



Parish Council Meeting

At the meeting on the 10th January, the Council agreed to fund a replacement VAS outside RAF Honington. Sapiston Parish Council have agreed to fund the sign on the opposite side of the road.

We now have a bench in the playing field in memory of Michael Cowdell, paid for with the funds donated by the now defunct Troston Carpet Bowls Club. The Parish Council would like to express their thanks to the Cowdell family and the bowls club for this addition to the playing field.

The Council website needs some updating if there is anyone in the village who has the necessary IT skills/ time please get in touch with Vicki trostonpc@outlook.com

The Warm Spaces initiative which has been running in the village hall, funded by a grant from West Suffolk Council and manned by volunteers has not attracted many users so the decision has been taken to suspend the service. There are still Warm spaces running at both Ingham and Ixworth.

The Suffolk Guild of Bell Ringers were granted the use of the playing field for parking as Troston is hosting a prestigious one day event in May.

The proposal by The Bull Inn for the change of use of Whitegates to form a guest house with seven letting rooms was discussed, and all bar one councillor agreed to support the proposal.

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

From Sue Rose, Parish Council Chairwoman

Church News

On the afternoon of January 15th, at 3pm, the Diocesan Bishop is coming to bless the bells. There will be a short service in church to which all are welcome - which may or may not include the ringing of the bells.

Later in the month, The Bull will be making a special brew to mark the first full ringing of a peel on the bells in the tower. Sam and Ben are still working on a name for it ("Clanger", or "A Touch of Claas" have been discussed!).

Later on in the New year when the works are fully finished, there will be a further celebration in the church, possibly with a talk or concert or some such thing, still to be agreed. This will be quite an event. The church has been without its bells in a ring-able state since the 1960's, and they have been on the ground since at least 1987. The building will never have been so well equipped or accessible.

From Rev Tony Redman

The Bull

Our popular village pub is set to build on its success by converting a nearby property into holiday accommodation. The Bull Freehouse wants to convert Whitegates into a guest facility with seven holiday lets.

A design statement, submitted to West Suffolk Council as part of a planning application, said: "The Bull has become a successful destination as a public house and restaurant and is building upon the success to create overnight/holiday accommodation." This is not possible at The Bull building, so this solution creates the required accommodation a few steps away in a building that already has character and an enclosed form that meets the requirements. The lets will be supported by seven car off-road parking spaces.

Changes to the property would be minimal and no new buildings are proposed. The proposal will help secure The Bull as a thriving business in a tough trading environment.

Please note: The Bull is closed until the 19th January so the entire team can take a well deserved break. Table reservations can still be made online for when they open but emails and the phone will not be answered during this time.

From Paul Derrick

Village Hall

We are pleased that our regular bookings for Pilates, Dance Classes and Coffee Mornings are well supported. We also have a steady stream of hirers for parties, birthday celebrations, club and association meetings, weddings and other family occasions.

We have a great community asset and hope that more residents will want to use the Hall for their events in the future. For all enquiries and bookings, please contact me: sandsbishop@icloud.com or 267467

From Sue Bishop

Men's Breakfast

The next "Full English" breakfast is in Great Livermere Village Hall 8.30 - 9.45 January 28th. Only £3 a session.

The speaker will be Rt Rev Timothy Stevens. His chosen subject is "The end of the peer show?". A topical talk about the House of Lords in which he sat for many years as a Bishop.

Please email Simon Charlton if you are coming and bringing others, so he can plan the food accordingly: simoncharlton60@yahoo.co.uk

From Rev. Tony Redman

Honington School

Well, Christmas certainly came to Honington School! We have been busy performing *Everyone Loves a Baby* and *Cinderella Rockafella* to parents, carers and some local residents.

Our Christmas Fayre raised an incredible £1,585 for school funds and Father Christmas even managed to take some time out of his busy schedule to visit us.

Years 5 & 6 had an outing to Thurston Community College for an afternoon of Carols and to watch Thurston's Christmas Showcase. The school would like to wish the residents of Honington and Sapiston a happy and peaceful New Year.

Scout Group

The end of the year has arrived and with December came lots of festive activities. The group contributed to the less fortunate by collecting food donations for the Thetford food hampers.

Beavers enjoyed a Beaveree at the end of November with Beavers from across the Bury St Edmunds district taking part in many Christmas activities, including creating decorative sleeves for the tins of food they all donated. These were then donated to a couple of local foodbanks. We have also done some Christmas crafting and end of term party with festive themed games.

Cubs had a night of crafting and their final evening was an escape from the gingerbread house event. Scouts have been crafting and partying also, and in addition had a visitor to assist with learning and improving their first aid skills. We wish the community a happy and prosperous new year.

From Jan Neary

Shooting Prospects

The bird flu outbreak in the UK seems to be tailing off, and the prospects for wild birds seem to be improving. It has been a challenging time, however, for our local game shoots. First covid, then the covid recovery year, and then bird flu issues. It's been difficult.

Although some shoots have their own game birds many last year still needed to buy eggs. About 50% are usually imported from France - but last year stocks were limited as the French put a ban on all exports. Adam Gwillam, who runs three commercial shoots said he can only operate two this season as he couldn't source sufficient eggs or chicks.

He has already ordered 50% of next season's eggs from Spain to reduce the risk of being wholly dependent on France. He is optimistic for the 2023 season. He thought that if he can't rear any pheasants due to avian flu, he could perhaps just do partridges as they don't seem so susceptible.

From Paul Jeavons

Restrictions on Gun Dogs

Local vet Mark Elliot, says that for the the game rearing, game releasing and game keeping sector, the impact of avian flu is almost the equivalent of foot & mouth. It's important that we take all the steps that we can to stop the stop the spread.

"If you're going shooting, don't turn up from being on another estate with mud around your wheel arches and drive on to a different estate."

While the National Gamekeepers Organisation want guns banned from bringing gun-dogs while bird flu is rife, others take a different view. Mark says that if people do take their dogs shooting, it's essential they are clean too.

"We don't dunk dogs in disinfectant, but dogs have been flagged as a potential risk. DEFRA has specifically flagged them in their risk assessment - the risk may be low, but it's not zero. If you have been travelling with your dog to areas where there's infected bird flu, don't go to your local shoot for two or three days if possible."

From Tim Weston, for National Gamekeepers Association

Farming Challenges 2023

After a tumultuous 12 months in farming, 2023 does not look like it will provide a significant turnaround in prospects. The economic downturn is expected to continue throughout this year.

Further, the shifting sands of agricultural policy, further impacts of climate change and soaring input prices are all likely to be key influences on the rural economy. Brexit, the elephant in the room, has also not brought the expected benefits as we lost EU markets, added paperwork at borders, face potential deregulation and drop in food production standards.

Last year's harvest were likely to have been profitable for those lucky arable growers who purchased the bulk of their inputs before the massive increases in input costs and benefited from buoyant grain prices. But looking ahead, input costs for harvest 2023 will be significantly higher - and commodity prices have also eased back from the highs seen earlier in the year. Higher working capital requirements will put a squeeze on profitability and have a big impact on cashflow.

Environmental groups will (rightly) continue to push policymakers to recognise nature recovery is just as important as reducing greenhouse gas emissions. In the near future, regenerative farming techniques and active habitat management will become more important. Indeed, our research has shown enhancing wildlife margins can have a positive effect on crop production; farm profits can increase even if the area cropped is reduced.

Of course, grants to help future-proof your business are worth seeking out. For example, farmers in England have until 31 January to apply for grants of up to £250,000 to replace, build or expand existing slurry stores so that they have six months' storage capacity. A new Rural England Prosperity Fund is also on its way, which could be useful for farmers looking to diversify.

The effects of climate change are becoming clearer every day; heatwaves, flooding and disease risks seem to be increasing for the arable, livestock and forestry sectors. For example: the forestry sector is seeing the spruce bark beetle and the oak processionary moth spread in East Anglia. Woodland owners are advised to actively monitor their woodlands and plan ahead.

From Rhodri Thomas, Strutt & Parker

Have your say

We all know our health service is in trouble. Join the conversation to help the NHS shape the emerging Suffolk and North East Essex Integrated Care System - SNEE.

Go to the *Working Together to Make Things Better* link on the *Let's Talk SNEE* home page. Contribute your ideas and thoughts on how we can work together to make things better in the future - the aim is to connect Primary Care (GPs), Acute Care (Hospitals) and Social Care (Local Government) more effectively.

Your ideas could be at a very local level in your community, your town, your county or across the whole of the Suffolk and North East Essex Integrated Care Board area.

Please email Katie.sargeant@suffolk.nhs.uk if you need more information.

From Paula Martin, Community Liaison Officer

Levelling Up

I am enormously pleased that our beloved Theatre Royal in the heart of Bury, alongside the wonderful Food Museum (formerly the museum of East Anglian Life) will benefit as part of the Government's Levelling Up agenda. The Theatre Royal is set to receive £220,000, providing a long-term investment in a theatre that sits very much in the heart of our constituency. I know that like me, many people in Bury will have visited the Theatre Royal throughout their lives, and its importance as a place of creativity and culture is undeniably important. In addition, this funding will be instrumental in supporting the next generation of creators, performers and artists on their journey.

In addition, the Food Museum will gain £358,000 through the grant. Having visited the museum numerous times both in its previous life as well as since its renewal, I have been enormously impressed by their contribution to Suffolk's rich agricultural heritage, both through education of locals and visitors alike about our unique position as the 'Breadbasket of England' as well as through attracting numerous tourists and visitors to our wonderful area.

From Jo Churchill, MP

Suffolk Devolution

A devolution deal was signed in December to give Suffolk more power over spending. There will not be a mayor as in previously proposed devolution deals...

The landmark half a billion-pound deal places money and power over building, regeneration and skills into the hands of the elected leaders in Suffolk who know best what is required to level up and meet our region's ambitions. The investment fund is guaranteed for the next thirty years, enabling the county to drive growth and plan for the long-term with certainty as we look to unlock our economic potential.

The deal also sets out the government's plans to devolve more power to Suffolk County Council through:

Investment: It will bring decades of funding worth £480 million to improve the lives of Suffolk's residents and spend on their local priorities.

Housing: The deal will provide £5.8 million to regenerate brownfield land into beautiful, affordable homes and drive economic growth across the area; Suffolk will also receive greater compulsory purchase powers.

Education: The agreement devolves the Adult Education Budget so they can shape provision in a way that best suits the needs of residents and the local Suffolk economy.

Transport: An integrated transport settlement starting in 2024/25, to support the area to improve key transport infrastructure priorities.

The Environment: The new deal will help Suffolk deliver on its ambitions to be the country's greenest county with £3 million to improve energy efficiency in homes.

From Matthew Hicks, Leader Suffolk County Council

Next Meeting?

The next Parish Council Meeting is scheduled for **Tuesday 7th March at 19.00** 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

