



## Parish Council News

Since the last newsletter we have welcomed three residents that have been co-opted onto the Council as new councillors, Mr David Mouncey, Dr Graeme Norris and Ms Pip Fletcher.

The Old Piggery: At our last meeting a representative from Troston Farms attended to update the Parish Council on current plans for Lower Farm. The contract to farm pigs on the site finished in December 2025, there will still be pig farming but in a different location out of the village. He advised that under permitted develop they would like to convert 3 existing farm buildings into 7 residential private homes.

There are strict requirements when building under permitted develop and these would need to be adhered to, including the need to be completed within a 3-year time period from the time of approval. This plan is at the very early stages, and it was felt that residents would benefit from Troston Farms hosting a public meeting so more information can be understood. The Parish Council will keep all residents updated on any further information received.

Troston Wood management days: The Parish Council have drawn up a management/maintenance plan for Troston Wood, which includes keeping the paths clear, making sure the sculptures and tables are maintained and the area is kept free of litter. This plan ensures that local residents can access and use the area while keeping the biodiversity/wildlife in the wood as a top priority.

We will arrange dates for organised maintenance that local residents can get involved with – giving everyone a chance to visit the wood, enjoy the area and help, in whatever way they feel capable, to keep the wood looking at its best. We are always grateful and really appreciate anyone who helps out in any capacity to improve the parish.

These dates need to be arranged by the Parish Council to ensure the correct risk assessments and insurance cover applies to any work undertaken in the woods as unfortunately any work done outside of council arranged dates would mean that individuals are not covered by any insurance.

If at any time a resident becomes aware of any maintenance that may need addressing in the woods, please contact the Parish Council via the Clerk

(clerk@troston-pc.gov.uk) so this can be added to the next scheduled maintenance event.

Annual Village Meeting: 14th April 2026 – 7pm in the Village Hall – this is an opportunity for all parish residents to come along and contribute to ideas for the village, ask questions and gain information.

It is an informal evening which will be used to discuss ideas of improving the playing field area for all residents, talk about the plans for the Lower Farm site and give comments and ask questions about anything else relating to the parish.

Free light refreshments will be available, cheese and wine, tea, coffee, soft drinks. We would like to encourage as many residents to attend as possible to give everyone a chance to have a say in matters relating to our lovely village.

Our next Parish Council meeting: **Tuesday 7th April 2026 at 7pm** in the village hall.

*From Diana Bilverstone, Chair of Troston Parish Council*

### **Thank You for Supporting Our Village Hall**

A heartfelt thank you to everyone who has supported the Village Lottery in aid of the Village Hall repairs. Thanks to your generosity and continued participation, we have been able to raise valuable funds towards essential repairs, helping to preserve and protect our much-loved hall for years to come.

The Village Hall truly sits at the heart of village life, and it is only through the support of residents that we are able to care for it properly. Every lottery number purchased makes a real difference. If you would like to join please contact trostonvillagehall@outlook.com. We look forward to hearing from new players.

### This Month's Winners

Congratulations to our lucky winners:

 1st Prize: Andrew Britten

 3rd Prize: Elizabeth Walton

 2nd Prize: Stephen Bilverstone

## Quiz & Chilli Supper

Thank you to everyone who has booked for the Quiz and Chilli Supper. We're looking forward to a fun, friendly evening together and really appreciate your support.

## Spring Fare – We Need Your Help

We are now planning our Spring Fare and would love some help from the village. We are looking for:



Cake bakers



Plants to sell



Helpers to set up and clear away

If you can lend a hand in any way, please email [trostonvillagehall@outlook.com](mailto:trostonvillagehall@outlook.com) with your name and how you are able to help.

## Dates for Your Diary

- . Quiz & Chilli Supper – 7th March.
- . Spring Fare – 25th April.
- . Village Lottery Draw – Bi Monthly draw at the Parish Council meeting.
- . Rural Coffee Caravan - 11th March and 8th April 10 to 12 noon.

We look forward to seeing you at our events!

## Join Our Village Hall Committee

We are looking for a few enthusiastic residents to join our small friendly committee to help organise events throughout the year.

We are not asking for a huge commitment -just people who are willing to share ideas, lend a hand planning, and help bring events to life. Whether it's quiz nights, seasonal fairs, coffee mornings or new ideas you'd like to introduce, your input would be truly valued.

Please get in touch with Diane Bilverstone [trostonvillagehall@outlook.com](mailto:trostonvillagehall@outlook.com) if you're interested or would like to find out more.

*From the Village Hall Committee*

## **New Waste Bins**

Starting this June, West Suffolk Council is introducing major changes to bin collections to comply with new government regulations. Households will receive new bins to separate paper/cardboard from other recyclables (plastics, metals, glass) and a food waste caddy. The general “Black Bin” waste will remain on a fortnightly schedule.

The current co-mingled method of collecting recycling in one “Blue Bin” means that a large amount of the paper and card collected is contaminated by the other items - and with an additional recycling bin, will transform the quality of materials for re-use, with huge environmental benefits.

Note: The existing garden waste (brown bin) subscription service remains separate.

*From Sally Noble*

## **Not so Sure?**

Not all Councils across Suffolk are convinced... they warn that the rollout of food waste collection under the “simpler recycling” reforms places disproportionate cost burdens on large, geographically dispersed areas.

*From Kerry Booth, Chief Executive of the Rural Services Network*

## **Parking**

For us rural folk, being able to drive and park in Bury is important.

So a Conservative proposal to add periods of free parking in Bury (plus Haverhill and Newmarket) has to be a good idea - but it was only narrowly passed. Indeed, it caused some dismay to the administration run by a coalition known as the West Suffolk Progressive Alliance - which includes Labour, Liberal Democrat, Green, and non-affiliated members.

We very much hope it will encourage shopping and visitors to the main towns and support the High Street generally. We need a thriving economy to fund services.

*From Andrew Speed, Ward Councillor for Pakenham & Troston*

## **Unmet Promises**

We can all see the major development of new houses around and in Bury St. Edmunds. West Suffolk Council, however, have only granted 65% of new housing applications last year to September 2025 - compared to 75% across the rest of Suffolk. The Government’s target (and associated continuing

funding support) for West Suffolk is based on delivering 1195 new homes a year - but, in fact, only 705 have been added per year on average between 2022 and 2025.

West Suffolk's Progressive Alliance are probably facing questions as the Government were elected on promises of making the planning process more flexible - and delivering affordable homes.

*From Dan Wainwright, Journalist*

## **Scout Group News**

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.

This half term, the Beavers made bird feeders and identified different types of birds. They celebrated Chinese New Year with some crafts, trivia and games. They also had a parliamentary debate, while learning what MPs do. This all put some good work to their challenge activity badges.

The Cubs have been busy looking at food groups, what they eat and the journey from field to plate. They also spent time learning about money, exchange rates and how global spending impacts us and wider things. There was also a night on program planning to the Cubs could incorporate what they'd like to do going forward. The Scouts had the final visit to our tree to complete the Green Tree Project which has been running for the past 12 months. They started the plan for their lightweight hike, improving their map skills. There was a fire lighting night with a small fire and snacks, and they built a balsa plane to fly next term.

All Sections had the opportunity to go and watch Rapunzel at the Theatre Royal and have enjoyed the District bowling competition for each section. They have all started to set out their personal challenges which is further work toward their challenge badges.

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](mailto:judy.brooks2010@btinternet.com), phone number 07805 777162 or Martin Brooks e-mail [gsl1sthonington@gmail.com](mailto:gsl1sthonington@gmail.com), phone number 07531 560701.

*From Andrew Freeman*

## **Church News**

Monthly Services:

- Second Sunday of the month: Holy Communion at 11am.
- The fourth Sunday of the month: An informal service of discussion with refreshments at 3pm.

All services within the local area can always be found on The Blackbourne Team Ministry Facebook page as well as the Troston Facebook Page.

*From Jane Harland*

## **Women's Institute**

February saw us welcome the East Anglian Air Ambulance (EAAA) for a demonstration on providing the very important skill of CPR and basic first aid.

Members were walked through how to look out for cardiac arrest and how to calmly use a defibrillator and perform CPR if needed. We learnt that a single helicopter trip for the EAAA is around £4250, with an average of five call outs a day! They rely heavily on donations from the public to continue running and saving lives.

If you fancy coming along to one of our meetings, please email [honingtonsapistonwi@gmail.com](mailto:honingtonsapistonwi@gmail.com), we have a range of speakers each year and would love to see you.

*From Joanne Hoyle, Co President*

## **What's happening to the old Piggery?**

Troston Farms is in the process of submitting a General Permitted Development or Class Q application to West Suffolk Council for the conversion of three agricultural buildings to residential dwellings at Lower Farm. The conversion is limited to three buildings creating seven dwellings on the site which will be converted using the existing structure and be capped at 1000 square meters floor space.

The Class Q submission follows the departure of the pigs from Lower Farm with the ambition to expand the pig housing facilities at Chicory Farm - the site of an existing pig finishing building which is further away from the village. The expansion of the pig finishing capacity is important for the farm and the bio-security of the pigs themselves and avoids 'pig-miles' taking the weaned pigs to an alternative finishing housing.

*From Edward Vipond, Farms Director*

## **A little bit of Context**

Troston Farms have put forward various proposals over the years to remove the dilapidated buildings of Lower Farm Piggery and the old Slaughter House. Plans for 24 new homes on the site have always been rejected by West Suffolk Council. Troston is classed as a "Type B" infill-village with only a limited range of services and facilities. Only developments of five homes or less within the designated housing settlement boundary will be permitted.

In May 2024, the law changed. Unused farm buildings can now be converted into up to 10 residential homes or commercial spaces (e.g., shops, cafes) without full planning permission, under expanded Class Q and Class R permitted development rights.

These rules apply to agricultural buildings, allowing a one-time maximum of 1,000 square meters of floor space for conversions. Individual homes are generally capped at 150 square meters. Buildings must have been used for agricultural purposes on or before 24th July 2023.

While full planning isn't required, "prior approval" must be obtained regarding aspects like transport, noise, and flood risks. The Council will consider factors like:

- Conversion without significant rebuilding?
- Connection to water, electricity, and sewage?
- Proper access to the public highway?

These changes aim to reduce housing shortages in rural locations and provide incentives to farmers to tackle derelict properties.

*From James Riding, Planning Advisor*

## **Little Flyers Group**

Get creative with themed craft each week, unlock your child's imagination with our small world play, beat to our own rhythm with our musical toys and meet other local parents at our fun, friendly family group.

For children aged 0 to 5 and their parents/carers. Free of charge.

Wednesdays 10am to 11:30am - snack break with refreshments provided.

St Edmunds Station Church & Gardens, RAF Honington, IP31 1LU

To book your space contact Honor on 07415 689087 or email:  
[honor@familiestogethersuffolk.org.uk](mailto:honor@familiestogethersuffolk.org.uk)

*From Honor Warner*

## **Spot-On Spot-Off?**

Suffolk Wildlife Trust are becoming increasingly concerned about the overuse of parasiticides - commonly applied as 'spot-on' treatments on dogs and cats to prevent or kill fleas or ticks. These toxic chemicals are making it into our rivers and ponds and killing the many invertebrates that live there.

One monthly flea treatment for a large dog contains enough to kill 25 million bees. In aquatic ecosystems, insect larvae are particularly at risk, such as those of mayfly and dragonfly.

Concerned cat and dog owners should talk to their vets about whether such regular preventative treatments are really needed. In the same way that we only take antibiotics when we're ill - not every month - we may need to apply the same principle to parasite treatments for our pets.

It seems common sense, to use pills rather than spot-on and only use parasiticides when a pet is afflicted by fleas and ticks rather than treating healthy animals. While fleas nowadays tend to be active all year round (due to our tendency to use central heating, kindly providing a nice warm house for our pets' parasites), ticks are still very much seasonal. They are most active in the spring and autumn – when the weather is relatively warm and wet.

*From Dr Andrew Prentis, Vet at The Grantham Institute*

## **Ixworth Surgery News**

The Care Quality Commission visited the Surgery in January and again rated the Practice as "Good in all Categories".

We checked clinical records to seek missed diagnoses and reviewed patient's feedback, Healthwatch Suffolk surveys and spoke with care home representatives. Feedback was positive regarding the professionalism, helpful and caring nature of clinical and non-clinical staff and the clinical care and treatment provided. Feedback was positive regarding access to appointments and addressing health inequalities.

The NHS Friends and Family Test, from 12 January 2025 to 12 January 2026 showed 98% of people rated their overall experience of Ixworth GPs as good or very good.

*From Sarah Buckle & Anna Gleadale, Lead Inspectors CQC*

## **Note:**

This Newsletter is funded by Troston Parish Council. Any opinions expressed in these articles are solely the author's and do not necessarily reflect the opinions of the Parish Council - or the Editor!

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