



Parish Council Meeting March 7th

There has been some tree planting in the playing field, both new and replacements, so a big thank you to those that turned out to help James, and thanks to Sicon for providing the saplings.

A site meeting was held recently in Troston Woods with some councillors, and Peter Kerry, a local tree surgeon and conservationist, to glean advice on the forward management of the area. The plan is to keep the woods with as much natural habitat as possible, but maintenance projects for this year will include the cleaning and oiling of the sculptures, bark laying on some of the pathways, bulb planting for next spring (snow drops, aconites, bluebells etc), removal of some ivy. None of this will be achieved without the help of volunteers so if you would like to get involved please contact James Moffat jmoffat54@gmail.com all the activities will also be posted on Facebook.

It was also suggested to re-establish an original wet area in the woods, as a clay lined natural pond, this will require funding which if successful it is hoped this could start in the Autumn.

Three sets of litter picking equipment are being purchased with funding received from West Suffolk Council and will be available shortly for anyone to use.

Several villagers kindly offered to spread grit during the bad weather. SCC give advice and guidance on how to do this safely. Further information regarding this can be found on both the Parish Council and Suffolk County Councils websites.

The offer of Speedwatch equipment and training is available, this would require a minimum of 12 people to work in groups, and undergo the training. It was felt this is beyond the manpower of The Parish Council, and we are unable to pursue. Full details are available from the clerk if anyone has the intent of forming and running such a group.

The Kings Coronation provides yet another bank holiday, and the opportunity to socialise. The Village Hall has been offered free of charge for a village event, or the playing field is available for a picnic. If there are any party planners or ideas people out there give a shout out on Facebook.

The minutes for the meeting are available as always on the website <https://troston.onesuffolk.net>

From Sue Rose, Chair Troston PC

Church News

The rededication of the bells by Bishop Martin, and the ringing of a quarter peal by the bellringers, followed by the specially brewed beer, aptly named "A Touch of

Claas" kindly donated by Ben and Sam from The Bull, announced that the church is now well and truly open! There is still some work to be carried out and tidying up to be done, but the main body of the church is a welcoming space. Please come in and make yourself at home.

From daylight until dusk, St Mary's is open for prayer, as a silent space to gather your thoughts, or to admire the spectacular wall paintings.

There is a service of Morning Prayer at 9am on the 4th Friday of each month. You are very welcome to join us in this short service.

If you need to contact a member of the Ministry Team please contact:

Team Assistant Priest: Revd Tony Redman 01359 269335 / 07860868828
tony@theredmans.co.uk

Team Rector: Revd Karen Burton 07546 491388 revkarenburton@outlook.com

From Jane Harland

News from the Bell Tower!

The afternoon of Sunday 26th Feb saw us ring the first quarter peal on the newly hung bells at Troston.

A quarter peal consists of 1260 changes, a change being when each of the six bells strikes once and takes around 40 minutes. We rang a method called Woodbine Delight Minor, a very old method having been first defined in 1677. A method is the bell ringing equivalent of a tune. This was very special as it was the first quarter peal that has ever been rung on them since they were cast for the church in 1868 and then rehung in December.

New rings of bells are very popular so we expect to be welcoming lots of visiting ringers from across Suffolk and indeed the whole country. In addition to visiting bands we will be having a practice night on the 2nd Wednesday of the month.

On Saturday 20th May we will be hosting the annual Suffolk Guild of Ringers striking competition when bands of ringers from across the county will be coming to Troston and competing with each other to perform the best piece of ringing. The winning band is the one who makes the least number of mistakes as judged by an expert ringer and has taken place for over 300 years, making competitive ringing older than rugby, association football, and many other sports! The ringing on the 20th May will be from around 10am to lunchtime.

We are very keen to involve the community in our ringing so if you're interested in seeing what we do or finding out more please get in touch, would also be happy to commemorate any special birthdays, anniversaries etc with some ringing if possible. gtbartonbells@gmail.com

From Neal Dodge

Village Hall

Our newly redecorated Village Hall is available to book for all your celebrations, including Easter and the Coronation. To check availability, book or have a look round, please contact Sue Bishop on 269467.

From Sue Bishop

Men's Breakfast

The men's breakfast will take place in Livermere Village Hall on 25th March at 8.30am. Full English, followed by a speaker (to be confirmed for March). Veggie option available if requested in advance. £4 on the door.

Please book your place by contacting me or simoncharlton60@yahoo.co.uk

From Rev. Tony Redman

News from Honington and Sapiston WI

A number of us from Troston go each month to the Women's Institute meeting at the Village Hall in Sapiston held on each second Tuesday in the month at 7-30. Our next meeting is on the 14th March.

We usually have a speaker on an interesting subject, news and other events such as games, sales, competitions and outings. We remember members' birthdays and there is always a cup of tea or coffee of course. The aim is to have an enjoyable evening.

Last month we had a talk on "Gliding" and later in February an Accessories Sale where we raised a useful sum which will help to improve our activities.

The March meeting's talk is called "Tools with a Mission". I don't know what that is about but it's bound to be interesting. For the competition: please bring an unusual tool/implement and guess its use! The April talk is about "20th Century Women of Bury St Edmunds".

If you would like to join us please come along to Sapiston Village Hall on a second Tuesday, you will be most welcome, or contact me, Anne Walker on 07979 808606 and I will try to arrange transport if needed.

From Anne Walker

Signalling Martians?

Curious ploughed patterns can be seen on some fields around the village. The cultivation that has taken place around the perimeter of some fields at Lower Farm is deliberate and forms part of the Countryside Stewardship Scheme that Troston Farms was awarded early in 2022. The scheme combines various options including

Stone Curlew fallow plots, nectar rich grass margins, tussocky grass buffer strips, wild bird cover and cultivated arable weed margins which are the reason we are cultivating around the perimeter of some fields. This approach allows rare arable weeds to germinate and provide habitat for a wider range of insects than would ordinarily be present.

Other cultivation has occurred recently in readiness for the crop of sugar beet to be drilled at Lower Farm although the soil temperature is far too cold to be drilling that crop yet, a sustained period of warmer weather and especially warmer night time temperatures are required to allow drilling to take place. Having had a very poor year with the previous sugar beet crop, some of which had to be sold as animal feed due to the extensive frost damage, I sincerely hope for a better crop this year and the weather abnormalities disappear - although if recent weeks are anything to go by I don't hold out much hope!

From Edward Vipond, Farm Manager

Expect Food Shortages

Our local farmers are calling on the government for action to prevent future food shortages. Already customers are seeing bare supermarket shelves. The government has, for many years, considered that food could be bought from anywhere in the world simply because until now we had enough money to afford it. They've done very little to create any form of resilience in our food system. We are now addicted to cheap food.

Further, farms were encouraged to get bigger leading to the decline in small to medium scale horticultural businesses which tended to focus on salad vegetables and cheap farm labourers from Europe. We have to rebuild our whole food system: much smaller farms and much smaller supply chains serving local markets.

Indeed, the situation will be made worse because water is in tight supply this year. Farmers are struggling to fill their reservoirs, so there is a return to growing sugar beet as it is a crop which requires less water to grow.

This decision will not affect consumers immediately, but looking at the year ahead, it will be interesting to see how farmers across Suffolk will have decided to grow their land. Carrots and salad potatoes could be in shorter supply through summer. Current supermarket shortages, which have mainly affected tomatoes, cucumbers, peppers and lettuces, could be a common occurrence going forward.

"Retailers will be looking to source elsewhere if UK crops fail and this is a threat to our farming," said Mr Blenkiron of the Euston Estate.

From Dolly Carter

Depression and Anxiety

The Farm Safety Foundation charity reported that some 95% of farmers under 40 cited declining mental health as their biggest concern. Farmers are relatively isolated and NHS data shows rates of suicide and mental illness are increasing.

Farmers are especially vulnerable as they battle spiralling fuel and fertiliser costs, poor harvests and problems accessing goods and labour following Brexit. Less access to GPs and bank managers – once the go-to professionals for farmers to confide in - is compounding problems. There are plans to up-skill vets and insurance reps to fill this gap and keep an eye on mental health issues. Farming communities are encouraged to set-up social events to reach out and provide support.

From Lucy Johnston

Honington School

We have certainly had a busy half term! The whole school took part in National Numbers Day when we wore something with a number on and had lots of number-based activities running throughout the day - we raised an amazing £173 for the NSPCC.

Our Year 6 class were busy preparing for their February residential trip to Thorpe Woodlands in Thetford Forest – they were so looking forward to all the outdoor activities.

This week has been Children's Mental Health Awareness week and the theme this year is 'Let's Connect' – those connections with others are one of the key elements that help to keep us mentally healthy. As part of this, the whole school have been learning a dance throughout the week and today they performed it all together on the playground – brilliant.

Scout Group

During February we have of course been learning about Lord Robert Baden-Powell, who founded the scout movement back in 1907. His birthday was 22nd February and each year is marked by Scouts and Guides around the globe as "founders' day" or "thinking day". The Beavers have been learning who he is, and why he is important to us.

We have also been exploring how to stay healthy, through the food we eat and the exercise we do. The Cubs have been having an evening on aeroplanes organised by one of the young leaders. They have had a pancake themed evening, and are practising their knots with some pioneering. The Scouts have also been learning about the aeroplanes. Scouts have learnt about Baden-Powell and world cultures, with some world delicacies thrown in.

From Carol King

Ixworth Surgery

Healthwatch recently spent time in the surgery speaking to patients and gathering feedback. The responses were very positive rating the service 4 out of 5 stars. A recent “Friends & Family” survey was also conducted with everyone attending the surgery for a flu jab: 93% gave a good or very good rating, 5% felt it was neither good nor bad.

The uptake for flu jabs was 86% of over 65's (NHS target 82%) and 78% of under 65's considered to be at risk (NHS target 53%). 78% of patients eligible for the Autumn Covid booster have had their jab.

The GPs have been told by some patients that they are unhappy about the 2 week wait if attempting to make appointments using the online booking system. The system is aimed at patients scheduling non-urgent regular appointments. Most patients use the telephone and accept the triaging needed to schedule a face-to-face appointment or phone conversation with the appropriate doctor or nurse. There still seemed to be some patients who prefer the crowded waiting room first-come first-seen approach - and seem unworried about catching covid or flu! Our staff are concerned and careful scheduling has reduced queue length.

It seems many patients are unaware of out-of-hours GP services. We use Suffolk GP+ to provide extra doctors appointments in the evenings, at weekends and Bank Holidays. Please ask our Reception staff to make your appointment.

There is a view that eConsult is not sufficiently used by patients. It can be accessed from the Surgery's website. It is an online artificial intelligence program designed by the NHS which enables patients to informally but confidentially check their symptoms, find verified NHS self-help information and find appropriate local or self-referral services.

From Josh Williams, Practice Manager

Non-native plants outnumber British flora

Parts of Suffolk's landscape today would be unrecognisable to someone who grew up just 70 years ago. Non-native species have thrived while some native plants have been hit by modern agriculture and climate change. In a 20-year study, volunteers and botanists visited 10x10km sites in 99% of the country to record flowering plants, ferns and charophytes. Many sites were visited multiple times in different seasons to record variety.

One in every five plant species in the UK is listed as threatened. The loss of grasslands, heathlands and other habitats would be really shocking for someone brought up in the 1950s.

Thousands of volunteers recorded 3,445 plant species, of which 1,692 were native to Britain. But 1,753 were non-native flora that compete with native species and can become invasive. They usually escape from gardens or are thrown away for taking up too much space, but thrive in the wild. They includes the American Skunk cabbage and Japanese Rose.

The areas where half the recorded species naturally thrive has declined since the 1950s, the survey found. Heather, Alpine Lady-fern, and Devils-bit Scabius have decreasing ranges. But some species, including the Bee Orchid, Early Meadow-grass and Mossy Stonecrop, have expanded their ranges.

The decline in plant life is largely driven by increased use of land for intensive agriculture as well as pesticides in farming. These have removed land that flora grow on or altered the nutrient balance in soils. Insect, animal and human life depend on plants as pollinators must feed on flora and in turn help to produce food crops.

From Georgina Rannard

Environment Improvement

Last month the announcement of the Environmental Improvement Plan makes a huge step forward in the government's commitment to leaving the environment in a better state than we found it. There is no denying that the state of our unique natural environment in Suffolk is in decline, so I welcome this commitment to find innovative ways to restore a crucial balance, through protecting rare species, improving access to green space and protecting our rivers and waterways.

In particular, East Anglia is home to some of the most precious chalk stream habitats in England, so I welcome the government's action on this matter. It is vital we develop stringent regulations to protect these ecosystems for our children and grandchildren.

Through the plan we aim for 65 to 80 per cent of landowners and farmers to adopt nature-friendly farming practices on at least 10 to 15 per cent of their land by 2030. They will also be supported to create or restore hedgerows providing a real boost for biodiversity.

From Jo Churchill MP

Only by One Vote

Only by one vote were the plans given the go-ahead for the new, larger West Suffolk Hospital to replace the old buildings deemed "past their use-by date".

West Suffolk Council's development control committee was split over the proposal which it heard would result in the loss of "irreplaceable waxcap habitat".

Independent councillor Jason Crooks said: *"This development is a real shame. The applicant has chosen to destroy parkland that's hundreds of years old and it is completely irreplaceable when we all know there are alternatives."* A Green Party spokesman said *"It is so frustrating. We can't vote for this because of the destruction of parkland."*

The Chairman had the deciding vote and considered with the growth in the town and desperate need for a new hospital outweighed concerns. Indeed, the current building has serious structural defects associated with the type of reinforced concrete used in its roof and walls. Steel jacks hold up the roof in many wards.

Under the plans, the new hospital will be located on the already Council owned Hardwick Manor site. The development will be able to use the new facilities already built, such as the state-of-the-art Cardiac Centre, Labour Suite, and Acute Assessment Unit. Alternative sites were considered but involved the purchase of land owned by different parties who were “ambiguous” about the price...

From Doug Walker

Charity Concert

Music Night in aid of the West Suffolk NHS Foundation Trust - Trauma and Orthopaedics Unit. Irish Country Singer Stacey Breen will be performing on 24th March 2023. Doors open 7:30pm at the British Sugar Sports and Social Club, Hollow Road, Bury St. Edmunds.

Tickets : £15 each online at www.eventbrite.com/e/charity-country-music-night-with-stacey-breen-tickets-537710415327 Or call 01359 230028.

From Linda Howe

Newsletter

The Newsletter is produced every two months after the Parish Council Meeting and is available on the Parish website and facebook page. To save paper/money and effort in distributing the Newsletter, only a limited number of printed copies will be available from The Bull, The Jackdaw, the Village Hall - and the Village Newspaper stand in The White House (underneath the staircase, outside the garage, inside the table-top box).

If you would like to receive a copy by email, however, please contact me:
graemenorris46@gmail.com

Indeed, if you have written short articles or found news items you feel might interest villagers, please email them to me in Word/docx or Pages format for consideration - and, of course, possible editing to fit the space available! Thanks.

From Graeme Norris

Register Your Vote

West Suffolk Council (WSC) is encouraging voter registration and is undertaking personal visits to properties where a resident has not responded to an ‘invitation to register’ form. Remember you will need photo ID to vote in the May election!

Next Meeting?

Date of the next meeting **May 9th 2023** Annual Parish meeting 7pm, Parish Council meeting 7.30pm in the Village Hall. Please tell me about items you would like to add to the Agenda: 01379 898 733 or email trostonpc@outlook.com

From Vicki Gay, Clerk to the Council
