



Troston Annual Parish Meeting and Parish Council Meeting – 6th May

The Parish Council currently have two vacancies for councillors. Joining the Parish Council can be very rewarding if you wish to contribute to the local community. Anyone interested in becoming a councillor or just wanting more information can contact the Clerk - clerk@troston-pc.gov.uk - or any of the current councillors.

Rebecca Hopfensperger and Andrew Speed were unable to attend the meeting, but Rebecca sent a report covering current issues affecting the parish. Highways continues to be a hot topic of conversation – any issues can be reported directly on the Suffolk Highways website or reported to the Parish Clerk so she can report them. Local Government Reform (Devolution) discussions continue – anyone interested in knowing more or seeing the current position can visit the Suffolk County Council website for the latest updates - <https://www.suffolk.gov.uk/council-and-democracy/council-news>

The Chair of the village hall management committee reported on the past year's events/activities – the Parish Council thanked all the committee for their hard work and efforts over the past year.

Dr Graeme Norris submitted a report from the Ixworth Surgery Patients' Association and thanked the Parish Council for their donation to the charity.

Diana Bilverstone was elected as Chairman and Peter Riddick was elected as Vice Chair.

It has been confirmed that the new zip-wire will be delivered and installed by the end of May.

The Parish Council will continue with general maintenance works within Troston Wood – more community work days will be arranged during the warmer months.

The village website is being updated by Cllr Des Pugson – the aim is to make the website more 'user friendly' and appealing.

Our next meeting will include discussions on improving community communication and interaction within the village, and possible future plans for a community garden and/or orchard – both topics which have been raised by local residents. If you have any ideas/thoughts on these or any other matters, please either contact the Parish Clerk or come along to our next meeting.

The full minutes for the meeting will be available as on the website - <https://troston-pc.gov.uk>

Date of the next meeting **1st July 2025 - at 7pm** in the Village Hall.

From Diana Bilverstone, Chair Troston Parish Council

Church News

Now that the internal decoration of the church is complete, there has been a steady stream of visitors coming to admire the magnificent wall paintings and the medieval graffiti. Do pop in and take a look, although the door is a little stiff, it is always open, just pull it towards you.

The church is for everyone, as a historic building as well as a place of worship. If there is any aspect you would like to get involved with, please feel free to speak me.

Services take place on the second and fourth Sunday of the month:

- 2nd Sunday 11 am Communion Service
- 4th Sunday 3pm a more Informal Service

All welcome.

From Jane Harland

Village Hall

The Committee has continued to ensure the smooth running of the Village Hall on a day to day basis. The hall is insured, cleaned, and energy and servicing bills are paid. Unfortunately bookings have dropped significantly and costs are rising which means our income no longer meets expenditure. We do hope more people will want to hire the hall in the future as this is our only source of income.

Following reports of falling tiles and a Condition Survey reporting the deteriorating state of one side of the Hall roof, major repair work has been carried out. This has been funded by grants from the Government funded West Suffolk Community Fund, and from our Council and Borough Councillors and the Parish Council, and donations from the Church and a village resident. We have also had to use most of the reserve saved by the Management Committee. We are very grateful to everyone involved in making it possible to go ahead with the work and to John Cutmore for carrying out the project so sympathetically.

Many of us on the committee are well past retirement age and feel we need to pass the responsibility for the Village Hall on to the next generation. We do hope that you will want to come forward and help to support this important village asset and further develop its use for our residents.

Thanks to the Committee for their commitment to maintaining the hall during the past year.

For all enquiries and bookings, please contact Sue Bishop. To check availability, book or have a look round, please contact me on 269467. Remember, residents have a special rate of just £10 an hour.

From Brenda Burridge

Weather Woes

There is a saying that farmers are never happy with the weather, either it's too wet, too dry, too windy, and so the list goes on, but you would all I'm sure agree that is incredibly dry and seems to be set that way until at least mid-May.

The effect it has on my role is considerable, everything has been about retaining the moisture in the soil to plant spring crops, a challenge at the best of times. The light land at Troston has limited ability to retain the moisture meaning its very free draining, extremely helpful in a wet time, quite the reverse in a dry time. The soil type is one of the reasons we have changed the cropping to include sunflowers which can tolerate dry conditions very well, they are fantastic nutrient scavengers and are cheap to grow but you need a lot of patience and some luck when you harvest them.

Agriculture is facing many challenges, not just the weather, so managing the risk of growing crops on light land has never been more important. Let's hope the sunflowers we grow establish well and can be enjoyed by the village and as we edge closer to harvest please bear with the dust and the noise and the slow-moving traffic at times in and around the village, it doesn't last long....

From Edward Vipond, Troston Farms

The WI

Our meetings always have an interesting speaker. Jude Law who is a volunteer at Fullers Mill Garden shared the history of Fullers Mill along with a detailed walk through the layout of the garden and provided her extensive knowledge of the unique plants, trees and shrubs the late Bernard Tickner chose to include.

Jude explained how the garden is ever evolving and educated us on the importance of placement when it comes to plants thriving.

For April's meeting we were joined by Trevor White, a local Bee Keeper. Trevor took up the hobby when he retired. We learnt how Bees communicate by dancing to tell others where to find the closest nectar. There were plenty of questions to keep Trevor on his toes throughout the evening! After the fascinating talk, we then had the opportunity to purchase some of his delicious honey.

If you would like to join in please do come along or contact Tricia tel. 268442 or email honingtonandsapistonwi@gmail.com to find out more.

From Joanne Hoyle

Calthorpe and Edwards Educational Foundation

Please apply to us before September for grants that might help you - or the young people in your family. The Foundation was founded to help students in our area with a grant for studies in Further Education. This means University, Further Education College, Medical School and similar establishments. It excludes courses that could have been attended at School.

The Governors limit assistance initially for a maximum of three years and to people under 25 years of age. The period may, at the Governors' discretion, be extended a year at a time when appropriate, but not beyond the age limit. The grant is paid in three termly instalments of around £100.

For more information contact Mrs Rosemary Boswell: phone 01284728199 or email: boswellrg444@outlook.com

From John Browning, Trustee

Farm News

The Euston Estate is combining Open Farm Sunday with the popular annual flower festival at the Church. The Flower Festival is open from 11am-5pm on Saturday 7th and Sunday 8th June. Open Farm Sunday will again be offering tractor and trailer rides (leaving from the church) together with livestock and machinery. Refreshments are available throughout the day. An exciting new addition is a 'Scarecrow Trail' – all entries welcomed!

Further information from me at the Estate Office. £2 car park and booklet, with all profits to local charities. 01842 766366 or hilary@euston-estate.co.uk

From Hilary Philpot, The Euston Estate

Muntjac Increase

These days seeing a muntjac in the fields - and, alas, gardens - of Troston is nothing out of the ordinary. Unlike other deer in Suffolk, that is fallow, red and roe, it seems the muntjac is able to thrive in close vicinity to humans.

Indeed, Euston Estate director, Robert Childerhouse, said he was only too aware that these animals have boomed in numbers over recent years, and has become an invasive pest that is responsible for much damage to our native flora. The number living near us is difficult to estimate due to their elusive nature but some 30 were estimated by Suffolk Wildlife Trust to be in close proximity to Troston.

Their full name is the *Reeves Muntjac*, named after tea inspector John Russell Reeves who first imported the species to Britain in 1839. A large shipment arrived at the turn of the twentieth century to form part of an exotic deer collection being assembled by 11th Duke of Bedford at Woburn. Inevitably some escaped and bred to become the most widely distributed deer in Suffolk after the native roe deer.

Although they are solitary animals and territorial, muntjacs are also reasonably tolerant of each other, so can exist in high densities. But their size belies a fiery nature, stag muntjac are aggressive when cornered and the fangs that protrude downwards from their mouth are razor sharp.

Another key factor, which separates muntjac from all other species of deer found in the UK is that they do not have a specific breeding season and mate all year round. The female can mate soon after giving birth, so she spends most of her life pregnant. Even considering that muntjacs have a single offspring after each seven-month gestation, it doesn't take a great brain to realise that this is an adaptation for exponential growth.

But it's not just muntjac numbers that are on the up. Without any natural predators, all deer species are increasing and causing devastation by eating large amounts of agricultural crops and damaging woodland biodiversity. A recent study of Knettishall Heath reported deer had significantly reduced the understorey foliage, resulting in a loss of plants like bluebells and habitat for nesting birds, butterflies and other insects. Even the most ardent conservationists agree some deer, including muntjac, need to be culled to manage numbers.

From Charles Smith-Jones

Scout Group

The Group meet at St Edmunds Church, RAF Honington. We have Beavers for children aged 6-8, Cubs for 8-10½ year olds and for 10½ -14 year olds we have Scouts. Our usual meeting days are Monday 6.30pm-8pm for Cubs, Tuesday 6.15pm-7.30pm for Beavers and Wednesday 7pm-9pm for Scouts. We are run by a small, dedicated team of volunteers and new adult volunteers are always welcome either to help run the Sections or to help manage the Group.

Since Christmas our Beavers have taken part in the District Ten Pin Bowling competition, held their own highland games, visited space, identifying planets and constellations and each member taking the part of a planet or moon brought the solar system to life. They have had a sleepover, a Lego night and enjoyed pancakes. Cubs have built Airfix models, been Ten Pin Bowling, taken a trip to Laser Quest, tried their hand at pancake art, held their own highland games and have been creative. Scouts had a frostbite camp, all waking up to frost on their tents and a campfire to warm themselves, they have hiked, taken part in and won the District quiz, enjoyed pancake art, learned about different stoves and fires and how to use them safely and enjoyed a trip to Planet Laser.

This term much of our programme will be outside with Scouts hiking, fire lighting, map reading and learning knives, saws and axes skills, Cubs and Beavers have an upcoming camp, Cubs will be hiking, enjoying a campfire, having an evening arranged by our Young Leaders, a presentation by one of our Young Leaders about the work of the Riding for the Disabled and an escape room. Beavers are concentrating on safety and first aid, den building, hiking, campfire and science experiments. All three Sections will finish the term with water fights and games. Members of all three Sections have also taken part in a Group fundraising day and we will be holding our AGM at the end of May.

If you are interested in your child joining one of our Sections or you would like to volunteer, please contact Judy Brooks e-mail judy.brooks2010@btinternet.com,

phone number 07805 777162 or Martin Brooks e-mail gsl1sthonington@gmail.com,
phone number 07531 560701.

From Andrew Freeman

Update from the Surgery

Two new GPs had joined Ixworth Surgery: Dr Claire Brooke, who specialises in women's health, and Dr Ifeoma Oluhara, who is a registrar and will be with the Practice for the next six months.

The Surgery had been proactive in offering flu, covid and RSV jabs as vaccines. Alas, about 50% of eligible patients are choosing not to have the jab...

The decision to proceed with the development of some 2000 homes in the Surgery's catchment area was obviously going to increase the demand for Primary Care - a concern which has been raised with the Suffolk Integrated Care Board - but to no effect it seems? (Interesting perhaps to note the Suffolk ICB was recently declared by the NHS as as "a national exemplar for improving population health" and "in the highest performing category" - yet face a 50% - yes, 50% - cut in budget. The West Suffolk Hospital are in the process of selecting where...).

The lack of adequate parking space at the Surgery continues to create problems. Particularly, it seems, on Tuesdays. Residents of Peddars Close were complaining about patients parking outside their houses and on the grass areas. Indeed, West Suffolk Parking Enforcement Officers are intensifying interest in double yellow parking infringements in and around the surgery. Be warned!

The transport service continues to be busy and we are seeking more volunteer drivers to meet the increasing demand for help. Mileage claims will be met. Please contact me at the Surgery 01359 230252 or Ray 01842 898414 for more information.

From Sarah Clarke, Operations Manager

Next Newsletter

Please email me possible items you think would interest local residents for the next Newsletter. The deadline is **15.00 Thursday 3rd July**. Articles may be edited, of course, to fit the space available.

Any opinions expressed in these articles will be solely the author's and do not necessarily reflect my opinions or of the Parish Council.

If you would like a copy (bcc so your address is hidden) emailed to you every two months please send me your address: graemenorris46@gmail.com

From Graeme Norris, Editor
