

STURMER PARISH COUNCIL

Ian Brown
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Minutes of the **COUNCIL MEETING OF STURMER PARISH COUNCIL** held at **STURMER VILLAGE HALL** on **29 NOVEMBER 2022 AT 7:30 PM**

COUNCILLOR	IN ATTENDANCE
Cllr Diana Garrod (Chairman)	YES
Cllr Alan Carter	YES
Cllr Terrie Jones	YES
Cllr David Porth	YES
Cnty Cllr Peter Schwier	NO

CLERK – Ian Brown

2 Members of the public

22/73	NOTE AND APPROVE APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE Cnty Cllr Peter Schwier – attending another meeting
22/74	INVITE ANY DECLARATION OF INTEREST FOR THIS MEETING Cllr Diana Garrod declared a Non personal pecuniary interest in Item 22/84 – Footpaths for FP3
22/75	APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 11 OCTOBER 2022 RESOLUTION – Minutes 11 OCTOBER 2022 adopted as true record: Proposed Cllr David Porth, Seconded Cllr Alan Carter - Unanimous agreement
22/76	PUBLIC PARTICIPATION SESSION <i>This provides an opportunity for members of the public to raise questions and comment on items on the agenda or of import. Time for this session is limited to 15 minutes (03 minutes per person)</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Weight restriction missing from Water Lane, B1061 (Kedington Rd) – CLERK to enquire➤ Various potholes have been reported to Highways via the online portal➤ Speeding on A1017, particularly at night, request for speed check and or better enforcement; noted CSW cannot operate after dark➤ Vehicle Activated sign licence to store / report data elapsed some time ago due to cost of that facility; noted Finchingfield PC request to share data / experience of speeding and noise to build better, wider picture of the problem➤ FP3, request for update as to when reopening; Highways have inspected, no agreed date for reinstatement, riverbank erosion due to animal crossing, estimated repair costs of £60-£70,000 – CLERK to enquire of Highways for latest position via Cnty Cllr Peter Schwier➤ Sad case of seemingly wilful damage and sabotage of newly planted saplings on private land, some part of a national trial of resistant species of Elm tree; second occurrence of the sabotage
22/77	RECEIVE COUNTY & DISTRICT COUNCILLORS REPORTS Cnty Cllr Peter Schwier has shared many reports and updates through the month with the members via the office. Dist Cllr Diana Garrod – Full report at APPENDIX A – but added comments re Bio waste processing plant, with concerns raised which BDC have been alerted, highlighting potential offensive odours and other related matters.

22/78	<p>RECEIVE CLERKS REPORT & NOTE CORRESPONDENCE Full report at APPENDIX B</p>
22/79	<p>FINANCE – RECEIVE FINANCIAL STATEMENT - AGREE PAYMENTS, APPOINT AUTHORISER RESOLUTION – Approve Finance statement as attached: Proposed Cllr David Porth: Seconded Cllr Terrie Jones – Unanimous approval</p> <p>Appointed authoriser – Cllr Alan Carter Finance statement – APPENDIX C</p> <p>22/79 (i) – CLLRS TO PUT FORWARD THEIR INPUT TO 2023-24 BUDGET AND PRECEPT REQUEST This item was moved to the end of the finance section, after much discussion members agreed to review the budget needs for 2023-2024 and defer a final decision until January 2023 in time for the formal precept submission</p> <p>22/79(ii) – NOTE LIGHTING ENERGY CONTRACTOR CONFIRMED PC NOT TO PARTICIPATE IN THE ENERGY BILL RELIEF SCHEME (EBRS) AS IT HAS A FIXED CONTRACT PRICE UNTIL 2024 Noted, contract to be reviewed in 2024</p> <p>22/79(iii) – NOTE LGA AGREED PAY AWARD OF £1/HR ACROSS ALL SCP BACK DATED UNTIL APRIL 2022 – CLERK to ACTION Noted – full council approval; impact on budget to be assessed</p> <p>Cllr Diana Garrod moved the proposal that the Clerk be authorised to make payments during December 2022 when council does not meet, Cllr David Porth seconded the motion – unanimous approval.</p>
22/80	<p>REVIEW & COMMENT ON CURRENT PLANNING APPLICATIONS/APPEALS</p> <p>Ref. 22/03013/TPO Notice of intent to carry out works to trees protected by Tree Preservation Order -8/89 4 Horse chestnut trees - All four are diseased and would require felling. - 8 Wheel Chase, Sturmer, Essex Comment date 08 December 2022 Suggested parish Tree Warden seek clarification and confirmation of condition – request to Tree Warden.</p> <p>Council suggested following feedback to Planning - If felled they need replacing with four new trees complete with a maintenance plan in place.</p> <p>Request sight of report claiming the diseased condition and whether the disease is fatal to the species and whom in Planning is reviewing the comments in the report.</p> <p>The “Baulk”, FP13, opposite Red Lion PH requires its condition confirmed prior to any works and its condition reinstated after any proposed tree works.</p> <p>RECEIVE FEEDBACK - Lanpro Solar Farm, Hill Lane, Sturmer; Planning Scoping Opinion Consultation 22/03173/SCR</p> <p>The parish council supports the observations, comments and requests from the Sturmer Flood Action Group – APPENDIX D</p> <p>And the PC further requests a full and proper public presentation from the developer and or its agents with a local exhibition in this parish for its residents to attend and raise questions, suggested the Sturmer village hall; complete with copies of the original slides presented in the neighbouring parish.</p>

	<p>To request evidence from other, existing Solar site developments, with documented responses from those residents.</p> <p>DISCUSS PROPOSALS FOR GREEN ENERGY GAS PLANT NEAR HAVERHILL BY ACORN BIOENERGY - WEST SUFFOLK COUNCIL</p> <p>Proposal to remain on the PC radar due to mounting concerns and objections to the impact on surrounding residents</p>
22/81	<p>RECEIVE FEEDBACK FROM HIGHWAYS SITE MEETING TO DISCUSS FOOTWAY IMPROVEMENTS AT j/w HILL LANE WITH A1017 – DRAINAGE, REDUCING ROAD WIDTH, FOOTWAY CONDITION (SAFE PEDESTRIAN / MOBILITY USERS), HEDGE MAINTENANCE, ROAD SIGNAGE, VISIBILITY ISSUES</p> <p>The PC is concerned as to when the improvements might materialise. Mounting concerns over the deteriorating condition of the footway adjacent to Churdles.</p> <p>Scheme to be submitted to the LHP – CLERK to seek update from Highways officer</p>
22/82	<p>CONSIDER RESPONSE TO LITTER MANAGEMENT SCRUTINY REVIEW See APPENDIX E CLERK to SUBMIT</p>
22/83	<p>RECEIVE UPDATE TO LAND OWNERSHIP CONTACT FOR LOT 2 WOODLAND ADJACENT TO AMENITY WALK No confirmation of ownership to date – CLERK to pursue</p>
22/84	<p>RECEIVE UPDATE REGARDING FALLEN WILLOW TREE 03/11/22 FROM WOODLAND NEXT TO RAILWAY AMENITY WALK OVER RIVER AND PROW 3 Land owner notified, has made site visit, still awaiting their action to remove fallen tree</p>
22/85	<p>COMMENT ON COST CUTTING PROPOSALS OUTLINED BY PAUL PARTRIDGE, HEAD OF OPERATIONS, BRAINTREE DISTRICT COUNCIL CLERK to submit responses, essentially no reduction in street cleaning funding and no reduction to litter / dog bin collection routes. The remainder of savings proposed by BDC were supported.</p> <p>CLERK to SUBMIT responses online and seek clarification of impact on litter / dog bin servicing</p>
22/86	<p>RECEIVE UPDATE ON GRANT APPLICATION TO FUND PROPOSED PURCHASE OF TEAK MEMORIAL BENCH AT £620 FROM CYAN – CLLR DAVID PORTH Original bench selection no longer available, current option costing £450 complete with installation; new option being pursued</p>
22/87 Standing Orders were suspended at 9:30pm	<p>RECEIVE REPRESENTATIVES REPORT:</p> <p>a) Footpaths – ALL – Bridleway 17 noted trees coming down, CLERK to advise land owner in neighbouring parish</p> <p>b) Flood Action Group – Cllr Alan Carter – SFAG report – APPENDIX F Potential need for an amendment to the Emergency Plan muted</p> <p>c) Play Area – Cllrs Alan Carter & David Porth – Matting under swing now stabilised [c](i) – Note lamp out, ownership unclear, potentially BT? – Request for assistance to be sent to UKPN, seeking ownership and billing – CLERK to ACTION</p> <p>d) Parish Maintenance – Cllrs Alan Carter and David Porth – Works now finished for 2022</p> <p>e) War Memorial – Cllr David Porth – APPROVE WHITE BARN PAINT PURCHASE, PRICE TBC and installation of new paving slabs, freely donated – Cllr David Porth to pursue grant claim</p>

	<p>RESOLUTION – Approve purchase of paint and bench fixings; Proposed Cllr Diana Garrod, Seconded Cllr Terrie Jones – unanimous decision</p> <p>f) Village Hall – Cllr Terrie Jones – Opening as a “warm space” from 10 January 2023, soup, hot drink, conversation; planned opening from early pm, no booking necessary</p> <p>[f](i) – Defibrillator function – Cllr Terrie Jones – currently working OK</p> <p>g) Highways – ALL – Wheel chase pothole now repaired; CLERK to seek confirmation of weight limit on B1061-Water Lane – Kedington Road and whereabouts of weight restriction signs</p>
	<p>MOTION TO BE AGREED - Approve exclusion of the public <i>Members of the public will be asked to leave the meeting for the next item, Exclusion of Public and Press - Under Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting whilst discussion takes place on the following item on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt and commercially sensitive information</i></p> <p>RESOLUTION – Approve the exclusion of the public: Proposed Cllr Diana Garrod; Seconded Cllr Alan Carter – unanimous decision</p>
22/88	RECEIVE UPDATE ON THE VG52 LAND SALE PROPOSALS
	<p>MOTION TO BE AGREED – Approve readmission of the public <i>Members of the public to be readmitted to the meeting</i></p> <p>RESOLUTION – Approve the readmission of the public: Proposed Cllr Diana Garrod; Seconded Cllr Alan Carter – unanimous decision</p>
22/89	<p>CONSIDER THE COUNCIL’S POSITION ON ANIMAL TESTING AND OR THE PLACING OF BIASED MARKETING MATERIALS ON PUBLIC ASSETS SUCH AS BUS SHELTERS</p> <p>The PC does not support or condone any unauthorised placing of advertising materials or printed matter on its assets and is particularly displeased to recently witness such upsetting graphic material placed on its assets, such as the bus shelter and will not tolerate such actions.</p>
22/90	<p>AGREE DATES FOR THE FORTHCOMING 2023 MEETINGS</p> <p>Proposed the following –</p> <p>24/01/2023 07/03/2023 04/04/2023 – Annual Parish Assembly 15/05/2023 – Annual Council Meeting (dependent on final election date)</p> <p>Potential for the following dates to be approved -</p> <p>04/07/2023 05/09/2023 17/10/2023 28/11/2023</p>
22/91	<p>ITEMS OF REPORT TO BE NOTED OR ADDED TO NEXT COUNCIL AGENDA</p> <p>Budget & Precept 2023-24</p>
22/92	DATE OF NEXT MEETING – 24 JANUARY 2023 – CLOSE – 09:50pm

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

APPENDIX A

District Councillor's Report November 2022 to Parish Councils **(Cllr. Diana Garrod - Bumpstead Ward)**

Temporary Traffic Regulation Orders

Intended closure of Hill Lane, Sturmer Road. Due to commence on 9th December 2022 for 5 days whilst Gigaclear Ltd undertakes network repair.

Intended closure of North Street, Steeple Bumpstead. Due to commence on 18th December 2022 for 6 hours whilst Openreach undertakes overhead and underground cabling.

The bridge at Poole Street, Gt. Yeldham A1017 – works are expected to continue until 23 March 2023.

*Whilst outside the Braintree District, the roadworks map indicates a road closure with diversion on the B1054 (Hempstead) 9-11th November whilst Affinity Water undertakes works.

Winter Warmth and Welcome Spaces Funding Applications Now Open

Free money to keep warm, socialise and have some fun! This funding, through Essex County Council totals £100,000 for grants of up to £1,000 to support the provision of Winter Warmth and Welcome Spaces and activities for local communities in Essex. These can be the creation of new spaces and activities or to support existing ones. Open to a variety of groups; registered charities, unincorporated clubs or associations, small community groups, etc. Projects should be delivered and all funds spent by 31st March 2023. Application form and guidance notes can be found at:

<https://ealc.gov.uk/winter-warmth-and-welcome-spaces-fund/>

Homes for Ukraine Update

Braintree District has over 200 Ukrainian guests staying with 90 sponsors, and many of these guests are coming to the end of their initial 6 month stay with their sponsor. BDC are managing the rematching of guests who need new homes with new sponsors and so are actively looking for new sponsors. Anybody who might be interested should contact Community Services. Any questions from the guests themselves can also be referred to the team.

Garden Waste Collection

The garden waste collection is suspended during the winter months. The last collection this year is 21st November. It is scheduled to resume on 27th February 2023.

Defibrillator Grants – London Hearts

Grants are available to fund Public Access Defibrillators in communities all over the country. London Hearts is a charity aiming to help and support communities with the provision of heart defibrillators and teaching CPR/defibrillator skills. They can provide a grant of £300 towards the cost of a defibrillator and storage as well as a free online training video:- <https://londonhearts.org/>

Share Your Views on Healthcare

The local NHS is asking people for their comments about proposals to offer fairer access to six healthcare services in mid and south Essex. In July 2022, a change in the law created a new organisation, NHS Mid and South Essex, to take over local healthcare planning from the five former clinical commissioning groups (CCGs) serving the area. These five organisations had been responsible for planning, buying and monitoring most local health services. While the majority of their policies were similar, six services had marked differences:

- Weight loss surgery (bariatric surgery)
- Correction for uneven breasts (breast asymmetry)
- Breast reduction
- Female sterilisation
- Vasectomy (male sterilisation)
- Special fertility services (intrauterine insemination or IUI for short, sperm and egg donation, and in-vitro fertilisation, usually called IVF)

Clinical experts in our area have looked at the latest evidence and practice for all six of these services, both nationally and locally, to ensure the local offer is high quality and safe. NHS Mid and South Essex has already

met members of the groups most impacted by the proposals to seek advice on how best to shape the proposals. Dr Ronan Fenton, Medical Director for the Mid and South Essex Integrated Care System, said, “To provide equitable access to services across mid and south Essex, we want a single policy for each one. “This is important as some residents within our health and care system currently don’t have the same access to these services as their neighbours do. The proposed changes to the services will correct that.

“We want to hear what our residents think of the plans so we can ensure we’re treating everyone fairly.”

The consultation runs from 31 October 2022 until 19 December 2022:-

<https://www.midandsouthessex.ics.nhs.uk/get-involved/how/consultations/>

Essex County Council – Early Years and Childcare Parent Survey – Share Your Views

If you are a parent in Essex, please share your views by completing the early years and childcare parent survey. This questionnaire is for parents of children aged 0 – 19 years living in Essex, or up to 25 years if your child has special educational needs or disabilities. Essex County Council want to hear about your family’s experience of childcare in Essex so that they can gain a greater understanding of what childcare arrangements you make and if your childcare needs are being met. They also want to hear about your experiences of your child starting primary school and the impact Covid-19 had had on your child’s experiences. Your information is valued and will inform the 2022 childcare sufficiency assessment and the early years and childcare strategy:-

<https://www.essex.gov.uk/news/complete-our-early-years-and-childcare-parent-survey>

Essex County Council – Residents & Businesses invited to have say on 2023/24 Budget

Against the current difficult fiscal backdrop, ECC is in the process of setting its own budget and is inviting businesses and residents to give their feedback on how public money should be spent in the coming financial year. The consultation is due to close Monday 28th November. People can take part at:-

<https://www.essex.gov.uk/news/residents-and-businesses-invited-to-have-say-on-ecc-2023-24-budget>

Braintree District Council 2023/24 Budget

Some aspects of the Council’s budget are scheduled to be discussed at the forthcoming Full Council meeting 12th December. Some financial information (e.g. the Treasury Management Mid-Year Report for 2022/23) is available in the Governance and Audit Scrutiny Committee agenda for the meeting 3rd November 2022:

<https://braintree.cmis.uk.com>

Cllr. Diana Garrod

Braintree District Councillor - Bumpstead Ward

APPENDIX B

STURMER PARISH COUNCIL -CLERKS REPORT 29 NOVEMBER 2022

The energy supplier has confirmed this council does not qualify for the Energy Bill Relief Scheme, contract started 14/03/2019, ends 2024

Updates on the proposed Solar Farm, the on site meeting with ECC Highways, VG52 land sale, Amenity walk neighbouring Woodland ownership, request for collaboration from Finchingfield PC concerning vehicle noise are all covered by the agenda

The council have received various communications from the bodies that support this sector including BDC and ECC and all other matters are covered by the agenda.

APPENDIX C

Sturmer Parish Council Finance Statement - November 2022											BUDGET	ACTUAL	BALANCE	
											11,937.00	12,362.64	-425.64	
							Opening				11,445.82			
Date	Supplier	Description	Invoice	BACS/DD	Minute Ref	Rec	Credit	Debit	VAT	NETT	Cost Cnt			
Month Closing Balance							£15,428.21							
07-Nov	DH Maintenance	Amenity Walk maintenance	922	FPO		Y		100.00		100.00	S106			
07-Nov	DH Maintenance	Parish maintenance	822	FPO		Y		50.00		50.00	PM			
09-Nov	ICO	Subscription	ZA278582	DD		Y		35.00		35.00	Subs			
11-Nov	UKPN	Wayleave	W000001	BGC		Y	3.45				Income			
15-Nov	A&J Lighting	Annualised maintenance	36690	DD		Y		27.00	4.50	22.50	Lighting			
15-Nov	RBL - AC	Wreath	RBL donation	FPO		Y		35.00		35.00	Admin			
18-Nov	DRAX Energy	Electricity Lighting	81077/81078	DD		Y		11.51	0.55	10.96	Utility			
	Employee	Expenses	November repo	FPO				42.20		42.20	Admin			
	Employee	Salary	PAYE	FPO				434.15		434.15	Clerk			
	HP Ink - IB	Instant Ink	551957	FPO				3.33	0.56	2.78	Admin			
	A&J Lighting	3 x LED 9001/9008/9010	36668	FPO				1364.40	227.40	1137.00	Lighting			
	Sturmer Village Hall	Hall Hire	94	FPO				24.00		24.00	Hire			
	R Farthing Building Serv	War Memorial base works	241	FPO				1730.00		1730.00	PM			
	B&Q - DP	Padlock to secure Tommy	29256751	FPO				8.00		8.00	PM			
	DH Maintenance	Amenity Walk maintenance	1122	FPO				100.00		100.00	S106			
	DH Maintenance	Parish maintenance	1022	FPO				50.00		50.00	PM			
NOVEMBER							3.45	4014.59	233.01	3781.59				
Month Closing Balance							£11,417.07							
S106	Source - Exp 30-04-27	Open - Spend to date	Description	Balance										
	Wheel Chase	20,103.56		20,103.56										
	Oct-20	5,664.00	Play equipment	14,439.56										

APPENDIX D

This statement is fully supported by Sturmer Parish Council and forms part of its comments on the related Scoping Opinion, as reported in its minutes of 29 November 2022

28 November 2022

Dear Sir

Rowley Hill Solar – Land west of Hill Lane, Sturmer, Braintree - Consultation

I am writing on behalf of Sturmer Flood Action Group.

We were formed in 2014 (after a serious flood in the village) to help alleviate flooding and look at other environmental issues.

We have some questions about the development of a solar farm off Hill Lane as follows:

1. Which way would the panels face?
2. How do the panels affect drainage when rain lands on them instead of on soil or crops? Does more water flood off the land? If so what arrangements are made to alleviate flooding?
3. Hill Lane already floods badly particularly near the track for Walton Farm and the surface is badly damaged by flooding. This is inconvenient for residents of Sturmer using Hill Lane in vehicles and for walkers in the area. Part of the site falls towards Hill Lane. If panels are facing south towards Hill Lane would this make the flooding here worse?
4. The other side of the site falls towards the track proposed for the use of construction vehicles. A ditch runs near this track and water then flows past the lake at Sturmer Hall to the Baulk opposite the Red Lion pub. Essex County Council has installed woody dams in the ditch to hold back flood water to the main road – A1017 and the ditch by the pub which flows across gardens in The Street (causing flooding regularly) and eventually to a part blocked bridge over the Stour Brook in Water Lane. Seventeen houses in The Street have been flooded internally previously and gardens and outhouses are regularly flooded by the Brook and Highways water. Would the panels increase flood water to this area?
5. Would the track for construction vehicles be surfaced? Would this be restored to a more rural appearance after the works? How would lorries be prevented from using an easier route to the

construction site via the A1017 (through Sturmer – with noise and nuisance to residents) and Hill Lane or via The Endway at Steeple Bumpstead?

6. How will wildlife on the site be affected? Will wildlife corridors be provided?
7. Will the site be screened as it will spoil a pleasant view for residents and walkers?
8. How will the panels be disposed of at the end of their useful life?

I hope you can provide a response to these queries.

Thank you

Linda Bevan

Secretary

Strummer Flood Action Group

APPENDIX E

What, if any, litter management activities are undertaken by your Parish Council, and who is involved with this? (E.g. what are the cost/resource implications of litter management).

Litter collection is undertaken by volunteers on an ad-hoc basis.

Which, if any, partners does your Parish Council work with to undertake litter management activities?

Local organisations e.g: Village Hall Committee and W.I

What past/current successes have there been with managing litter in your area? (e.g. any past successful campaigns that you could provide details on, any volunteer groups, etc)

There are no dedicated litter picking volunteer groups. A date is advertised and local volunteers participate.

Are there any challenges associated with managing litter in your area?

Challenges are local fast-food restaurants.

Going forward, how do you think coordinated working between Parish/Town Councils with the District Council could be improved in order to deter and manage littering in future?

1. A bin located at a lay-by in Sturmer would be helpful. Where people can drive up and drop it in without getting out of their car.

2. The 'Littering is illegal signs' displayed in Sturmer; near the Haverhill bypass roundabout on the A1017 was helpful and we would like to see this again.

3. The concept that that it is acceptable to litter a village when it looks unloved by its governing councils.

Generally, the village now looks unkempt due to the pavements crumbling and weeds growing along its edge and in the cracks, potholes which go unrepaired for several months and sometimes years, broken signs left unrepaired, long grass and hedges overhanging. It is known that speeding and littering is reduced when a village appears attractive. However, with Sturmer situated along an 'A' road, residents are dependent on their District and County Councils to undertake this maintenance. On the whole residents feel let down; given the Council Tax that is paid to these authorities.

APPENDIX F

SFAG November 2022 update

Red Lion Flooding:

Glenn Shaw from Essex Flood Team inspected the area and agreed to ask Highways to clear the culvert under the road;

Flooding in gardens in area of The Gables:

Glenn Shaw agreed to send a letter to residents reminding them that they are responsible for keeping the ditch in their gardens clear and Alan cleared the ditch this runs into by the amenity walk.

Universities:

Representatives of University of East London, UCL and Kansai (Japan) University came to Sturmer in November to interview members of the flood action group, residents and an academic from Anglia Ruskin University.

They are researching how best to inform people of flood prevention measures.

As a result:

At the suggestion of a resident, I have set up a texting group for residents for local information on flooding.

We looked at the Emergency Plan and noted that the flood action group is expected to implement this in the event of flooding (Appendix D). We hope the PC will revise this as we are all likely to be subject to flooding if there is a serious event and would not be able to do this;

In addition, I contacted the Corporate Resilience Officer at Braintree District Council to find out her list of emergency rest centres. Some of these would be flooded or access to them would be although flooding isn't the only emergency covered by the Plan;

We renewed our informal agreement with Daniel Hannan of Sturmer Hall to use his venue as a rest centre if people are forced from their homes by flooding;

In addition, residents spoken to for the Red Lion and Gables Flooding and University interviews are once again complaining about speeding. I have asked for posters from Community Speedwatch to be placed in the Sturmer Village News and I have put some up in the village. A few people seem willing to take part but lack a leader. Janet Willey of CSW has offered to be a contact.

Solar Farm off Hill Lane:

We received postcards about this and when the online consultation is available we will make some comments. Initially, we wonder how drainage will be affected when rain falls on solid panels rather than soil or crops.

Thanks

Linda Bevan
Sturmer Flood Action Group