

**MINUTES of the Annual Parish Assembly on Thursday 25
May 2017 at 7.30p.m.
Held at Stanton Community Village Hall.**

Present: There were 28 people present, these included County Council, Borough and Parish Councillors, Invited representatives from village organisations and members of the public.

Parish Council Chairman Mr. Kelvin McDonald chaired the meeting.

Apologies for absence: Cllr F Hart, Cllr Smithson, Cllr Chapman, Cllr Willcox.

Minutes of the previous Annual Parish Meeting: Proposed by Cllr Mann that the minutes of the previous meeting on 25 May 2016 be accepted as correct. Seconded by Cllr Frizzell.

Report of Chairman – Kelvin McDonald

Having been in Office since December 2016 I would like to thank the previous Chairman Alan Shelton for the many hours and fantastic work he did as Chairman. The whole Council were very sorry to see him leave due to personal circumstances and wish both Alan and his wife Nanette all the very best for the future.

Newly appointed Councillors

We welcome Councillors John Frizzell, Sue Willcox, Brian Brown, and Larry Morris to the Council. Each of them bring their own expertise to the Council from their professional lives and we are very lucky to have such a diverse and experienced Council.

We said Farewell to Cllr Ross Genn and Roland Unsworth who moved away and Cllr Ian Engall who resigned for personal reasons and we wish them all well for the future.

Cemetery

Applications have been submitted by the Parochial Church Council to close the churchyards of St Johns and All Saints for any further burials, except for cremated remains at St Johns and second burials in current graves.

There is no space for any further burials in the Churchyard and therefore the Parish Council Cemetery has been opened with the first burial on 3 May 2016. This is a new experience for the Council who are learning from each occasion that a burial takes place. We would like the grounds to be a quiet and restful place very much in keeping with the Churchyard of St Johns opposite and therefore the rules will remain the same as the St Edmundsbury Diocese rules with each application for burial or memorial being decided on its merits.

Councillors John Frizzell, John Mann, Francis Hart and Sue Willcox have planted Spring bulbs which appeared for the first time this Spring and a new header has been placed on the notice board.

Flooding in the Village

The work on the Grundle grid has been completed and continues to be monitored. Cllr Neil Chapman regularly visits the area to clear the gates and fill the brown bins.

Suffolk County Council are due to visit the site in May to assess the impact of the gates and ensure the likelihood of flooding is reduced.

Street Cleaning

We are very lucky to be able to afford the services of a street Cleaner and are grateful to Kenny Brown who has had no sickness in the last twelve months and turns out in all weathers to keep our village looking nice.

The litter picker employed on Saturday and Sunday mornings left in July 2016 and we have not been able to find a replacement to date.

However, Kenny does open the toilets on a daily basis and has been known to collect litter at the weekends too!

Speeding

The Council has invested £3,500 in a new SID – Speed Indicator device - which you will be seeing pop up at 7 different locations within the village. These devices flash to motorists when they are exceeding the 30mph speed limit and are an effective tool for reducing speeding.

Cllr Larry Morris and John Frizzell are working closely with Peter Palmer, the speedwatch co-ordinator to ensure the new device is placed safely and reduce the level of speeding.

£2000 of the total has come from the locality budget of County Councillor Joanna Spicer for which we are very grateful.

Village Tubs

The tubs have been planted up by Hillcrest nurseries who will shortly be replacing the lovely pansies with another colourful display. Cllr June Miller should be thanked for her regular work in looking after them.

Village Maintenance

A new bench has been purchased and sited at the bottom of the Street near the bus shelter.

New lock down litter bins were purchased at a cost of £300 each to replace old dog litter bins on the recreation ground and to provide extra litter disposal options in the village centre. This has led to a decrease in general littering in the area.

Recreation Ground

Council were very pleased on the completion of a new play area which cost £75,000. Donations of £20,000 were received towards the project. £10,000 from St Edmundsbury Borough Council Rural initiatives grant, £5,000 from Shelbourne Reynolds and £5,000 from Havebury Housing. A new bench with disabled access was purchased. Cllr Ian Engall led on the project and together with myself and my wife even laid the turf at the last minute! Cllr Larry Morris is now keeping a regular eye on things.

The play area was officially opened in July and has proved to be very popular with local children and subject of many compliments.

The toilets on the recreation ground were closed for a few weeks after vandalism and complaints about their condition. Refurbishment cost quotations were extremely high and so they were cleaned up and repainted by myself and Cllr Francis Hart at a cost of less than £200. One toilet was taken out of use and is now a store room. The other is a unisex toilet and a cleaner is employed to clean it 3 times a week.

The skate park and Basketball court, tennis court and MUGA were power washed.

Grass cutting contract

The two-year contract will come to an end in April 2018 by which time Council expects to be handing over the closed churchyard of St Johns and All Saints to St Edmundsbury Borough Council for grass cutting and maintenance.

Bonfire & Firework Night

A very successful night was run in 2016. More and more residents of surrounding villages are coming to Stanton as it is good value and a great display. There were some issues of firework remnants blowing into a field at the back of the recreation ground due to high winds and Cllr Hart helped to clear this up with the resident.

Moving forward we do need to get more residents involved in the organisation of this event if it is to continue

Highways Issues

A number of issues were raised with Suffolk County Council in relation to overgrown hedgerows and the condition of pavements and speeding in George Hill along with minor signage issues elsewhere. A site visit by the Head of Highways was organised and the work to improve George Hill is ongoing. The County Council agreed to let a local contractor cut the hedgerows at George Hill and Old Bury Road for which we were reimbursed. The Council is grateful to County Councillor Joanna Spicer for her relentless work to resolve these issues.

The move to the new school site in Upthorpe Road and the traffic calming scheme was subject of a lot of debate and again resulted in Cllr Spicer convening a meeting of Councillors, Highways and representatives of the School and residents to resolve the issues. Although the scheme is not perfect, things seem to have calmed down considerably as the school settles in to its new surroundings.

New homes

Ongoing issues with the completion of works on the Abbey Homes estate is receiving attention from Cllr Spicer and Borough Cllr Jim Thorndyke with Cllr Brian Brown leading on behalf of the Parish Council. We will continue to liaise until all outstanding items are completed to the satisfaction of residents

Liaison with residents

The Facebook page is proving to be extremely useful for keeping contact with local residents and the Clerk regularly updated any issues that we become aware of that will help keep residents safe. In addition, there is now a fledgling website that is being maintained by the Clerk and Cllr Barbara Smithson

Accounts

At the budget meeting in November 2016 Council agreed on a budget which resulted in a small reduction in Council Tax for all residents. The end of year accounts show a small underspend of £3400 with savings made in administration with a move to BACS payments for invoices and a negotiation of new terms in respect of public liability and contents insurance and an underspend in training..

In the Future

- Cllr Sue Willcox has identified the need for more clubs and activities for young people in the village and in the coming weeks she will be meeting with representatives from St

Edmundsbury Council and village organisations to promote and encourage new activities. More volunteers are required so if you have an idea for a club please let her know.

- Cllr Francis Hart and myself are exploring the possibility of having a 'Beacon' in the village which can be lit on ceremonial occasions.
- Cllr Sue Willcox and Neil Chapman are looking into the provision of a defibrillator.
- It is intended that some village furniture will be replaced and the bus shelter cleaned and repainted.

Finally, I would like to thank the members of the Parish Council who give their time and effort for the benefit of Stanton village. To Joy Hart, our Parish Clerk, Kenny Brown, our Street Cleaner and to Councillors Jim Thorndyke and Joanna Spicer for their continued help and support.

Report of County Councillor Joanna Spicer, Suffolk County Council

I am very pleased to have been re-elected as County Councillor for the Blackbourn Division at the Suffolk County Council elections on May 4th and I undertake to work with parish councils, community groups and residents to secure the best possible service for the area from the County Council.

Firstly, I would like to **thank Kelvin and members of the Parish Council** for their unstinting leadership of the Parish Council over the last year and to Joy for her help and guidance to me and to members. I would also want to take this opportunity to again **thank Alan Shelton** for all his hard work for the people of Stanton. For very many years I have been hugely grateful to Jim Thorndyke for all his hard work for Stanton in numerous ways

The **County Council** has had a challenging year whilst we have sought to maintain front line services this gets more difficult each year. Nearly half of our controllable budget is needed for adult social care and 20% for children's social care and child protection.

The **Energy from Waste facility at Great Blakenham** continues to make big savings for the council. We have made some changes to crewing and vehicle location in our Suffolk Fire and Rescue Service which we are confident will ensure continued safe response times.

Turning to Stanton -

It has been a mixed year for me as your county councilor. Some good news, some frustrating and some difficult to make progress.

For me the best news was the **move of the primary school** last September. All went to plan and the school is now well settled after a few early glitches. Furthermore, the pre-school has also completed their move to Upthorpe Road and are doing well and planning a formal opening ceremony in June. Changes made to the road layout in Upthorpe Road were received with mixed views – but on balance seem to be settling down. The priority was, and must remain, safety of children going to school.

The **former primary school** site has had plans drawn up which include the change of the Victorian buildings back in to 3 houses and 7 new houses on the footprint of the school.

I am pleased to have helped with the funding of some **new VAS equipment** for Community Speedwatch and want to thank all those volunteers who are helping and especially Peter Palmer. There have been continuing concerns around the **GP surgery on The Chase** with parking especially after the surgery in Hopton closed. There are now proposals put forward for a pharmacy at 10 The Chase.

I am relieved we have recently made some progress getting both the legal and structural issues of **The Grundle** sorted out. My thanks to those who have worked hard clearing the grills and protecting the people of Stanton.

We have looked at options to make **George Hill** safer for pedestrians and to manage speed and I hope to take some proposals forward in the next year or two.

Frustrating issues for many people have included the failure of **Abbey Homes** to complete highways issues (as well as other unfinished work). This has meant a huge amount of extra work for SCC as officers have had to bully Abbey Homes to complete agreed work. But that is nothing to what residents have had to put up with.

Highways issues – hedges, potholes, lining, resurfacing have all been tackled this year and will continue to be monitored.

Please note my e mail address is Joanna.spicer@suffolk.gov.uk

Report of Borough Councillor Jim Thorndyke, St Edmundsbury Borough Council

A quiet year again with most of the news being of ongoing progress rather than too much with new projects.

For the last few years we have been **working with Forest Heath** towards a common workforce with the aim of becoming more cost efficient and thus able to provide services without huge increases in council tax, we now have largely the same procedures as Forest Heath avoiding duplication where possible and therefore making savings, many hiccups along the way but now at the state where it is being considered that the two councils should become one, this would involve a larger area and probably a reduction in the number of councillors, maybe from the combined seventy two down to sixty or even less and changes to ward boundaries. Public consultation starts mid-June, that's if both councils agree to proceed to this consultation in early June. Many thoughts but probably one of the biggest headaches is that Forest Heath council tax is currently some £40 a year lower than St Edmundsbury.

West Suffolk Operational Hub (WSOH)

A planning application has been submitted for the West Suffolk Operational Hub, the LPA are yet to confirm when this matter will go to Development Control for a decision possibly late June or early July. Residents have been encouraged to engage with the planning process and many have, there are already well over 80 responses from residents The potential impact of traffic and highways issues – there is a detailed Transport Assessment running to many pages, Environmental issues (noise, light, smell, visual impact, air quality, litter, etc).

Bury St Edmunds Town Centre Masterplan has been out to Public consultation and generated more than 1000 responses with some excellent ideas and suggestions. The masterplan is being co-produced with the Bury St Edmunds Town Centre Masterplan Working Group consisting of representatives from key local organisations. The next step is considering all the responses before producing a draft masterplan that will go back out to consultation in July.

Neighbourhood plan. Several other local villages are working on these and hopefully Stanton will be starting work on its own plan very shortly. A neighbourhood plan is a community led framework for guiding the future development, regeneration and conservation of an area. Neighbourhood plans are subject to a few basic conditions will once approved become legally binding and will become part of the development plan for the area. These conditions include:

- they must have approval through a local referendum
- they must take account of national planning policy
- they must conform generally to the needs for strategic development set out in existing Local Plans (previously the Local Development Framework)
- they cannot provide less development than existing Local Plans but could propose additional development if it was appropriate

Some grants are available to help with costs.

Within the council I am **remaining on the same committees** as last year, main ones being Grant working party, Overview and Scrutiny committee, and Development Control (planning) which I have had the privilege of chairing for the past five years

From my **locality budget** I have made **grants to Stanton pre school, young Bardwell cricket, SGP residents** towards conversion of the old shop building into a community facility and a lightweight scaffold for use in the village hall.

My thanks to Kelvin and Joy and the parish council and to Joanna for the help and guidance they have given me over the past years

Report of Mr Jim Thorndyke – Chairman – Stanton Village Hall Management Committee

This report will cover the village hall year from January 2016 to December 2016 but also adding some information from the first few months of 2017. I will not be producing accounts for 2016 as these have not yet been approved by the committee at their AGM.

Apart from the regular weekly and monthly bookings in 2016 we have had further bookings for over 25 wakes, birthday and other parties and also Christmas events for Bluebell Children's Centre, Shepherds Grove Residents, Stanton Pre School and Stanton Friendship club for these the committee decorate the hall We had monthly bookings organised by the midwives for local expectant mums and their partners, sadly these ceased in January 2017 – not due to a lack of clients but it seems down to cutbacks.

The Borough Council held their Parish Conference here in April 16, then in May we had a full house of over 200 for a police meeting concerning the crime wave the village had been suffering at the time, there were small follow up meetings with police and Flagship in the hall but these were not well publicised so not many people attended.

Another good booking for the hall although only using the Terry Bray room is the visits by the Diabetic Eye Screening team usually in two periods but 22 days in total, sadly in the football season which involves committee in extra work keeping the eye screening equipment secure.

Other annual events include the popular village quiz and the village show.

Last year we suffered some very unwelcome visitors in the early hours of the third of September who left after about five minutes having caused some £4,500 of damage, the police came and did an initial inspection and the hall was secured at around 2am. The scenes of crime arrived on Saturday morning and stayed and stayed, a football match had to be cancelled as we had no access to the changing rooms. Committee members were eventually allowed in on Saturday afternoon to clear up and after temporarily repairing a couple of doors swapping another one and removing the damaged television and other bits the hall was back in use for the next booking at lunchtime on the Sunday.

The resulting insurance claim is still ongoing, it seems that while we responded quickly to the companies emails it would take them four weeks to come back with further requests for information, we supplied them with the pictures and report on what had been damaged and a single quote with a request we could use the local firm that already carried out work in the hall as they could work around hirers thus meaning we did not suffer further loss of income, it took almost six months for them to say they needed another quote again after a further email exchange they gave us permission to proceed with our original quote, now we have finally have the go ahead we find the doors we need to replace are no longer stock items and only available to order with a 40 day delay.

Normal repairs and renewals continue to gobble up our funds, a new boiler and rework in the boiler room to remove of 30 years of modifications cost just under £12k, we were helped with this

with grants of £1k from the parish council and £3,500 from the Borough Council. Other significant spending has included £1,600 on insurance, £1,300 on electricity, £600 on water, £900 on the boiler house roof replacement, and the annual £450 on the two big green waste bins outside. Also £270 on a lockable door handle on the Terry Bray door destroyed by vandals.

More recent spending has been £3,500 on the hall floor to be restored to its former glory, £1,230 on new heaters in the lounge and small hall with switching to prevent them being left on all night, a new chair trolley and replacement rubber wheels for the old trolley to try and further protect the floor. Some £700 on the external LED security lights most now on PIR switching to save electricity. Indeed we try and save electricity and heating oil by every week setting the boiler and air conditioning to suit the bookings for the week ahead.

We lost Les our cleaner who moved to Downham Market but have now got Gill keeping the hall in a clean and tidy condition.

We have further work in the mill including a complete revamp of the guttering round the hall and also new curtains in the small hall and lounge, we have also been investigating solar panels on the roof but the question over this is how much shadow is cast from protected trees behind the hall.

Thanks to all members of the VH committee.

Report of Mr Jim Thorndyke – Stanton Cinema Club

This report will cover the village cinema year from August 2015 to July 2016 but also adding some information from then to the current time and as we have not been asked to report before a little bit of history.

The cinema group came together in early 2012 and following a few meetings started showing films in October 2012, we borrowed a set of kit, two cars full, each month from the Suffolk Cinema Network which we had to collect from and return it to Mildenhall, Stonham Aspal or Sudbury depending on which kit was available, then we had to assemble the screen, cobble together a platform for the projector and string wires for the speakers, not very satisfactory but it worked. Our first film, The best exotic marigold hotel saw an audience of 133, this was followed by War Horse with 81, figures have not always been that good but our monthly average sits on 61 over 57 shows and to date we have entertained some 3,500 visitors.

We soon realised that to continue operating it was not very practical to continue spending half of Friday collecting and Saturday morning returning kit to its home location and that our own kit was needed, we discussed our needs with a local firm with experience in the market and we managed to secure an awards for all grant and some funding from Joanna's SCC locality budget and spent some £7k on what we thought was a good set up, blinds were installed by April 2013 part funded with a grant from the borough council but from then on then we suffered technical problems with the installation and although we managed with one exception to get through each show successfully the crew permanently had everything crossed, one example was the night all overheat lights came on on the projector for most of the second half of the film, we were watching the lights but thankfully the audience were watching the film.

Most of these problems were subsequently found to be HDMI cable related problems and eventually we bit the bullet and spent out on a new cat7 cable system which thankfully works.

During the period Alan and I have travelled around purchasing chairs which have a bit more padding than the village hall seats, 55 came from a club in Milton Keynes, others have been sourced in Peterborough and elsewhere.

Apart from the film shows we have also supported others with use of our equipment including the village quiz and the football club race nights.

Sadly midway through 2016 we said goodbye to our chairman, the man who had masterminded our early days but who had health issues not helped by our ongoing problems, at the same time we also lost his good lady who ran our ticket sales operation.

In the last year we have had a mixed programme of almost current films and have maintained audience figures for which we are very appreciative and are now thankful that Celia has joined us and is doing a great job selling tickets.

Throughout all this time our original ladies have continued to enthusiastically organise refreshments including several flavours of ice cream and we have had the bar open for most of the shows, and all this together with a monthly raffle has allowed us to not only keep our heads above water but also fund our own chairs and ongoing improvements to our equipment.

An idea of average costs for each show include hall hire of around £30, advertising about £30 and film costs of around £150 although this can be as high as the £265 for Quartet.

We have also been visited by and able to assist other groups starting out with advice, both technical, film suppliers and more, notably groups from Ixworth, Fornham and indeed earlier this month I spent an afternoon helping at Cockfield with several issues that were making them consider giving up, thankfully we managed to work through and improve their set up .

Report of Sue Chapman – Head Teacher, Stanton Primary School

Also present was Charlotte Hare, Chair of Governors.

It has been an extremely challenging year with the move to the new site which went to the wire at the start of term. After a week, we had a huge downpour and discovered holes in the roof. The water also came up through the floor causing damage and flooding a classroom.

We are now very privileged to have a lot of room for activities. We have a new IT suite, separate rooms for Art and a separate dining room which means that the hall can be used for activities very lunchtime.

The nursery now has two big classrooms and a lovely outside play area.

There are still things to be done especially with the fabric of the building such as the roof and the footpaths. There are issues with the heating also. Cllr Spicer kindly donated money towards new carpeting but there is still some more to be replaced.

The school has a huge field despite some of it being fenced off. We have been successful in gaining lottery funding of £10,000 and a £10,000 grant from the Tesco bags scheme to improve our outdoor play area and create a wildlife woodland.

The children love the new site. We have an amazing space now and it is a pleasure to work there.

Report on Stanton Steamer – Mr Peter Palmer

The Editors and its delivery team of volunteers has completed its 20th year of production to provide a community information service to over 1300 homes. The Editors are pleased to announce that they have agreed to fund the new stone plaque commemorating the village men that gave their lives in the first and second world wars. This new monument will supplement the brass plaques

in All Saints Church that have become worn and indecipherable over the many years of loving care. The centenary stone will honour the end of the Great War in November 2018.

Report on Stanton Community Speed Watch – Mr Peter Palmer

The High Sherriff of Suffolk awarded the Suffolk Speed Watch Team the Corporate Community Partnership of the Year Award for 2017 in recognition of the positive contribution thy have made to the local community.

The Speed Watch radar gun was deployed 24 times this year reporting 420 vehicles speeding on George Hill to the police. The Vehicle Activated System (VAS) was also deployed on various sites within the 30MPH areas of the village. This Highways VAS is no longer supported by any maintenance agreement, and is beginning to show its age with wear and tear. The devise is shared with two other villages and therefore has limited availability.

Both the Parish and District Council have been paramount in raising the funds to purchase a new Mini Speed Activated Device (SID) for the village which is being deployed on the newly erected posts within the Parish 30MPH areas. The Speed watch team is grateful to the Parish Councillors in supporting this venture to provide education and promote safety to those selfless drivers that disregard the speed limit putting other road and path users, pedestrians and cyclists at risk.

Report of the Blackbourne Local History Society – Mr Peter Palmer

The Society, founded in 1982, normally meets on last Tuesday of the month at the Church Rooms from September to April with talks on local and national history events. In addition, a Spring/Summer trip is arranged, last year we spent a cold but very interesting walk/talk to view the important properties of Walsham le Willows ending with a welcome hot drink and nibbles. Talks last year ranged from ‘Entertainment in Elizabethan England’, to the ‘History of Sea Shanties’, complete with Shanty singing!

Report of Stan Co-Co Trust - Mr Ian Engall

Trustees - As Village Trust

Membership – 1. The trustees of the Stanton Village Trust

2. Any resident of Stanton Parish who has subscribed not less than £7 to the Stan Coco Tote or by donation to the Trust during the previous financial year.

Objects

- The provision of grants to any or all of the voluntary organizations operating within the parish of Stanton for the general purpose of improving the amenities of the said parish.
- To enable and assist any voluntary group in the village regardless of status.
- To provide funds for the charitable Trust known as ‘The Stanton Village Trust’.

There was a net gain of 40 members in the Tote, thanks to the welcome number of new members recruited by our collectors, for whose continued monthly effort we are very grateful. We have a vacancy for a collector on Shepherds Grove Park and for the new Housing Estate on Hepworth Road. Any help in these areas would be gratefully received. Unusually, this year, we had no requests for assistance.

Our available funds carried forward should suffice for expected needs, although we would always welcome more members for the Tote which is our main source of income, or straight donations. A copy of the audited accounts for year ending 31st December 2015 was also submitted

Report of Stanton Village Trust - Mr. I Engall.

The Stan Co Co Tote began 2016 with 254 subscribers reducing to 251 at the year end. During the year Stan Co Co gave grants to the Stanton Village Trust, Ixworth patients Assn (Stanton Residents), West Suffolk Volunteers Assn for the blind (Stanton residents)

The net total income for the year was £959.60. Grants totalled £750 which gave a net surplus to funds of £209.60.

Stanton Village Trust had an income of £405.57. £400 was paid out in grants leaving a net surplus to funds of £5.57 for the year.

Therefore, both organisations show a net increase in funds held which the trustees regard as satisfactory for the coming year.

Mr. John Robinson resigned as treasurer due to ill health early in 2016. Sadly, John passed away later in the year. He was the driving force and inspiration within Stan Co Co and the Village Trust. He had an enormous influence on all of us and will be greatly missed.

For 2017 so far, we have seen a drop in Tote subscribers to 239 mainly due to residents moving away and sadly the death of several residents. However, the Tote is still able to maintain the level of our 3 prizes each month and this represents exceptionally good value for a minimal stake of £1 per month.

All monies raised goes towards grants for local organisations and we would welcome applications for grants and of course applications from new members to join the Tote.

The trustees for 2017 are Ian Engall, Chairman & Treasurer, Deirdre Siddaway, Secretary, Carol Pharoah and Neil Chapman.

Report of Stanton Poor's Estate - Mr. M Ronchetti. (Not present)

The value of vouchers paid was slightly more than the previous year (£4840 as against £4320 in 2015) but we had anticipated a higher take up due to the increase of housing within the village. There was only one hardship claim this year.

The system using vouchers, to be exchanged for goods solely within the village, again worked very well and the Trustees intend this method to continue into the foreseeable future. We intend to incorporate a bar code on the vouchers for next year to assist those businesses involved in the scheme with their accounting. A copy of the audited accounts has been submitted to the Charity Commission.

Report of the Royal British Legion – Mr Brian Bartrum

The Stanton District Branch of the Royal British Legion has a membership of approximately 65 men and women, which is lower than the previous year, but is in line with the current national trend.

Sadly, I have to report that in the last year, the deaths of Dr A Russell, R Rodgers, E Jones and G Theobald, all valued members of the branch.

Branch meetings are held in the Cock Inn, Stanton on the 2nd Tuesday of each calendar month and are well supported. Average attendance ranges between 10 and 20.

The Branch Standard was 'paraded' at The Suffolk Show and several funerals throughout the year as well as the Festival of Remembrance at Bury St Edmunds and Remembrance Sunday at Walsham le Willows and Armistice day at Stanton.

Other events

Coffee morning in the Church Rooms, Stanton on 18 March 17.

Annual Branch Dinner at The Cock Inn, Stanton on 16 May 17

Annual Poppy Race Day at Newmarket on 6 August 16.

RAF Honington Graduation Parade on 24 June 16.

Visit to RAF Marham on 5 July 16

Clairvoyant night at The Cock Inn, Stanton on 15 July 16

Members of the Branch have been invited by the RAF Association to their Annual Christmas Dinner (6 Dec 16) and a Cheese and Wine Evening (24 Mar 17), both events at RAF Honington. The Branch was represented at RBL Suffolk County Conference held in the Community Centre at Needham Market in February 2017.

The Branch was represented by myself as Delegate at the Royal British Legion National Conference held in Southport on 20-21 May 2017.

The Branch have been represented at 'C' Group meetings held quarterly, (Jan, April, July, October) at different venues in the area.

Any monies donated/gifted to the Branch, or raised by the Branch are used for welfare work. As we are a small branch we transfer all such monies to the County Benevolent Fund. Donations which the Branch receives including that from the Parish Council are greatly appreciated.

Report of the WI – Maureen Johnson

Stanton WI is a thriving group of women of all ages and backgrounds. Our membership currently stands at 41 members.

Our active committee organise a programme of speakers, visits and members evenings, as well as workshops and our ever popular 'craft and chat' afternoons which are open to non-members and where we usually have a charitable knitting project taking place. These have included knitting

hats for seafarers, outfits for 'fish and chip' babies in Africa, clothes for premature babies and much more.

We are also active Charity fundraisers supporting recently the Alzheimer Support Group and Parkinsons UK with our Christmas Event and our Fashion Show.

Look out for our Purple Tea party' in July raising funds for the Bury St Edmunds Women's Refuge. Being part of the Suffolk West Federation of WI's, our members have the opportunity to take part in a wide range of workshops and sporting activities, joining with members from all across the Country. Theatre trips and exhibitions are popular.

We are very proud of the fact that next year is our Centenary. To recognise that for 100 years there has been a group of Women in Stanton enjoying each other's company and doing very similar things as we do today.

We have a busy year planned for our Centenary – keep an eye on our website. There wasn't one of those 100 years ago!!

Report of the Stanton Friendship Club – Pip Bedford

Stanton Friendship Club has almost 100 paid-up members and continues to meet on the first Monday of each month. We have managed to keep our annual membership fee to £5 and there is no charge for members attending Monthly meetings.

Circumstances dictated the need for three new Committee members during the last year and fortunately, three members came forward and we now have a strong Committee, working together, running the Club. All our Speakers and trips are voted upon by the Members as we try to provide what they enjoy.

In 2016 we had six social/games afternoons and 5 very diverse speakers covering plants, Americans in East Anglia, Old toys, History and Old Time Music hall. A very successful river trip on the River Cam took place in the summer on a beautiful sunny day and in the Autumn we went to the Gorleston Pavilion for the last showing of their Summer Laughter Show which was hilarious! We ended 2016 with a Christmas lunch for around 80 members in the Stanton Community Village Hall.

2017 has begun well for the Club, we now have several new Members and are financially sound.

Report of the Stanton Musicians – Pip Bedford

Stanton musicians meet fortnightly in the Church Rooms and there are now around 14 members at the sessions. Most players are willing to form a band and play out occasionally, mostly at local events. In 2016, we played at Wyken Plant Sale, Bardwell fete and for the Stanton WI Christmas cracker event.

In January 2017, the band organised a music café in the Stanton Church Rooms, making £250 for the Stanton Friendship Club, played at Wyken again and have around ten future bookings this year.

At the end of the meeting Maureen Johnson thanked the meeting for inviting village organisations and commented that the Parish Council had been working very hard indeed for the village.

Mr. Alan Shelton asked that his thanks be given to Jim Thorndyke for all his work both as a Councillor and for the various village organisations he represents.

The Chairman thanked all representatives for their reports.

Presentation of Community Recognition Awards

At the conclusion of the reports the Chairman announced the Community Recognition Award and explained that the awards are given annually to people or organisations to recognise their work in the community of Stanton, or who make environmental achievements or in some other way contribute to the life of the Parish. Anyone could nominate their friends, co-workers or suppliers of good service to receive an award and Councillors then considered and decided the award winners for the year.

This year we had 3 nominations which were presented by Councillor John Mann MBE and St Edmundsbury Mayor Terry Clements.

Lisa McHugh

Nominated by Dawn Bradley and seconded by Lorna Bradley who say -

“Lisa set up the ‘Stanton Sewing Bee’ just over 3 years ago. It is a real place of welcome where everyone is made to feel at home and this is thanks to Lisa. The Church rooms are always filled with chat and laughter.

Lisa raises funds for Charity by organising events such as the annual Strawberry tea and by – for example - encouraging members to make cushions for breast cancer care. So far, she has raised over £1000.

Lisa also arranges outings and speakers to make meetings fresh and interesting.

Everyone attending the ‘Sewing Bee’ wants Lisa to know that they hugely appreciate all the effort she puts in to make the meetings such a happy place to be. The Group is a real benefit to the village and allows people with a shared interest to meet”

Maurice Lynch

Nominated by Mr Brian Brown and Mr Ian Engall and seconded by Mrs Mary Brown and Mrs Deirdre Siddaway who say -

“Maurice is always happy and pleased to see his customers, welcoming everyone into the shop and remembering everyone’s names. Customer service is exceptional.

His work for the Community is outstanding and amazing. For those not able to get to the Post Office Maurice is willing to collect and deliver. During the recent renovation, his commitment to the village shone out as he managed to run the business from the Church rooms so as not to inconvenience his customers.

His staff are always extremely friendly and helpful and always go that extra mile. A great asset to the village”.

Mr Peter Palmer

Nominated by Mr. Larry Morris and seconded by Mr. John Frizzell who say -

“Peter is a great asset to the village over many years for his tireless work and especially recently, on Speedwatch and the development of the new Speed Indicator Device project.

In addition, he is a significant figure as Treasurer, historian and archivist of Stanton history and the Blackbourne Local History Society and shows a great passion for keeping the memories of the village alive.

Peter continues to devote a great deal of time to the production of the village magazine, (the Stanton Steamer) and runs a successful village quiz annually.

He has previously been a key player in running the Spring Gardens of Stanton weekend, which was a very successful event raising much needed funds for the local Church.

We want Peter to know that all his voluntary work makes a significant difference to the village and his efforts are hugely appreciated by all.”

There being no further business the meeting concluded at 9.15p.m.

Minutes signed as correctNeil Chapman (Chairman)

Dated.....