre around highways issues, we received the following numbers:

- 1,899 – average daily number of calls to the Contact Centre in January 2023;
- 432,711 - total calls to Contact Centre;
- 47,904 - total calls to Highways (new faults and general) service.

Meanwhile, the average answer waiting time for highways calls was 03:10.

Levelling Up

In late 2021, ECC launched its own Levelling Up White Paper, aimed at raising living standards for people in particular cohorts and locations. One year on, a great deal has already been achieved. This includes:

- 12,000 more homes and businesses connect to Superfast Broadband
- Over 6,600 devices donated to schools across Essex, to support students with getting online and enhancing their learning.
- 250 new entry level jobs created through our social value scheme.
- The Essex Opportunities website launched to provide access to more flexible job roles. In its first year the website has had more than 90,000 visits and 6,500 clicks to apply for jobs
- The Essex Apprenticeship Levy Transfer Service supported creating 240 new apprenticeships across Essex Businesses. Expanded our completely free holiday activity and food programme, ActivAte, which over the last two years has provided over 500,000 free meals and supported over 30,000 young people
- An almost £2million boost provided to social care in Essex under our Nightingale Care Bursary, which will support people from the most deprived communities in Essex to achieve social care qualifications or support existing care workers to achieve further qualifications.
- Our working families programme has been in contact with 960 families to provide support to those seeking information on upskilling or retraining for a new career
- Parkplay has now been launched in 16 areas across Essex and had over 2,000 unique people attend, with 16,000 attendances in total so far! Parkplay will be launched in more areas throughout 2023.
- The physical and mental wellbeing of 130,000 school children and young people supported at Essex Outdoors sites, where they learn a range of skills through outdoor pursuits.
- 60,000 new library members have signed up since Jan 2022
- 150,000 new recyclable library cards distributed to every primary school child in the county as part of the 'Essex Year of Reading' celebration. 74 new literacy areas have been created across Essex (one in every library).
- Almost 24,000 children took part in this year's Summer Reading Challenge. This is an increase of 36.4% on 2021.
- 'Multiply' launched - a new initiative that will offer over 14,000 Essex residents free access to maths and finance training

The environment and climate action

As the county council's Climate Czar, I've been front and centre with much of the work around our support for the environment and the drive towards net zero. I am delighted that it remains a central ambition of the council's work, despite the financial pressure. Progress has been made, along with our partners, over the last year, and key achievements include:

- 138,349 trees planted across Essex on our way to target of 375,000 by 2025. This amounts to 52.73 hectares of trees, and 16,492m of hedgerows
- 36,681 LED streetlamps now installed across the county.
- 1,222 fuel-poor households receiving support, helping them claim an additional £2.4 million in benefits via our Warm Homes Essex project
- £100,000 awarded in the last 12 months to local cycling groups and charities
- SuDS advice provided on 850 major planning applications a year
- 62,500 new properties receiving flood reduction expertise
- Green Flag award status retained across seven country parks welcoming one million visitors during the year
- £500,000 awarded from the Climate Action Challenge Fund to more than 30 local organisations and schools taking action on key climate change issues
- Several retrofit projects completed on the ECC estate
- £17.2m secured jointly with partners to provide fuel-poor households with grant funding of up to £10,000 to improve energy efficiency and heating systems in their homes
- A new North Essex Farming Cluster supported, which will help with information-sharing across the farming community, helping farmers move to more sustainable farming methods and protect sustainable agriculture
- Through Solar Together Essex, we have led a scheme enabling Essex residents to benefit from a significant discount on solar panels and battery storage from a reliable supplier. The scheme in Essex has now delivered over 1,300 installations and enabled over 1,100 tonnes of avoided carbon emissions annually. There have been 6,600 registrations over this year, more than any other year. The deadline to apply has been extended so people can register until 21/4/23.

Waste and recycling

We continue to work closely with district councils to promote recycling and efficient waste management that minimises the harm to the environment:



52% of household waste in Essex was recycled in 2020/21 – higher than the national average of 44%



The household **recycling rate varies from 40% - 58%** across the different district, borough and city areas



On average, each resident in Essex produces around 463kg of waste per year, that's **16% more waste than the national average.**



Approx 700,000 tonnes of household waste are generated in Essex per year – with a recycling rate of 52%, that means **circa 330,000 tonnes of general rubbish to landfill each year**



Over £100m is spent each year on the cost of collecting, treating and disposing of household waste in Essex



There are around **1.5 million visits to our 21 Recycling Centres each year**

Locality Fund

Once again, it has been a pleasure to support local communities through my Locality Fund. The details of schemes supported are as follows:

Organisation	Amount
The Birdbrook & District Community House	£310
Steeple Bumpstead Parish Council	£600
Mens Shed Great Yeldham	£1,000
Sturmer Parish Council	£700
Gestingthorpe Parish Council	£825
Birdbrook Bowls Club	£800
Helions Bumpstead Community Benefit Society	£803

Belchamp Otten & Belchamp St Paul Parish Council - Belchamp St Paul Community House	£300
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I hope the above gives you an idea of the work that has gone in over the last year to develop our plans and deliver on them for the people of Essex.

Meanwhile, my work as Climate Czar has been extremely rewarding: meeting people across Essex and beyond; championing the work and achievements of people throughout our county; lobbying government on environmental causes – including the East Anglian Green proposals which I and colleagues across the region are steadfastly opposing.

On top of the above, I have also continued my busy work as a Braintree District Councillor, including membership of various bodies, such as the Planning Committee.

Most of all, it has been my pleasure and privilege to serve the residents of all the villages, both large and small, within the Hedingham division. I look forward to continuing to do so in the next year and beyond.

Best wishes,



APPENDIX B

District Councillor's Annual Report to Parish Councils - April 2023

Cllr. Diana Garrod - Braintree District Council Member for the Bumpstead Ward

As your District Councillor, I have pleasure in providing this end of year report which outlines some of the activities and achievements relating to Braintree District Council. It is not exhaustive, but contains subjects which will probably have an impact on the Bumpstead Ward.

About your District Councillor (Diana Garrod)

I live in Sturmer and became your Braintree District Councillor in October 2016. In April last year I was elected Vice Chairman of the Council where I have undertaken a number of duties throughout the district. I have attended all Full Council meetings during the year, these often have agendas containing hundreds of pages. I am also Chairman of the Community Development Scrutiny Committee where I have overseen scrutiny reviews this year in to Cycling and Walking, The Cost of Living Crisis, where I personally put forward 20 out of the 22 recommendations to Cabinet, and Markets and Associated Events which is currently awaiting a response from Cabinet. I am a member of the Climate Change Working Group and have participated in shaping the Council's Climate Change Strategy, and I remain the Council's outside representative for the Dedham Vale and Stour Valley Advisory Committee; part of this ward is placed in the AONB; Stour Valley 'project area' and is considered a 'valued landscape'. I also remain a Mental Health Champion as peoples' mental wellbeing should be considered a priority and of course, I liaise with parish councils, local organisations and residents.

Councillor's Community Grant Scheme

I am allocated a Councillor's Community Grant which is used to support a range of projects and initiatives to benefit residents through local groups and organisations. Since April 2019, 288 grants have been awarded by Councillors, totalling £245,847. This money has gone into the heart of the districts' towns and villages to meet local needs.

Fly-Tipping

Your Council will always respond within 24 hours to remove the dumped rubbish. During 2022, 680 fly-tipping incidents were reported and cleaned up, 37 fixed penalty notices were issued and 13 cases were sent for prosecution.

Financial Support

In the two years 2021/22 and 2021/22 the total amount of Covid related grants and reliefs provided to businesses and individuals was £59m and £2m respectively. These relate to both mandatory and discretionary schemes. Financial support given to individuals included the Council Tax Hardship Fund.

In 2022/23, £7.7m of Council Tax Energy Rebates paid to eligible households in Council Tax Bands A to D. A discretionary scheme was also administered providing a further £213K of financial support to households not included in the core scheme and 'top-ups' to those households in receipt of Local Council Tax Support.

Rough Sleeper Initiative

Funding was secured through the Rough Sleeper Initiative which, in partnership with Essex County Council and some of the other Essex Housing Authorities, has enabled the provision of an outreach service to anyone found to be rough sleeping in the district. Other RSI funding has been used to provide a 6-bed scheme, with support for former rough sleepers and/or those at risk of rough sleeping, with a further 3-unit scheme, due to come on-stream in summer this year. Some RSI funding was also re-purposed during the pandemic to trial a Mental Health Navigator role, shared between BDC and Epping Forest District Council. The Value of this post was recognised by all, and funding has been extended for a further 3 years (until 2024/25).

Warm Spaces

Since the beginning of the year, a number of new warm spaces activities have been established and in February this number was 73. Contact was made with 22 of the organisations participating to see if other support is required. On the whole, these have been received very well.

Stray Dogs

Unfortunately, the Council has seen an increase in the number of stray dogs being reported and abandoned. In the calendar year ending 31st December 2022, a total of 60 stray dogs were reported of which 15 were not claimed. Unclaimed dogs are signed over to the RSPCA to be assessed and to be put up for adoption.

Planning

Last year BDC received and validated 3,088 planning applications. The Council formally adopted Section 2 of the Local Plan in July 2022. Section 2 contains local policies and allocations to guide development of homes, employment, infrastructure and community facilities between now and 2033. Section 1 of the Plan, which was adopted in February 2021 is shared with Tendring District and Colchester Borough Councils, sets the key vision,

objectives, and overall strategic direction for growth. The Local Plan has full weight in determining planning applications.

In tandem with the Local Plan, Neighbourhood Plans also have a role to play where towns and villages want to see development in their area. Neighbourhood Plans take time to pull together and require the dedication and effort of a group of local volunteers, together with the support of the Parish Council and BDC Officers. I am delighted that Steeple Bumpstead's is currently in the consultation phase.

In addition to planning applications, an increasing number of Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects (NSIPs) have come forward such as the A12/A120 upgrades, Longfield solar Farm, East Anglia Green energy upgrade and the Bramford-Twinstead energy project. These schemes are time-consuming and complex,

A Members Forum for the Planning Committee has also been established. This gives developers the opportunity to present an application at an early stage to the Committee, and relevant Ward Members, take questions and receive feedback on their scheme as a whole. It is early days for this Forum, but already appears to be beneficial to all concerned.

The Enforcement Team has received a further £200k to boost staff resources and have covered some particularly difficult investigations.

Community Safety Achievements

In August last year, the Council secured £29,000 from Essex County Council via the Changing Futures fund to provide an SOS Bus; a medically equipped mobile vehicle, in identified locations across the district providing those with complex needs and vulnerabilities with access to a range of services in one place including drugs and alcohol, mental health, housing, debt, etc.

Health

The Medical Centre at Sible Hedingham is making good progress and also a Community Diagnostics Centre will be opening in Braintree which will be able to provide CT and MRI scans amongst other things. The ward space which has opened in Halstead Hospital is also to become permanent.

I continue to campaign for better healthcare services in this part of the district and raise this at every opportunity.

Finance and Council Tax

Many local authorities are under more financial pressure than ever and although good financial management over the years has put Braintree District Council in a better position than others, there may still be some difficult decisions to make. Of course protecting the services that residents rely on will be a priority. This year, an unprecedented £1million will be invested to support the vulnerable and those who need it most by providing food security, supporting community groups and organisations, and enabling physical and emotional health and wellbeing during this cost-of-living crisis.

BDC recognises the cost of living pressures faced by residents and have tried to keep the increase in Council Tax as low as possible. The Council Tax increase for the next financial year will be 2.5% which is half the maximum allowed. You may well have noticed £25 by way of a refund shown on your council tax statement, which has been provided to all eligible council taxpayers. This will be the largest Council Tax reduction of any District Council in the country. This money originally came from a New Homes and Growth Dividend. Between 2017 and 2022 1,159 affordable homes were completed with 417 in 2021/22, exceeding the target of 250. The Council requires 30-40% of new housing developments to be affordable. It is recognised that population is growing and people are living longer; more people want to live in this district. The Council wants to ensure that housing is decent, sustainable and genuinely affordable as it is the foundation of people's lives and essential to good health and wellbeing. There are also 2,000 empty homes in our district and the Council is also exploring ways to reduce this number.

Local Elections

Elections for Braintree District Council will take place on 4th May. Voting in person will require presentation of Voter ID. Acceptable ID includes a UK or EU passport, a photocard driving licence, a blue badge, a bus pass or a PASS card. If residents do not have ID, they can request a Voter Authority Certificate from BDC.

Assuring you of my attention at all times.

Cllr. Diana Garrod

Braintree District Councillor - Bumpstead Ward

APPENDIX C

Sturmer Parish Council

Chairman's Report

Annual Parish Assembly 4th April 2023

The Parish Council has met nine times over the last year to discuss matters affecting the village.

We have seen two resignations; Keith Choat resigned in May 2022, having joined the Council in September 2019 and undertaken responsibilities for PROW during his service, and Eileen Raynes was co-opted onto the Council in October 2021 and resigned in May 2022. We are delighted to say that Paul Smith joined in January of this year and has already made some valuable contributions. The council still has a place remaining, as it should hold six members.

The parish council has examined around 10 planning applications in the village this year, and another 2 this evening. It has sometimes looked at applications from the wider area, such as proposals for a Green Energy Gas Plant at Withersfield, near Haverhill by Acorn Bioenergy and a Solar Farm at Water Hall, Wixoe. Naturally these would fall within West Suffolk Council, however the parish council tries to monitor developments close to the village wherever possible.

LanPro have put forward proposals for a 31 hectare solar farm which is predominantly in Sturmer and straddles across into Steeple Bumpstead. An exhibition with their representatives was arranged for 12th January and this was very well received. Residents conveyed their gratitude as it was useful to receive information and address their concerns face-to-face. The main concerns with both of these solar farms are relating to the cumulative effect (having one at either end of this small village) and construction traffic within the first six months or so, this could see traffic movements in excess of 1000. This is of concern to Sturmer and Steeple Bumpstead as Essex County Council prefers a route going through Steeple Bumpstead due to an Oak tree causing obstruction near the Ford at Wixoe. Whilst actual planning applications have not been received for these yet, they are something to be monitored. Of course, both of these solar farms sit within the Stour Valley 'Project Area' for the Dedham Vale AONB which is considered a 'Valued Landscape' in a report they commissioned, written by Alison Farmer Associates in Cambridge.

Essex County Council are the authority for our Public Rights of Way and Highways. It is unfortunate that PROW 3 remains closed but ECC make it clear on their website that they are responsible for the surface of PROW's. The Council has had communications from the ECC Officer, however, works have not yet been decided.

A meeting was held with Dan McClean; a highways officer from Essex County Council in November 2022 around the multitude of issues at Hill Lane. The Council has pointed out the raised drain that does not carry water away in times of flooding, we have complained about blocked drains and overhanging branches and the difficulties for pedestrians, and the Council continues to raise these as serious issues which could cause

flooding to nearby homes. Cllr Schwier has responded to me this week to say he has referred the matter to Cabinet.

The Council was pleased to see repairs to the footway near Hill Lane, outside Churdles recently and this now looks much better and provides for a better and more even surface.

A dropped kerb near the bus stop on the northern side of the A1017 was applied for last year as people with pushchairs and wheelchairs cannot easily mount the pavement and of course this is dangerous. At the Braintree Local Highways Panel held in January 23, the scheme was noted as being 'in the validation process'. ECC has put in new bus stop signs.

I know that outstanding highway matters in Sturmer must be as frustrating for you as they are for the parish council and I can assure you that I frequently ask our County Councillor to give Sturmer more attention as we view these as a high priority.

I am pleased to say that all parish council owned street lights have now been upgraded to LED in efforts to keep energy use and costs as low as possible. A grant of £650 was received from Braintree District Council and £700 from Essex County Council which was a small help.

Repairs needed to the surface on and around the War Memorial are completed and a resident very kindly came to a meeting to convey her gratitude for the refurbishment of the memorial seat. It is always nice when the voluntary work that your parish councillors put in is recognised. The Remembrance Day service seems to attract more and more people each year. The Parish Council donates £35 to the Royal British Legion in return for a poppy wreath to honour our servicemen.

The village Emergency Plan is updated annually and submitted it to Braintree District Council. This is shown on the parish council's website for anyone wanting to view this, or alternatively, contact our Clerk, Ian Brown.

Complaints have been received relating to inconsiderate parking near the bus stop at Crunch Croft which occurs from time-to-time. Whilst the parish council has no jurisdiction, this has been reported to Essex Police as it causes congestion and is a potential safety hazard to pedestrians.

Cllr. Terrie Jones very kindly looks after our village defibrillator and I am very pleased to say that it has not received any use, but remains in place and in good working order in the event of an emergency.

The Pocket Park receives a great deal of use but remains in good working order although we expect that the railings around part of the area might need some refurbishment soon. The Council is just in the process of evaluating whether it is possible to fit another piece of play equipment into a small area, but this has not been calculated yet. A teak Memorial Bench was recently installed at the Pocket Park in memory of the late Queen Elizabeth II and we have received a favourable response from residents for this. Cllr. Porth also very kindly refurbished the notice board. I would like to take the opportunity to thank him for his efforts to the village.

The Railway Amenity Walk is also well used and Cllr. Carter monitors this on a regular basis. He engages with our village maintenance contractor and local tree surgeon when works are necessary and his contributions are also gratefully received.

Grant applications were considered and approved from the W.I for £200 contribution towards cookery workshops planned later this year. And the Village Hall for £850 contribution towards annual insurance premium and £150 towards the production of the Village News which we all have the opportunity to enjoy.

In January 2023 the Parish Council's 2023/2024 precept request was put to Braintree District Council of £13,130.61. The parish council always gives this matter earnest consideration in efforts to keep it at an affordable level for residents. However, it still remains low when compared to other local parishes and barely

covers the costs required. We are always searching for funding and grants to defray the costs for the necessities that the village needs.

The Parish Council has been engaged for some considerable time with a piece of Village Green (52), which is located near the former Woodlands Hotel. It was approached a few years ago by a developer who desires to have a Residential Home at the site. A strip of the village green runs along the entrance and we have been in negotiations about this with the owner of the site; West Suffolk Council. The Parish Council engaged the services of Cheffins to advise and act on its behalf and we have received a report which will be read to you separately.

I would like to thank my colleagues for their valued contributions, which are often time-consuming. Being a Parish Councillor is essentially volunteering to look after your village on behalf of residents. It is not easy, but can be rewarding. Councillors are expected to adhere to the Seven Principles of Public Life, which outline the ethical standards of Selflessness, Integrity, Objectivity, Accountability, Openness, Honesty and Leadership.

Cllr. Jones has been a parish councillor for 3 years, Cllr. Carter; 8 years, I have served 20 years and Cllr. Porth has served his community for a staggering 47 years.

Your parish councillors are volunteers. They care passionately about this village and their community spirit is second to none. I would also like to pay recognition to the voluntary groups who provide a variety of entertainment and activities for us to enjoy. The contributions of these people should never be underestimated and I have a great deal of gratitude and respect for anyone who serves their community with the thoughts of others in mind.

Cllr. Diana Garrod

Chairman – Sturmer Parish Council

APPENDIX D

Clerks Report for year ending 2023

BUDGET PERFORMANCE – Just over £,1000 over budget, however there is some good news on the horizon and I shall come to that very soon.

Main areas of overspend included – completing the LED street lighting upgrade such that ALL amps are now super efficient LED lamps, with some useful grant assistance from BDC and Essex.

Our Audit costs increased as did the annual Insurance costs.

We increased spend on parish maintenance by a sizeable amount HOWEVER that increase in expenditure was wisely entered into in the safe knowledge that the council could reclaim up to a whopping £3,780 from what is known as our S106 fund, money credited to the parish from historical development in the village.

If we succeed in that total bid for S106 reclaim our finances will show a healthy surplus for the year.

The S106 funds can only be spent on specifically identified areas which are listed in our Open Spaces Action Plan which is updated annually, such as the Amenity walk and the play area.

We have enjoyed a significant underspend on grass cutting.

We await the Internal audit later this month where are Governance and wise stewardship will put under the microscope.

The council continues to rely upon the generous donation of time and effort from council members to ensure certain works are completed but there will come a time when we cannot rely upon that input and will need to pay contractors to complete that work.

I will close by saying the finances are OK and we await the outcome of the Internal Auditor's in depth review of our Governance and whether we have been wise stewards of your taxes.

Dear Ian

Following our discussion over the telephone earlier this week and your kind invitation to the Parish Council meeting next Tuesday evening, as you know I will not be able to attend but, below, give you an update of progress.

It was hope that a month ago, exchange of contracts between the developer of the former Woodlands Hotel and the Parish Council would have occurred. A hiccup between West Suffolk Council and Haverhill Golf Club became apparent (there is a very complex set of discussions between the two parties which all had to be resolved (including the temporary cessation of use of the carparking spaces currently on the former hotel site which are used by the Club)) and all of the outstanding issues needed to be resolved before the Golf Club could agree to the temporary release of the spaces.

I am pleased to inform you that everything has now been agreed in order that **exchange** of the 200m² of Sturmer's Village Green land (known as part of VG52) can take place (the developers' solicitor states it will be within a week or so). However, **completion** of the sale of the 200m² of land can only be effected when the Secretary of State agrees to release the land of its village green status. I am reliably informed that this will take a further 2-3 months.

If you could share this with the Parish Council, I would be much obliged.

Kind regards

Mark

MARK CATLEY FRICS FAAV RICS Registered Valuer
Consultant

☎ 01223 271925 📠 01223 213666 📞 07500 556170

cheffins.co.uk

APPENDIX F

Sturmer Carpet Bowls Club / Trust

Formed on the 17th February 1993 at Sturmer Village Hall.

It was attended by 12 people who all became members.

An election of Officers was made:

Chairperson - Jack Parkhurst

Treasurer - Ethel Parkhurst

Secretary - Carol Carter.

Members were: Sheila ^{+ Ted} Swain, Derek, Daphne + Neil Draper, Ray + June Clow, Enid Ship + Doris Smith.

It was Established as the Sturmer Carpet Bowls Club and a draft Constitution adopted. A fee was set at £2 per year and a £1 per week.

By March 1993 Kath Bartle had joined us. In January 1998 Karen Coaker, Pat and Terry Alisan, Eileen Towns and Kay Gordon had also joined.

The A.G.M. was changed to the 1st Wednesday in March. A proposal was made to buy a ladder for the Village Hall which was agreed.

We also donated £50 to Neil for Disabled Athletics in Hull. Neil came 4th in most of his events.

Helen Burton joined in 2000.

In May 1999 we applied for a grant for a new carpet and box. This was successful and George Carr made us a base which is still in use today. At this point the Mat and Box became the property of the Sturmer Village Hall. It was agreed that a £50 voucher would be given to George as a thank you.

In October 2001 the Village Hall was flooded. David and Jo Porth managed to save the mat and box. A bottle of wine was given as a thank you. The flooded hall meant no bowls from October 2001 to January 2002.

In March 2002 a proposal was made to donate £75 towards a new heater. As they had already been purchased.

the money would be used towards kitchen items damaged in the flood.

In February 2004 the Village Hall was closed for extension work, until it reopened on the 25th August 2004.

In 2007 Linda Wignmore joined us.

In May 2007, at the Sturmer Village Hall Fayre, the Bowls club contributed with a bowls game and prizes of £5 vouchers, one each for adults and children.

Janet Sawyer joined us in 2012, Jackie Woodward in 2015, Shirley Draper in 2019 and Mandy MacMara and Ann Gould in 2021.

9 out of ¹² of our founder members have passed away, but we have managed to recruit enough new members to keep us going, although this has been hard at times.

The Sturmer Village Hall Committee purchased a Curling mat which we use when we don't have enough members to play bowls.

On the 25th March 2020 Bowls was cancelled until 6th October 2021 due to coronavirus.

We have enjoyed our Christmas Dinners at various pubs locally... Cock, Castle Camps, Golf Clubhouse, Haverhill Red Lion Sturmer and the Wratting Red Lion.

This is our short story of the Sturmer Carpet Bowls Club.

APPENDIX G

Sturmer Community Speedwatch

A volunteer has come forward to organise the group. Volunteers will be sought including those who have previously expressed an interest.

If you are interested please contact:

Jill Judd – 07973 258 334

juddjill@hotmail.co.uk

APPENDIX H

Sturmer Annual Parish Assembly Tuesday 4 April 2023 Sturmer Village Hall Charity Report

The Village Hall continues to be used by village groups, Carpet Bowls Club, Sturmer and District WI, Sturmer Parish Council, St Mary's Church Sturmer.

Many private hirings this year, Yoga classes, Suffolk West Federation of W.I's, craft fayres, birthday parties, meetings and get-togethers.

The trustees keep the fabric of the building in good repair and at the moment also keep the property clean and tidy.

After many, many years of trying to trace the deeds to the Village Hall, the trustees found that the village hall was not registered to them with the Land Registry, to this end we have engaged Adept Property Lawyers to proceed with the registration process with the Land Registry and register Sturmer Village Hall under the title of Trustees, we began this process April 2022, being advised by Adept that it could take up to a year for the registration to be acknowledged.

The Village Hall are members of both the Rural Community Council of Essex and Community Action Suffolk, through whom we had, in previous years obtained our insurance, CAS have changed their underwriters this year from Zurich to Hiscox who will not cover for flood. As you are aware we are in the extreme flood area on the Environment Agency map. The trustees have approached Zurich directly, but it is uncertain as to whether they will cover for flood, we are awaiting their decision.

We are grateful to Sturmer Parish Council for making a generous grant of £1,000. £850 to cover insurance costs and £150 towards the printing of Sturmer Village New.

The Sturmer Village News managed to obtain extra advertisers this past year, the cost of the quarterly Village News amounted to £815. It is delivered free throughout the village and to those who place adverts. It is collated and paid for by the Village Hall Charity.

We would like to thank all those who deliver the village news around the village and beyond. Likewise the trustees liaise and invoice all those who take out advertisements, please support them.

It is interesting to note that many villages and communities no longer produce a hard copy but rely upon village websites and facebook to contact their residents.

We held an afternoon to celebrate the Queen's Platinum Jubilee, free to all who attended.

The Union Flag was flown at half mast on the death of the Queen according to protocol.

We held monthly Winter Warmth lunches over three months, January, February and March 2023 and they were reasonably attended.

We have just held an Easter egg hunt, the first of its' type for a few years. Free for children, every child winning an Easter egg, and were pleased with the numbers attending. Hopefully there will be more next year.

An afternoon tea with games and a quiz are planned to celebrate the King's Coronation on Monday 8 May 2023 2:00pm to 4:00pm, everyone welcome.

We would like to thank Alan and David for their help in maintaining the forecourt and the rear courtyard garden, also we would like to thank the partners of all trustees for their help, support and advice on so many varied topics helping to keep the hall a safe and welcoming space for all who use it.

Jo Porth Sturmer Village Hall Secretary/Treasurer
pp. Trustees Mrs C Allison
Mrs T Jones
Mrs t Notcutt
Mrs S Power

APPENDIX I

Sturmer Annual Parish Assembly
Tuesday 4th April 2023
Sturmer and District WI Report

We meet on the second Monday of the month, usually, 2023 has changed that somewhat with Easter and the Coronation celebrations.

Activities over the past year have been excellent and varied.

A harvest supper, a garden party, curling without ice, memories of a midwife.

Excellent speakers, the inspirational author, Carol Creasey, who starting writing by telling the story of her second son who was born with delayed development and autism, entitled “My Life is Worth Living”, Carol went on to write many thriller novels.

Fran Saltmarsh who delighted us with the history of bridal wear from 1444, a portrait by Van Dyke of a wealthy lady, to the present day. Bringing with her examples of family wedding dresses from the 1920’s, many of the later dresses Fran had designed and made, including her own, and her sisters.

The educational outing was the wonderful, small, but perfectly formed, Ashdon Village Museum, a wealth of artefacts relating to the village with a delicious tea to follow.

The bursary was a well attended a four week “Introduction to Yoga”, many members have continued yoga with Nathalie in the village hall on Tuesday evenings.

We have members serving on Suffolk West Federation, Creative Leisure Activities Committee, and a Climate Change Ambassador.

The National Resolution this year, to be discussed at the AGM to be held in Cardiff, is “Clean Rivers for People and Wildlife”.

Forthcoming speakers and events include “Tales of a Holiday Manager”, making Macramé Angels, an introduction to British Sign Language, and a walk along the Suffolk Coastal Path.

The bursary this year is to be Italian cookery and will held in the village hall, we are delighted to receive a grant from Sturmer Parish Council and Braintree District Council's, Councillors Fund, which together will go towards the cost of two mornings, allowing two groups of ten persons, including non-members, to take part on each morning.

A warm welcome is extended to all at our monthly meetings, indeed many who support the WI in many activities have not, at the moment time enough to become full members.

First meeting is free, the second is £4, we hope then to have impressed enough that visitors become members.

Jo Porth, Secretary Sturmer and District WI. April 2023

APPENDIX J

Sturmer Annual Parish Assembly Tuesday 4 April 2023 Tree Warden's Report

Councillor's Porth and Carter continue to assess the trees along the amenity walk, when needed Dave Bryce, tree surgeon, is employed to remove or make safe any trees or branches of trees to make the walkway safer for all who use it, the two Councillor's helping to remove any debris.

Ash die-back, originally known as Chalara Fraxinea, now known as Hymenoscyphus Fraxineus, has been identified in a number of ash trees along the amenity walk and regrettably these will need to be removed as the disease progresses.

I was asked to make to make comments on the removal of four Horse Chestnut Trees, all with Tree Preservation Orders, situated along footpath 12, known as locally "The Baulk".

The notice of intent was to remove all four trees as they were described as diseased.

I asked Braintree District Council to independently inspect the trees as they are a significant part of the landscape, and having research the Forestry Commission, I was not certain that all trees were suffering from "bleeding canker".

If, unfortunately the trees had all been suffering from Phytophthora cactorum and the trees had to be removed, I hoped that the Forestry Commission's strongly recommended precautions be taken.....

- Felled trees and affected branches should be **destroyed on site, either by burning or burying.**

- If immediate disposal is not possible, **store logs away from other trees.**
- **Do not retain logs cut from diseased trees,** even for firewood.
- **Avoid chipping infected material** – this may create aerosols containing bacteria and spread disease.

If composting, take infected material directly to the processing facility, so it is chipped and composted in a well controlled heap with minimal temperature of 60°C throughout the heap.

.....and recommended that the trees be replaced with 4 native broadleaf trees.

The decision from Braintree District Council, granted consent for removal of the two trees nearest to 8 Wheel Chase, work to be carried out within two year's of the formal decision and replaced within 9 months with trees of a least 10-12cm in girth, species and location to be agreed in writing with Landscape Services before planting.

The felling of the remaining two trees nearest the road was refused as they afforded good amenity value to the area and it was not possible to confirm that they suffered from "bleeding canker".

The native hedge along both sides of Bridleway 19, planted some 8 years ago, is flourishing and has proven to be, as intended, a wildlife corridor linking two pieces of woodland.

The Woodland Trust and Eastern Claylands made available to those in the specified area packs of 50 whips, 10 each of Hazel, Cherry, Silver Birch, Hornbeam and Oak.

We were fortunate in being allocated 2 packs, mostly planted in the field known as Stoneylands, to the north-west of the footbridge at the bottom of Bridleway 19, and as to date they all seem to be healthy and budding up.

Jo Porth, Sturmer Tree Warden
April 2023

APPENDIX K

Sturmer Flood Action Group REPORT to Annual Parish Assembly 2023

Our main news is that the replacement bridge in Water Lane has been delayed until 2024/25. We very much hope it will not be delayed again next year. It has failed its safety assessment and a new bridge would help with flooding in gardens from the bridge in the direction of the pub.

The draft Approval in Principle has been sent to us and will be submitted to the Environment Agency soon.

We have been commenting on some planning proposals for solar farms and a biodigester. These will need sustainable drainage and there are other environmental concerns around them.

Woody dams at the rear of Maltings Cottages seem to be helping with flooding on to the main road.

The works carried out in Hill Lane have not been so effective as the gullies are above the level of the road and water floods on to the main road through the village. We hope the Parish Council will be able to have some improvements carried out as the flood group has been complaining for 9 years about this.

In November we hosted a visit by Japanese University professors trying to find out how best to educate people on flooding from the flood group and other local residents.

Our log is available for inspection – just contact our Chairman – Mary Sail.

We report to each Parish Council meeting and that report is usually included at the end of the minutes on the Parish Council website so is available for all.

Linda Bevan – 4 April 2023

APPENDIX L

ST MARY’S CHURCH, STURMER

We have heard nothing further from the Friends of Friendless Churches as to whether they wish to take on responsibility for the maintenance of the building. However, we have not heard that they do not, so we continue to hope.

Equally, we have not heard anything further from the Diocese of Chelmsford regarding the proposed closure, so we continue as we were, with services held when there is a 5th Sunday in the month, along with others as and when.

We have a 3 pm service at the church on Good Friday and the next morning service for the benefice will be on 30th April.

The churchyard continues to be maintained by volunteers. A new area for the interment of ashes has been demarcated in the “new” churchyard.

Stephanie Power

April 2023

APPENDIX M

Annual report 2023 – Sturmer Local History Group

This year we have started a new venture which is a talk on our Victorian Schoolroom for adults. We have expanded it to cover Victorian education in Sturmer and Haverhill and the activities of our history group. We gave the first talk to the Haverhill U3A at the Arts Centre (over a 100 members) and have another booked for September in the village hall.

In June we will be taking WI members on our guided history walk and displaying some of our archives.

Recently, we have been helping Mr Nunn from Florida with his family history in Sturmer.

Last May we were interviewed by Essex Radio about William Hicks.

I have started a two year history course with Denman WI college (weekly on Zoom) and attended talks in person including on John Atterton in Haverhill, the French Wars and landscape history.

We visited the museum at Ashdon with the WI and the Recorders' Day with Suffolk Local History Council.

We continue to send this annual report and our Recorders' report to Recorders of Uttlesford History and Suffolk Local History Council.

We are updating our archives every year and replacing leaflets on our heritage trail regularly.

We hope our archives, website and Twitter account will keep leave permanent record of history in Sturmer for all our residents and beyond.

Linda Bevan 4 April 2023