

Stebbing Scene

Your Village – Your Magazine



Photo courtesy of Sarah Maddox

Edition No: 178 Summer 2026

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Contents: Summer 2026



Regular Stebbing Community Updates

The Pilgrim Parishes.....	09
The Dunmow u3a News.....	11
Stebbing Bowling Club News.....	17
Over 60s Club News.....	19
Stebbing Primary School News.....	21
Stebbing Tennis Club News.....	22
Stebbing Garden Club News.....	30
Stebbing Village Stores News.....	39
Stebbing Cricket Club News.....	45
Parish Paths Partnership (P3) News.....	60
Dorcas Society News.....	61
Stebbing Ladies Group News.....	69

Recent Events in Stebbing

Stebbing Neighbourhood Plan: The Review & A Survey.....	14
The Great Stebbing Litter Pick.....	29
Stebbing Primary School Community Month.....	34
St Mary's: From Restoration To Celebration.....	53
Obituary: Paul Hopwood.....	66

Features

Recent News. What's Up Again Now, John?.....	06
Stebbing Local History Society: Butcher's Shop Memories.....	12
Celebrating New Stebbing Initiatives: Mums & Toddlers Group.....	24
More Than A Score: A Salute To Our Year 6 Stars.....	27
Summer On The Wing.....	41
Building At Risk.....	43
Porters Hall: Celebrating A Successful First Year.....	46
Stebbing Summer Fayre.....	47
Stebbing Parish Council Chairman's Report 2025-2026.....	63
A Spring Of Community, Connection & New Energy.....	68

Points of View

Mad Medic.....	20
My Year 6.....	37
Between The Covers – Stebbing Style: Suggested Holiday Reads.....	49
Letters To The Editor.....	62

Paddy McKeown



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Dates For Your Diary: Summer 2026

Gin Workshop For Adults	St Mary's Church	7.00pm	Friday 5 th June
All About Moths	St Mary's Churchyard	10.00am	Saturday 6 th June
Stepping Summer Fayre	Mill Lane Cricket Field	1.00pm – 6.00pm	Sunday 7 th June
Local History Society Talk	Village Hall	8.00pm	Monday 8 th June
Great Dunmow Bookfest	Great Dunmow	10.00am – 5.00pm	Saturday 13 th June
Tennis Club Mixed Tennis Tournament	Tennis Club	10.00am – 4.00pm	Sunday 14 th June
Stepping Village Garden Club Market	Village Hall	10.00am – 11.30am	Friday 19 th June
Tennis Club Race Night	Village Hall	7.30pm	Saturday 20 th June
Garden Club Visit	Downing College Cambridge	Tbc	Thursday 25 th June
Stepping Cricket Club vs St Mary's Church Match	Cricket Field	6.00pm	Friday 26 th June
Garden Club Visit	Beeleigh Abbey	Tbc	Wednesday 15 th July
Ladies Club Summer Social Evening	Andrewsfield Milli-Bar	Tbc	Wednesday 22 nd July
Countess of Warwick Country Show	Little Easton	11.00am – 5.00pm	Sunday 30 th August Monday 31 st August
Local History Society Talk	Village Hall	8.00pm	Monday 14 th September
Village Market Macmillan Coffee Morning	Village Hall	10.00am – 11.30am	Friday 25 th September
Garden Club Talk	Village Hall	8.00pm	Monday 28 th September
Dorcas Society Annual Harvest Lunch	Village Hall	12.30pm	Friday 9 th October
Garden Club Talk	Village Hall	8.00pm	Monday 26 th October

District Councillor's Corner: Recent News

What's Up Again Now, John?



Dear Residents

In contemplating what I might write in this edition and bring you up to date as to what's "gone on" in Uttlesford District Council in the last three months, I thought that I might wait until the outcome of the Essex County Council Elections held on 7th May was known. That is not because there will be any political observations included by me – deliberately, since none ever are in the articles that I submit to our excellent (I must add!) village magazine nor are any included in the detailed monthly Reports that I submit to the Parish Council. But, hot off the press as I write this, it might be that change will come about to the Local Government reorganisation in Essex that I have written about before as a result of the Election and change in political compositions – see more below.

Local Plan

In my last article, I described in detail what the Uttlesford Local Plan 2021-2041 was about and it might be worth a re-read for those wishing to be reminded of its context. As the UDC Cabinet Member responsible for Planning, after it had been examined and approved by the Planning Inspectorate, I presented the final version of the Local Plan to Full Council on 25 March. I am pleased to say that it was indeed adopted on the affirmative vote of 26 Members. There was one vote cast in opposition and six abstentions. None of the members were subject to "whipping" by their political parties and so all members from across the District had a free vote. Having a Local Plan was very long overdue, its predecessor having been put in place in 2005 when planning policy and rules were very different. So, adoption is very much to be welcomed.

Having an up to date Local Plan does not prevent development outright but it does specify where in our District it is to be allocated. Most of the allocations are on the outskirts of larger settlements with facilities ie Saffron Walden, Great Dunmow, Stansted Mountfitchet and Takeley. As was explained by the Stebbing Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group in the last edition of Stebbing Scene, the Larger Villages are required to make housing allocations also (in the case of Stebbing 98 dwellings). I previously described that Uttlesford was intending to introduce a Community Infrastructure Levy ("CIL"). This will mean that future development will carry a Levy calculated at the rate of £200 per m² of internal built area. Historically, infrastructure was only funded where it was justified by the development through the section 106 procedure, but it only applied to developments in excess of 10 dwellings. So, to avoid that requirement, one supposes it might explain why so often, schemes of 9 dwellings or fewer were proposed by developers. The introduction of CIL is also subject to public examination and this will have taken place on 20 May 2026. A detailed set of documents in support of CIL is available: <https://www.uttlesford.gov.uk/article/6074/CIL-examination-library>.

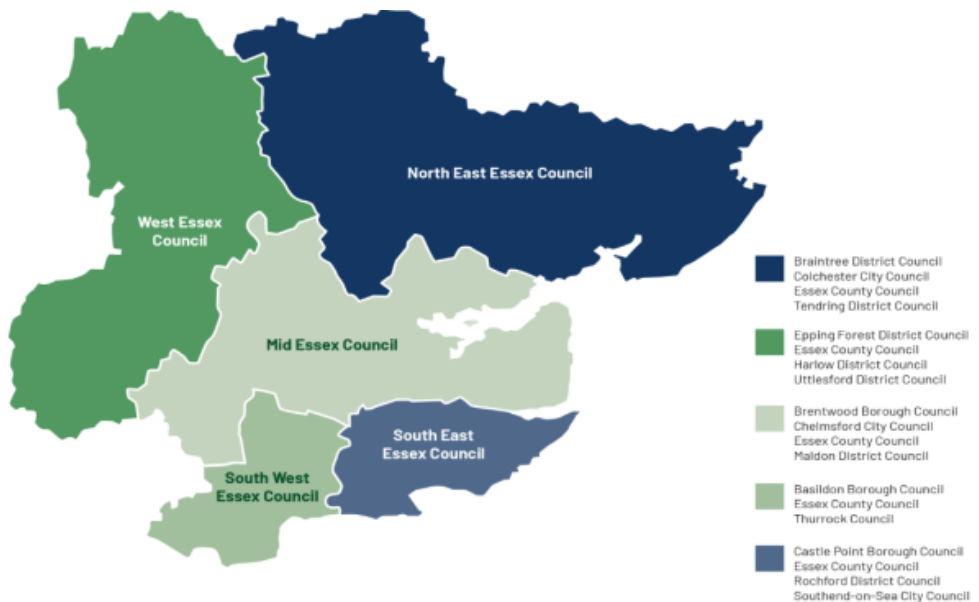
Importantly, where development occurs in a location which has an up to date Neighbourhood Plan, 25% of the CIL levied in relation to that development is payable to the Parish Council and available to be spent on relevant infrastructure within the Parish. So, prospectively when it arises, that will provide some helpful funding capable of being deployed directly on infrastructure requirements within our community.

Local Government Reorganisation

While on 25 March we had the new Local Plan adopted in Uttlesford, other things were happening elsewhere too. On the same day, the Government decided upon their plans for Local Government Reorganisation in Essex. I have described these before and which would involve the scrapping of Essex County Council and the District Councils with their replacement by several unitary (meaning “one stop” ie providing and administering all local government functions and services) councils. The alternative proposed would involve the creation of either three, four or five unitary bodies but also in each case the election of a Mayor to serve at a County wide strategic level.

While such reorganisation was not generally favoured by the Essex District and City Councils, if it was to come about, then most preferred the establishment of more rather than fewer unitary bodies. In the event, the Government accepted the argument in favour of the creation of more ie in the case of Essex, five.

This would mean that Uttlesford upon its disbandment would be joined together with Epping Forest and Harlow Councils (ie the logic being they bordered the M11 and shared the same Health Authority) which would create a new unitary to be called West Essex Council. This depicts the make up of the five proposed new unitaries:



Preparatory work has been going on for some time among officers and senior leaders of all the Essex Councils concerned to plan for the intended reorganisation which would come live in April 2028. However, at the time of writing, both the newly elected ECC and Harlow Councils (each of different political hues) have declared their intention to challenge the Government’s LGR plans for Essex.

They will be seeking maintaining the status quo on the grounds that LGR is unnecessary and is also likely to be very costly and not lead to the costs savings claimed for by Government.

Officers in Harlow have now even been instructed to pull stumps and not participate in further cross boundary LGR forward planning work. By the time readers will be digesting this article, however, things might have changed again or become clearer – in that case, apologies but the position described is accurate when written.

So, subject to possible change/reversal, ECC and UDC will continue “as is” until March 2028 when it is proposed the new unitaries will come into formal existence. There will be elections for that body to be held in May 2027 which will operate in shadow mode for the following 11 months prior to formal creation.

If any resident has any questions or issues to raise on this article (or of course any other unrelated subject) I will be very pleased to hear from them. I am of course always ready to assist any resident who might have a question or other concern relating to Uttlesford business.

District Councillor John Evans
E: clleevans@uttlesford.gov.uk

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The Pilgrim Parishes

Julian of Norwich once said 'All will be well, all manner of things shall be well'. Yet a number of us will ask "With all the suffering in today's world how can that be?"

Lady Julian was born in 1342 at a time of great turmoil and where religion dominated people's lives. Aged thirty she was seriously ill; whilst gazing at a crucifix she saw a vision of Jesus bleeding. Over the next few days she had many more visions. Sixteen in all where she saw the passion of Jesus, his mother Mary at the cross, the defeat of the devil, some about God and our salvation and much more. Julian devoted the rest of her life to prayer and trying to understand these visions, writing down her thoughts, then constantly adapting them as her understanding evolved.

Through time Julian shifts from the horror of Jesus' death to an understanding of salvation and the nature of God. But, over the years, she raged at Jesus about his words 'all will be well' when there was much horror, hurt and wrongdoing in the world. This is something we are still asking about today. Julian does not explain suffering nor say it does not matter. She tries to come to terms with Jesus' words in the context of a very different world, where the understanding of wellness was different. She had been close to death. Many people who know they are dying live differently, often enjoying the simplest things more fully. Jesus did not say 'things will turn out all right in the end' but that 'all things will be well'.

Julian speaks of the pain and wounds caused by sin. This is what Jesus took upon himself on the cross. This is Christ, we his beloved. Jesus' words does not mean we will not experience suffering but that it will be surpassed by the joy we find in him. When we admit our faults we come to know ourselves better and recognise the mercy and compassion within Jesus' love. Julian continued to rage at God, eventually accepting his final answer when Jesus speaks into her heart saying: 'that which is impossible to you is not impossible to me..... I shall make all things well'. Julian learned to live with the tension of hurt and suffering with Jesus' words of love, hope and reassurance.

One day, playing with a hazelnut, Julian sees three truths on which everything depends. God made the hazelnut. God loves the hazelnut. God looks after that hazelnut moment by moment. This realisation moves Julian to cry out in amazement: "What is he indeed? Maker, lover and keeper". He loves and cares for everyone - we are his beloved children. But, as children, we have to decide to rest in God's love. It took Julian a lifetime of prayer to realise that there are no words adequate to describe, or even comprehend, who or what God is.

In 2010 Pope Benedict said "Julian of Norwich understood the central message for spiritual life. God is love and it is only when one is open to, trusts and guided by His love, that all things are transfigured, true peace and joy found and one is able to radiate it. Then 'all will be well, all manner of things shall be well'. His is the final message that Julian of Norwich transmits to us and that I am also proposing to you today."

Janet Parker

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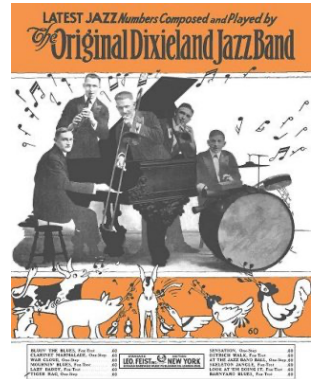
Are you **new to the Dunmow and Stebbing area** and want to meet local people?



Maybe you are **looking for a new hobby**. Are you also **no longer in full-time employment**? If so, now is the time to make the most of life in your 'third age'. Dunmow u3a gives you the chance to **develop your interests, make new friends and enjoy yourself**.

On Wednesday 24 June, Roger Browne will be telling us the tale of “The King’s Tiger Rag”. The strange story of the role that King George V played in bringing Traditional Jazz to Britain in 1919 with The Original Dixieland Jazz Band who set new trends when they moved from New Orleans to Chicago.

How society in Britain was never to be the same again once Jazz arrived on these shores and the unlikely link with Queen Mary’s Needlework Guild. Illustrated with live playing, on piano, of the ODBJ’s greatest hits, such as Margie, Tiger Rag, Livery Stable Blues.



“The King’s Tiger Rag”

Wednesday 24 June - 1.30pm for 2pm start

On Wednesday 29 July, LPA Made Simple will explain what Lasting Powers of Attorney (LPAs) are, the process by which they are drawn up and the important purpose they serve. They will also clarify the differences between LPAs and EPAs (Enduring Powers of Attorney) and answer any questions you might have about either of them.



“LPAs Made Simple”

Wednesday 29 July - 1.30pm for 2pm start

All our monthly meetings take place at Foakes Hall, Dunmow CM6 1DG and are free to members and potential members.

Our monthly meetings are a great opportunity to meet up with **other members**, join one of our **Interest Groups**, book a place on one of our **popular Outings**, choose a **few magazines** from our **Magazine Swaps table**, pick up a copy of our **latest newsletter** or just **enjoy a cup of tea** (please remember to bring your own mug) and **enjoy the speaker**.

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Stebbing Local History Society: Butcher's Shop Memories

The following revised article was first published in the Spring 2004 Journal and is based upon the personal recollections of John Baker. John was a previously long-serving butcher in Stebbing and his memories provide a fascinating insight into Stebbing's recent history.



Butcher Shop right hand end.
Circa 1878

Few people will fail to recognise the cottages shown above in this 1878 photograph, they have changed relatively little. But you may not know the story of the Butchers Shop, see right hand end, that was part of village life for over a hundred years.

Dating back to the 17th Century, the building was originally owned by Hawkes & Co. brewers of Bishop's Stortford, and re-fronted in brick in the late 1870s. The quaint end-of-terrace premises were typical of small butchers' establishments which featured in many of the surrounding villages. Information contained in the

census returns from 1891 and 1901 indicate that, at both these dates, the butcher's shop was kept by Richard Barker. He was apparently well enough off to have a servant too.

In more recent times, meat was bought in from wholesalers such as Humphrey's of Chelmsford, and for many years animals were bought on the hoof in Braintree market, to be walked to the shop, where they would be despatched and butchered. At least until the shop closed there was still a ring in the floor through which the unfortunate animal would be tethered, its head lowered, prior to being despatched. It was possible that animals actually had to be led through the shop prior to their slaughter at the rear of the premises!

Whilst the village and immediate areas provided most of the custom for the shop, rounds were made to Lindsell, Thaxted, and Saling, using horse and cart, complete with large wooden butcher's tray, for presenting cuts of meat to housewives. Seasonal produce also figured significantly. Up to the time prior to closure, for example, over 100 turkeys would typically be supplied at Christmas.

Not only was the butcher's self-contained in terms of the butchering process, the nature of the job was very different to that of today, relying much more heavily on physical effort, for example the use of large cleavers, which required the butcher to actually lift himself off the ground in the act of cutting the carcass. Local school leavers were also employed as "fly boys", their task being to literally swat the flies to keep them off the meat whilst it was out in the open. As with any small business, its prosperity was entirely dependent on the personal efforts of the butcher. On top of the physical nature of the work, very long hours and very irregular holidays were a feature of maintaining a successful business.



Circa 1980.

John Baker, who then ran the butcher's shop in Felsted, initially worked for Tom Rolph in the Stebbing butcher's shop during the late 1960s/early 1970s, before he moved to Thaxted. He then returned to Stebbing for a second period in the mid 1980s, when he again ran the butcher's shop for Tom Rolph. He subsequently left Stebbing when he had the opportunity to buy the freehold on the shop in Felsted. So, a new shop manager, Mr. Andy Smith, was appointed and for a while John retained a part-time involvement in the running of the shop, but this involvement gradually declined, and the shop ultimately closed in 1997.

John still has fond memories of his time spent in Stebbing, in particular the first Elizabethan Fayre, with suitably attired serving wenches and members of the Bowling Club in period dress supplied by Ogden's. The costumes were lavish. John recalls roasting a pig for the Elizabethan Fayre, something which became a recurring event at many a local fair. There was also a stand opposite the butcher's shop where John's wife served, together with Mrs. Rolph.

Do you have any personal memories of the butcher's shop? If you do, the Local History Society would be pleased to hear from you.



Stebbing Local History Society Speaker/Event Programme 2026

Monday 8th June

Maria Medlycott

Recent archaeological discoveries in Essex.

Summer Outing Date TBC

Visit with picnic to Vintage Aircraft Maintenance at Audley End.

Monday 14th September

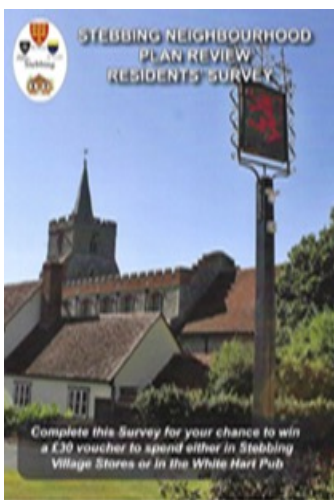
Martin Bridge

Buildings and other structural dating using dendrochronology.

Monday 9th November

Company of Merrie Folke: Historical food (with real food).

Stebbing Neighbourhood Plan: The Review & A Survey



In the last edition of Stebbing Scene, we reported that we were about to conduct a residents' Survey in order to obtain data about current housing provision and future needs in the Parish and to ask about residents' views concerning our current facilities and infrastructure as well as the issues of greatest interest and concern to them.

Members of the Steering Group and other volunteers (a word of thanks is very much extended to them!) hand delivered the Survey in hard copy to each household in the Parish (over 600!). Responses were invited to be provided either on-line or in hard copy deposited in a dedicated post box at the Village Stores.

We are pleased to be able to say that the results of the Survey will be very helpful in preparing the next stage of our Review which will be a Housing Needs Assessment. This will take in published data and information available in the public domain which relates to our community and its residents and will follow a commonly used structure and style for this type of technical report. It will of course also incorporate the specific data obtained through our own Survey.

We were looking for input from each household in the Parish but additional input from individuals was also welcomed. We received nearly **400 responses** overall. This level of response is very encouraging, being significantly higher than equivalent response rates reported for other similar surveys commissioned elsewhere in Uttlesford. We believe this reflects well on the willingness of our community to participate actively in the gathering of the reliable evidence that is required for effective neighbourhood planning.

We are now analysing the responses to the Survey in detail and in due course will prepare a summary of the findings in a digestible format, which will also reflect comments and answers provided in narrative form. We thought that we might meanwhile let residents have a few "tit bits" from the responses received which might be of interest.

Of the households that participated in the Survey:

- 28% have 3 bedrooms; 38% have 4 bedrooms; 24% have 5 or more bedrooms
- 63% are owned outright; 29% are owned with a mortgage; 8% are rented etc
- 57% have an average of 2 vehicles (cars or vans) each; 25% have an electric or hybrid vehicle

Of the residents who participated in the Survey:

- 55% are female
- 50% are aged 65 years or over; 52% class themselves as retired
- 11% are self-employed; 20% are in full-time employment and 12% in part-time employment
- of those in work, 55% work from home, either full- or part-time.

Interestingly, the average period that residents who responded have lived in Stebbing is 22 years – a very long time - which suggests that once here, our residents are very content and in no hurry to leave! Furthermore, when asked if they wished or expected to move home and stay within Stebbing, 58 residents responded 'Yes'.

We are pleased to announce that Sue Butler of Callista, The Downs, is the lucky winner of the draw for the £30 voucher offered in conjunction with completion of the Survey! The smiling Sue is shown here receiving her voucher, available to be spent in The White Hart, from Cllr Judith Farr, Chair of Stebbing Parish Council.



Finally, the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group would like to thank everyone who participated in completion of the Survey - IT IS REALLY APPRECIATED! We will be reporting again on our ongoing work in the next edition of Stebbing Scene.

The Stebbing Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group

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I have availability for trips to: Zurbaran Exhibition at **Operation Mincemeat** In Southend on 5th September, **The English Whisky Distillery Deluxe Tasting Tour** on 12th September, **Jeremy Clarkson's Diddly Squat Package** on 15th September, **Hayfever** at the Wyndhams Theatre on. 3rd November, **Dirty Dancing** at Westfield on 11th November, **Leeds Castle** on 5th December, **Bustranome** on 15th December, **Anything Goes** at the Mill Sonning on 3rd January and **Miss Saigon** on 8th June 2027

There are of course many other trips during the course of the year which are sold out, Paddington the Musical, Andre Rieu and Michael Ball to name but a few. Please contact me for details in case I have cancellations, and I can add you to my mailing list for up-to-date information. I will be adding other trips as we go along.

Please contact us for further details: judith@jlpresents.co.uk: Mob No: 07989 490828. www.jlpresents.co.uk



Are you interested in safeguarding Stebbing in the event of an Emergency?

Stebbing Parish Council are looking for a volunteer Co-ordinator to make sure everyone is aware of what they need to do in the event of an Emergency.

Stebbing Parish Council is updating its Emergency Plan so as to include both flooding and airplane crash.

For full details please go onto the parish council website and/or contact Cllr Judith Farr on 01371 856691

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Stebbing Bowling Club News`

We opened the club this year late April and had a good turnout for our first meeting and start of our internal competition, which runs throughout the season. At the time of writing we are in the throws of another very dry spell, so the green is playing hard and fast.

The North West Essex league stated on 6th May with a home match against Radwinter B which we won convincingly 7-1. Well done to the team!

The hedging on Mill Lane is growing back despite the dry weather and will soon be looking good again. You will also have noticed that the green is covered by netting etc. this is to TRY and discourage the Crows who have a penchant for little things called Leatherjackets. To get to them they dig down and leave sizeable holes and then scatter the plugs all over the green!

The Race night went very well and contributed much needed funds for the club. A big thank you to all those from the village who came along to support us, not just our members!

Other events organised this season are the Stebbing Ladies Group on 19th June, always an excellent evening, offering a BBQ and our bar. Plus we will be welcoming Stebbing Junior School on three dates in June. It is such a rewarding event where pupils try out bowling for the first time, and some parents come too!

We will be running the Beer Tent at the fete as usual so please come and say hello, but a reminder that it will be CASH ONLY as we can't seem to interest a company to support us with cashless payment.

Finally, a reminder that Thursdays are our club night and all, non members too, are welcome to come in and try the game of Flat Green Bowls.

Ray Sutton



Stebbing Cricket Club Inviting New Players and Volunteer Ground-Staff

Please contact either
Adrian Farr: Adrian.farr01@btinternet.com
or Graham Bird: gibird69@gmail.com

if you are an interested player of any age, gender or ability or are willing & able to offer even occasional help with ground preparation & maintenance

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Tools With A Mission ('TWAM')

For the last few years, Trish and I have been collectors for this charity. People contact us to donate tools of all sorts (see the website www.twam.co.uk) Sometimes we collect from them. Sometimes they deliver to us. So our garage gradually gets filled up with boxes of tools, which are regularly collected by the centre in Ipswich, where the tools are refurbished and packaged into trade sets, ready to be sent off to a training centre in Central Africa, and thence into the hands of someone newly trained in their use. In this way another family gains an income and becomes self-sufficient.



Lives are transformed by the donated tools! For example: Jeff was a disabled school leaver with no prospects, but found hope at a Training Centre in Solwezi, Zambia. There he learn tailoring, one of several practical skills offered. Equipped with the sewing machine sent to the centre by TWAM, he is now able to support both himself and his family.

In Malawi, the Dzaleka Refugee Camp helps women rebuild their lives after conflict, displacement and the resultant poverty.

"We have already given birth, so people say we have no worth. Here we gain the skills and the tools to support ourselves and our children."

To donate see www.twam.uk or contact Edward at econder@btinternet.com

Edward Conder

Over Sixties Club News

We've had some very interesting meetings up to now. And we're looking forward to an eventful few months to come.

In May, we are going to Paper Mill Lock for the afternoon for tea by the river, hopefully if the sun shines for us. June is our annual strawberry tea, always very popular. July we have a trip to Southwold, again always a popular event.

No meetings in August - time for holidays and reflections!

September we will have a music quiz provided by one of our members, John Green.

Due to the Friends Meeting House being out of action, we are holding our meetings in the Village Hall in Mill Lane at 2pm for the foreseeable future.

If you'd like to join our friendly club, male or female then, please contact myself, Edwina, Club Secretary on 01371-856520. Leave a message and I will call you back.

Edwina Winter

Mad Medic

Hello everyone, I wish each of you a truly happy healthy Summer.

My 'bit' is slightly different this edition, we are coming to terms with a family tragedy and my support is an ongoing commitment given with love.



But on a happier note, I'm going to show off about some of my incredible street children in Mumbai.

On some of my trips, I teach first aid to the children who only have each other to rely on. Responsible children are supplied with little cross body bags with basic supplies and their name badge fixed to the front. Over the years, Bruce and Wendy Haynes have helped me to provide hundreds of these bags, which have proven to be invaluable. I have friends who restock them for me out there and the lovely thing that warms my heart is that the children don't barter with them or sell them. Show off alert!

Prior to my last visit, there was a small explosion in one of the slum area factories and several people were hurt. I heard that a group of my children had helped many of the injured. They did such a good job that they were able to carry on when emergency help arrived. I'm incredibly proud of them, they had stayed calm and worked safely as a team. My friends are all in awe of their maturity and empathy. These are children that people not living the life they do, spit at or shoo away with vile insults, yet these children would never hesitate to help them. So humbling.

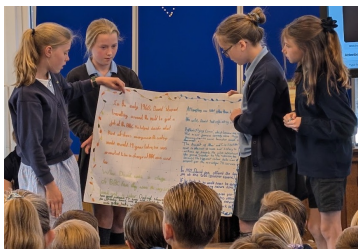
Several people have asked me how my book is progressing and wanted a bit of info. For obvious reasons I haven't written for several weeks due to circumstance but will get cracking again soon. I'm really enjoying collating memories and laughing to myself at the embarrassing scrapes I've managed to get into. Remembering the fabulous people who have shared my trips and the friends in Mumbai who have become close family. I've shown you below the writing on the back cover of my book to give you a bit of an idea and will keep you posted if you would like me to.

Mummy's House is warm and inviting just like a real home, only this Mummy's House isn't made of bricks and mortar, with windows that let the sunshine in and keep the rain out. It doesn't have a garden for lost and lonely children to play in and comfy beds to sleep on. Mummy's House is a living heart and soul that loves every child unconditionally, regardless of race, creed or colour. It is a heart and soul that swore to care for every child she possibly could because she is their Mummy and her name is Valerie, simple as that.

Thank you as always for reading my little bit and to the wonderful team putting everything together for this lovely magazine.

Lots of love Valerie xx

Stebbing Primary School News:



One of the highlights of our Spring term has been celebrating Sir David Attenborough's 100th birthday. Our special day enabled the children to find out more about his life and take part in a range of activities to celebrate and reflect. Thank you to our Year 6 pupils who wrote biographies to share with the whole school during our morning assembly.

We also watched some inspirational videos, listened to Sir David Attenborough's iconic voice and the powerful pieces of music which accompany his programmes. At lunchtime the weather was perfect to celebrate on the field with a picnic and birthday cake all made by Mrs Francis and Mrs Crow!



One of our very own Nature Experts, Toby, dressed up as David Attenborough for the occasion! Toby has such enthusiasm for learning more about our natural world and how we can all help to look after our planet. Each class worked hard to create beautiful artwork for our school displays and had various '100' challenges to complete too! It was a very special event for a very special person!



In April we were lucky enough to have a visit from the charity iSingPop, coordinated by St Mary's Church. We had an iSingPop tutor come into school to teach the children the songs and then the children had the opportunity to perform, not once, but twice inside the newly renovated St Mary's Church. This was a special event and a great chance for the children to see the updates and work that has been done to the church over the last few months.

Best wishes,
Lucy Heys, Headteacher

Stebbing Tennis Club News



The Summer season is now well underway at Stebbing Tennis Club, and there is a fantastic buzz around the courts as players of all ages enjoy another busy and exciting schedule of coaching and events.

It has been especially lovely to welcome several new members to the club in recent weeks, with our mix of social tennis, coaching and competitive play continuing to attract players of all abilities.



One of the biggest successes this Spring has been the launch of our new pickleball sessions. Led by Head Coach Mark Clark, they have proved hugely popular with adults looking to try this fast-growing and highly inclusive sport. Running four times a week until 25th September, the sessions require no previous experience and all equipment is provided, making them a brilliant way to stay active, social and involved.

For those keen to improve their tennis, a second six-week Tennis Xpress course is now underway, welcoming both beginners and returning players back onto the court. Weekly squad sessions also provide focused match play development in a friendly and supportive setting.

Our regular Thursday evening and Sunday morning mix-ins continue to be a real highlight of club life, attracting excellent turnouts each week, while Cardio Tennis and ladies mornings remain firm favourites thanks to Mark's energy and enthusiasm. Meanwhile, our competitive teams have enjoyed a strong start to the league season, with some excellent performances already recorded.

Looking ahead, we are excited to host a Mixed Tournament on Sunday 14th June, open to both members and non-members. It promises to be a fun and sociable day of tennis, and further details can be found on the club poster.

Junior tennis continues to flourish under the guidance of our Club Coach, Ashleigh Draper. Our popular after-school sessions for children aged 4 to 16 continue to provide a fun and encouraging environment for young players, who are welcome to join at any point during the term. Following a successful Easter holiday camp, plans are now underway for our Summer camps, with dates to be announced shortly.

This season also brings exciting new opportunities for our juniors, including LTA Rating tournaments and the introduction of our Under 9 and Under 10 teams into the Halstead and District League.

Away from the courts, the club's social calendar remains as lively as ever. Our March Bingo Night was a huge success, raising valuable funds towards our new clubhouse, while bringing together club members and villagers for a thoroughly enjoyable evening. Next up is our Race Night on Saturday 20 June at Stebbing Village Hall, with opportunities still available for race sponsorship.

Stebbing Tennis Club continues to offer affordable membership, quality coaching and a genuinely welcoming atmosphere for players of all ages and abilities. Whether you are looking to compete, get fit, learn a new sport or simply meet new people, there has never been a better time to get involved.

For further information, please visit our website or follow us on Facebook and Instagram for the latest club news, events and results.

Useful Contacts

Chairman: Ian Ford-Roberston – chair@stebbingtennisclub.co.uk

Membership: Sara Hill – membership@stebbingtennisclub.co.uk

Event tickets: Maria Glen-Doepel – 07958 325383

Adult coaching: Mark Clark – 07713 626239, mtclarkandco@aol.com

Junior coaching: Ashleigh Draper – 07966 502834, ashleighdraper@aol.com



MIXED TENNIS TOURNAMENT



Sunday 14 June, 2026
10am – 4pm (approx)

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Priority given to members

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Celebrating New Stebbing Initiatives: Mum's & Toddlers Group

Katie Clayden has recently set up a Mums & Toddlers group in the village, so I took the opportunity to ask her to tell us all about it.

Ed: I hear you've recently set up a mums & toddlers' group in the Village Hall. What inspired you to do that?

Katie: I felt the village was missing something for the younger children. There aren't any other baby and toddler groups in Stebbing now. In the few sessions I've held I've met a lot of parents that agree this is something that was needed. I also spend a lot of time creating activities for my daughter to do at home, which I enjoy doing and seeing her get so much out of these activities, I wanted to do this for other children too.

Ed: Do you have small children yourself?

Katie: Yes, I have two daughters that are two and ten months old. And I have spent a large portion of my adult life working with children and adults with additional needs. To set up the group I've successfully completed my NVQ.



Ed: When and how often is the group held?

Katie: We are a term time only group running every Thursday in the Village Hall in Stebbing 9:45am - 11:45am.



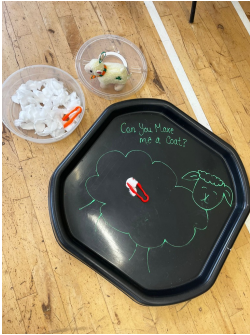
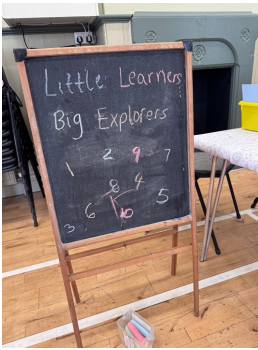
Ed: Who would the group be suitable for?

Katie: We have a baby section which ultimately is aimed at the new parents, getting out and about and meeting other parents in similar circumstances. The group is aimed at 1-5 year olds. We host different activities each time, some will be free play with a range of toys, other sessions are sensory and messy play sessions. I wanted to make it a wide variety so children can make the most of the sessions they attend, and have something different to do each week. People can sign up, currently we run without a booking system, as it is a new group we want to see how many attendees we have and then we will look to see if a booking system is in place. If we are hosting a messy play session, we do advise to prebook via me, just so I can ensure we have enough space for everyone to access the activities.



Ed: How much does it cost to come along?

Katie: Its £3 per session, under ones are free. Included in this cost is snacks and juice/water for the children.



Ed: What happens at a typical class?

Katie: The first 1.5 hours of the session is child-led free play, snacks are out for the duration and children play as they please! We do have a tidy-up time where the toys are put to the side and then we either do a Rhyme time or story time to finish.

Ed: Where did you get your equipment from/funding?

Katie: We were extremely fortunate to have a lot of items donated. We are also very lucky and thankful to the White Hart in Stebbing for hosting a Quiz Night raising money for us to buy play mats, tables and sensory trays. These donations are critical to running of the group so we are extremely appreciative of this. Thank you to everyone who took part!

Karen Clark talking to Katie Clayden



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More Than A Score: A Salute To Our Year 6 Stars

The hush has finally descended upon the classrooms, the extra-sharp pencils have been laid to rest and the collective sigh of relief could be heard around Stebbing. This May, our wonderful Owls Class took on the challenge of their KS2 SATs and they did so with the resilience and determination that we have come to expect from our Class of 2026.



While these tests are a significant milestone in the primary school journey, they only tell a small part of the story of who our Year 6 students are.

SATs week is often painted as a time of high stress, but Owls approached it with an admirable sense of calm. From the early morning breakfasts to the final marks on the reasoning papers, the atmosphere in the hall was one of quiet determination.

While we celebrate their academic dedication, it is important to remember that a test paper cannot measure everything that makes an "Owl" special. They do not know that some of you speak two languages; that you are a natural on the stage, the pitch, or the dance floor; the creativity you pour into a Google Slide or your eye for detail in a Canva presentation; or the care you take when baking something delicious for others.

Most importantly, these tests cannot measure your character. They don't know that your friends can count on you, that your laughter can brighten the darkest of days or that you are so kind and considerate to the younger members of our school.

They don't see you wondering about the future or helping out your brothers and sisters. They don't know that you are trustworthy, thoughtful, and that every single day, you try your very best.

With the "Statutory" part of the year officially in the rearview mirror, the Owls can now look forward to the most exciting chapter of their Stebbing Primary career. The final weeks of the Summer term are traditionally some of the most memorable, filled with:

- Leavers' events and celebrations.
- Transition days as they prepare to fly the nest.
- Building lasting memories before heading to secondary school.

To the Owls Class: You have worked incredibly hard, not just this month, but throughout your time at Stebbing. Your teachers, parents and the entire village community are immensely proud of you. Take a bow, Year 6. You've earned it!

Tom Le Masurier, Assistant Headteacher

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The Great Stebbing Litter Pick



Stebbing Parish Council (SPC) organised a litter pick for Saturday 18th April and it was well attended with 23 volunteers, people of all ages turning up. In total, 29 bags of rubbish were filled and they were collected by Uttlesford the following week. A big thank you to all the volunteers for your time and effort.



The general consensus was that we held the litter pick at the right time, that is before the verges had grown too high and that the amount of litter was less than usual. The latter implies that people are becoming more aware of littering and listening to the volunteers, people are more inclined to litter pick in their own time between organised events. Both situations are great and to be encouraged.



There is also more awareness of the law with the government stating "Littering is a criminal offence under Section 87 of the Environmental Protection Act 1990, punishable by on-the-spot Fixed Penalty Notices (FPNs) usually ranging from £100 to £150, or up to £2,500 if convicted in court. Dropping items like cigarette butts, chewing gum, and throwing litter from vehicles are all covered under this law." Our issue appears to be the latter, throwing litter from vehicles, and we found traceable evidence of litter found on Lubberhedges Lane that has been forwarded to Uttlesford. The "illegal poo bin" on Clay Lane still remains an issue!



SPC are continually seeking new volunteers to come forward as although we had a good turnout this time, certain areas such as Stebbing Green were missed out due to insufficient resources.

The next litter pick is planned for the Autumn, so don't miss out! Let the parish clerk know if you are interested. Amy's details are: Amy Wharton, Parish Clerk at clerk@stebbing-pc.gov.uk

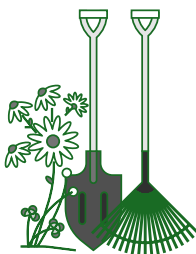
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for members. Visitors are welcome on the door.**

Come and visit our stall for details

Stebbing Garden Club News

Since my last bulletin in the Spring issue of the magazine Stebbing Garden Club Members have enjoyed two very entertaining and informative speakers and our AGM.



In February our Speaker Secretary, Linda Gustar, brightened up a dark Monday evening by appearing, in full costume, as the famous horticulturist Ellen Willmott. We learnt how, in 1875, Ellen's family moved to Warley Place in Essex where she created a rockery in the garden at the age of 21. After her father's death she developed the gardens extensively, at one time employing over 100 gardeners to meet her exacting standards. Queen Mary, Queen Alexandra and Princess Victoria visited Warley Place to admire her natural, wild planting, unusual for the era. Ellen was a keen benefactor of plant exploration and is said to have cultivated more than 100,000 species and cultivars of plants, many of which are named after her. Miss Willmott was an extremely interesting character, wonderfully brought to life by Linda, and is well worth further research.

The subject of our April meeting was Auriculas. Our speaker, Luci Skinner, who will be exhibiting at Chelsea this year, brought along an array of these colourful gems to illustrate her talk. We learnt the history of the cultivation of the species which originated in the mountain areas of central Europe and how to look after them in our own gardens. Quite a few members were unable to resist purchasing an example or two for their gardens!



Gardener and lecturer, Ed Flint, will be giving us a talk entitled 'Lessons From Great Dixter' at our May meeting and then we have two Summer visits to look forward to. On 25th June we will be visiting Downing College Cambridge for a tour of the gardens, only recently opened to the public, followed by afternoon tea. Then, on the 15th July we will be visiting Beeleigh Abbey near Maldon, for a garden tour also followed by refreshments. If you are interested in learning more about the Garden Club or becoming a member, please come and talk to us at our stall at the Stebbing Fayre on the 7th June or contact me at stebbinggardenclub@hotmail.com

Denise Puttnam, Secretary

Garden Club Calendar

Thursday 25th June	Garden Visit to Downing College, Cambridge
Wednesday 15th July	Garden Visit to Beeleigh Abbey
Monday 28th September	Subject to be confirmed
Monday 26th October	Keith of Aqualife: Garden ponds & bog plants
Monday 23rd November	Jane Steward: Meddling with Medlars

Adult Coaching

Mark Clark
07713 626239

- Monday 9-10am: Cardio Tennis
- Wednesday 9-10am: Cardio Tennis
- Wednesday 7-9pm: Squad Training
- Thursday 9-11am: Ladies Tennis
- Friday 9-10am: Cardio Tennis
- Private Lessons



New for 2026!

Pickle ball

4 sessions per week

Tennis XPress

6-week new-to-tennis course

Junior Coaching

Ashleigh Draper
07966 502834

- Group Sessions for ages 4 to 16 on Tuesdays & Fridays 4-7pm
- Performance Group Weds 6-7pm
- Junior League Matches
- Sunday Tournaments
- Holiday Camps



Adult Tennis
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Stebbing Primary School Community Month

March saw Stebbing Primary School once again take part in our annual *Community Month* – a special time when every class is encouraged to get involved with, support, and celebrate our local community. It is always one of the highlights of the school year, and this year was no exception.



Throughout the month, pupils from across the school took part in a wide range of activities that helped them connect with the people and places that make Stebbing such a wonderful village.

Some classes lent a helping hand at the village shop, while others enjoyed a visit to The White Hart, where they had great fun making their own pizzas. Many of our pupils also spent time litter picking around the village, helping to keep our local environment clean

and tidy. Acts of kindness were also a key focus during the month. Children carried out *random acts of kindness* in the community, spreading a little extra positivity wherever they could.

Some pupils also spent time supporting younger children at Maynards Montessori Nursery, where they helped with activities and enjoyed building relationships with the nursery children.

Year 6 pupils also have some exciting visits coming up to the village bowls club, where they will have the opportunity to learn a new sport and spend time with members of the local community.



Alongside these activities, we were delighted to work with The Way Forward Project from St Mary's Church on a special village history challenge. Esther, Caroline and Richard visited every class in the school to share fascinating stories about the history of Stebbing and some of its most well-known buildings.

Inspired by what they had learned, each class was then given a different section of the village and challenged to recreate it as part of a model village. The children worked incredibly hard planning, designing and building their sections, showing fantastic teamwork and creativity along the way.

Everything came together on the final day of the Spring term, when parents were invited into school to see our wonderful mini model village. It was fantastic to see the children's ideas and plans brought to life, and many visitors commented on the incredible attention to detail in the buildings. You may even have spotted some of the creations displayed around the village afterwards!



A huge thank you goes to The Way Forward Project for all of their support in making this project such a success. Community Month continues to be a brilliant way for our pupils to learn more about the place they live, build relationships within the village, and understand the importance of contributing positively to their community.

Mrs Clayden
Assistant Headteacher

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My Year 6

By Elias Haddad

As part of their home learning journey in year 6 at Stebbing Primary School, the children are tasked with writing an article for the Stebbing Scene.



Playing field hockey is a hobby of mine. Stebbing Primary School played a hockey match against Felsted primary school team C and D in preparation for our tournament the following week.

As we arrived at the host school we were greeted by the coaches and the Felsted team. The first quarter ended goalless even though both teams had many opportunities to score; no teams could capitalise the chances they created.

The second quarter started with more energy and determination from our team. Ms Wooding asked the team to play from the wings. And that is what we did, a pass from the wing helped Monty convert two goals before the half time whistle. Monty scored and completed his Hat-Trick with the start of the third quarter. I was substituted and therefore missed the only goal that Felsted scored. Our team defended really well and kept the score to 3-1.

Before the start of the fourth and final quarter, Ms Wooding gave some inspirational words. We resumed the match and I crossed the ball to Monty and he did what he does best! The match ended 4-1 to us. Both teams lined up to cheer, showing support and respect for each other.

Playing hockey is great fun and good for team building.

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Stebbing Village Stores: From School Desks To Shop Shelves

Owned and run by our village community

If you've dropped into the village shop on a Friday morning recently, you might have met some enthusiastic new faces behind the counter. We've been absolutely delighted to welcome Year 4 pupils (Kestrels) from Stebbing Primary School who have been stepping up as 'volunteer shopkeepers' - and what a fantastic job they did!

As in previous years, working in small groups, guided by one of our volunteers and supported by a member of staff, this year's young superstars threw themselves into the heart of village life. Far from just watching from the sidelines, they quickly learned where different items were in the shop and the name of each 'category' to help prepare for their upcoming work on the till. This included new vocabulary such as 'confectionery' and 'takeaway'. They identified items that needed replenishing in the shop and thoroughly enjoyed going down the steep stairs to the basement stock area and filling their baskets with items on their list to restock the shelves.



All Kestrel volunteers quickly learned how the till works, mastering the art of using the bar-code reader and learning when they needed to apply their knowledge of categories; 'Takeaway' – freshly-made sandwiches, sausage rolls and pasties; 'Meat' from our local farms Priors Hall and Great Garnett's - items that do not come with a bar code/from a factory.

Many of our young volunteer team had the added fun of selling to their parents/relatives.

So much to learn in such a short time and they all did it! Their concentration, energy and maturity were great to witness and all of us at the shop would like to send

A huge thank you!

To the Fabulous Kestrels (Year 4 Pupils): You were absolute professionals, a credit to your school and a joy to work with. (And thanks for your beautiful 'Thankyou cards'!)

To School Staff: Thank you for supporting to help things run so smoothly.

To our Customers: Thank you for your patience, encouragement, and warm welcomes to our youngest recruits.

Our community shop is one of the hubs of our community, and seeing the next generation get involved so brilliantly shows that the future of our village is in very safe hands! Meanwhile, if any of you adult readers would like to try your hand at volunteering, we would love to welcome you.

(Forms available in the shop/contact svsmanager1@gmail.com)

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Summer On The Wing



The warmth of Summer is enjoyed by most British wildlife, but particularly by insects. We often say "Cold blooded" when referring to them but this is not an accurate term. Summer invertebrates can get very hot blooded indeed, but they rely on external heat to become active.

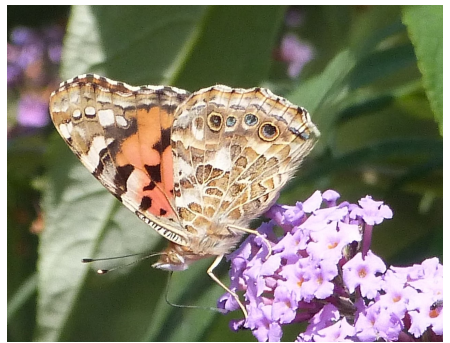
When warm, even the lazy flight of a butterfly is more energetic than you might think. The "Flutterby" may seem to move randomly, buffeted by breezes, but if you have ever seen one chased by a bird you will know that its flight includes some sophisticated evasion tactics.

Before they can even fly at all, butterflies must get their body warm enough – at least 16 C. On a cool morning they will sit with their wings open to catch as much heat as possible. If they get too hot, they will rest with wings folded, to present the smallest area to the sun in order to cool down.

In Stebbing, with the wide range of habitats and gardens, we have many species, easily identified by their colours. But, surprisingly, there are no pigments on butterfly wings. All those startling hues are created by the light being scattered by microscopic scales on the wing surface. The Latin name for butterflies is Lepidoptera, meaning scaly wings.

Incidentally, no-one seems to know why we call them butterflies. Some say they are named after the yellow varieties like Brimstones, but with so many other colours around, this seems unlikely to me. In the Netherlands the local name stems from "one who poops on butter" (yuck). For me the most likely explanation is that the name went through various transformations from "Beautyfly". Perhaps the main points to take from this mystery are, firstly, to simply enjoy these colourful insects. And, secondly, keep your butter in the fridge!

Richard Wren





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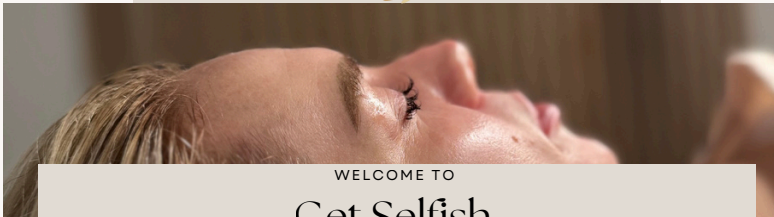
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Building At Risk



Stebbing has many fine buildings, bearing witness to centuries of habitation. If time travel were possible, an individual from the end of the 17th century would find many of the buildings in the High Street, from the village pump to the church, still standing. One particular Building, the 'Old' Friends Meeting House, would have just been built to accommodate the Quakers who had recently been given the freedom to dissent from the established church.

From 1674 to 2026 the buildings and grounds have been through several alterations and upgrades. Since 1990 a Scheme was registered with The Charity Commissioners for England and Wales where Trustees and Vesting was placed with the Parish Council as The Custodian Trustees. The object of the Trust being the provision of a village hall for the use of the inhabitants of Stebbing and the neighbourhood. The management of the hall being vested in a committee of Management Trustees. The last major restoration then commenced in 1994 when the Working Mens Club ceased to function and the desperate need to restore the building was set in motion by members of the public.

In 1996, a team headed by Jim Newbrook and Charles Going set about effecting a total refurbishment and two years later the restoration was finished at great cost financially and in time by the committee thus enabling it to be used by members of the public.



However the Grade 2* hall has had to be closed due to severe problems with the ceiling. In 1997 it was rehung according to heritage standards but tragically has failed prematurely owing to construction defects. The entire ceiling needs to be replaced at a cost of probably around £50,000

Time has taken its toll in other respects, cracks in the northwest corner have appeared possibly due to ill-advised planting, causing soil disturbance and drain blockage. The drainage problem has recently been attended to. The guttering, which is of cast iron (heritage standard but less reliable than your home's plastic guttering!) needs total refurbishment. The peg tiled roof for which grants were obtained by Ewart Kiddle some 50 years ago is in need of re-felting at the edge. A breathable membrane technically is best but because of heritage standards is not apparently allowed due to the fact of possible bat roosts. It is probable that some £100,000 plus VAT may now be needed to be spent before we can secure this building for regular use again and for future generations.



The management trustee committee would value support and commitment from the village and conservation groups for this beautiful, historic now at risk, building.

Stephen Bazlington



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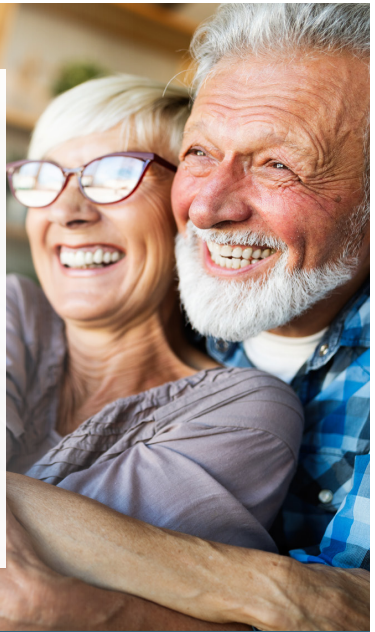
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Stebbing Cricket Club News



May arrived and with it village cricket. Stebbing seniors made a winning start with an away fixture against local opponents Little Hallingbury. The home team opened set a target of 106 in the face of strong bowling performances by Jack Plunkett, Alfie Reeves, Zac Zema and Freddie Munson. Stebbing replied scoring the required runs in 25 overs with some impressive batting including 49 not out from Will Foxton and 26 for Ryan Preston. Next up was a home match at Mill Lane against CamKerala on Sunday 10th May. The afternoon included a quick action T10 and a narrow victory for our opponents by just 7 runs.



Stebbing CC win at Hallingbury

Saturday afternoons should see junior cricket providing opportunity for both practice and competitive games for under 14s. Costs to maintain the pavilion, cricket square and outfield seem to increase yearly and so it is particularly pleasing to see an increase in youth participation. Worth a further mention is the inclusion of no less than 7 players under 18 years old in the Stebbing seniors team for the Hallingbury game.

Our pavilion refresh continues with a current plan to replace all the old strip lights with led units. An impressive mural is also taking shape and I hope to say more on that one later. Finally two dates for village diaries: Sunday 7th June Stebbing Fayre where the club will have a traditional bbq and Friday evening 26th June Stebbing CC v St Marys Church.

Ben Riley, Club President.

Remaining 2026 Fixtures:

Sun. May 31 st	Braintree (H)	Sun. July 19 th	Braintree (A)
Fri. June 5 th	Lindsell (A)	Fri. July 24 th	Felsted Robins (A)
Sun. June 14 th	Hatfield Heath (H)	Sun. July 26 th	Old Sertonians (H)
Sun. June 21 st	Old Sertonians (H)	Sun. Aug 2 nd	Dunmow (A)
Fri. June 26 th	Stebbing Church XI (H)	Sun. Aug 9 th	Hatfield Broad Oak (H)
Sun. June 28 th	Linton (H)	Sun. Aug 16 th	Terling (A)
Sun. July 5 th	Terling (H)	Sun. Aug 23 rd	Eastons (A)
Fri. July 10 th	Lindsell (H)	Sun. Aug 30 th	Little Hallingbury (H)
Sun. July 12 th	Canfield (A)	Sun. Sept 6 th	Dunmow (H)

Porters Hall: Celebrating A Successful First Year



This Summer marks one year since Porters Hall opened its doors, and looking back, it has been an exciting, rewarding and memorable first chapter.

In its inaugural year, Porters Hall hosted 52 bookings, welcoming 940 guests and even 42 dogs, achieving a 40% occupancy rate in its first season. From the very beginning, the aim was to create a place where people could come together to relax, celebrate and make lasting memories — something

reflected in the overwhelmingly positive response from visitors.

We are especially proud to have received a 100% five-star rating, with guests frequently commenting on the décor, the beautiful surroundings, the quality of service and the special experiences they enjoyed during their stay. Porters Hall has proven particularly popular for milestone family celebrations, including birthdays and anniversaries, as well as large friendship group get-togethers. It has also been wonderful to welcome guests from much further afield, including Australia and California, who have chosen Porters Hall as part of their travels.

The year also brought welcome recognition. Porters Hall was named a finalist in the Muddy Stiletto Awards for Best Boutique Stay in Essex, and featured in The Arbuturian, an award-winning online magazine aimed at discerning, well-travelled readers. Closer to home, this Summer will see an editorial feature and advert appear in the Let's Visit Essex supplement, distributed with Life magazines to neighbouring counties, with a print run of 75,000.



Behind the scenes, there has been a great deal of learning and creativity. A new website was launched, alongside a YouTube channel which gained an astonishing 70,000 views in its first three days. Our social media presence across Instagram and Facebook now reaches an average of 15,000 views each month, helping to spread the word about Porters Hall and the local area.

Porters Hall has also begun to extend its offering. This year saw the first bookings for corporate retreats and a small wedding reception, and we are looking forward to hosting a Wellness Day Retreat in June, led by Adri Welham.

Supporting local businesses has been an important part of our approach. Guests are increasingly using our recommended local suppliers, including Hadlow & Co for private catering, Josephine from Juvenescent Reformative Massages for in-house treatments, and Neil Bull for wine-tasting evenings — helping to extend the benefits of tourism within the community. We have also built strong relationships with nearby wedding venues such as Barnston Lodge and The Reid Rooms, who now recommend Porters Hall to their guests.

As with any new venture, there have been challenges and learning curves — from mastering social media to using technology that allows remote control of heating, gates and security. We also made the decision to change holiday-letting agents to Holidaycottages.com, ensuring that service standards met our expectations. Looking ahead, our focus for the coming year is on increasing mid-week occupancy, while continuing to offer a welcoming, high-quality experience for every guest who stays with us. We are also listed on 3 specialist websites promoting locations for photo and film shoots and are hoping this will prove popular too!

We would like to thank the parish and wider community for the support and encouragement shown over our first year. We look forward to welcoming many more visitors — and sharing many more happy moments — in the year ahead.

Fran Morgan

www.portershall.co.uk



Stebbing Summer Fayre

Final preparations are underway for the [Stebbing Summer Fayre](#), which takes place in just a few days on Sunday 7th June from 1:00pm to 6:00pm on the [Mill Lane cricket field](#).

Following last year's unfortunate washout, the committee made the decision to bring the event forward from September to June, and we are all keeping our fingers firmly crossed for clear skies and afternoon sunshine.

An excellent selection of entertainment is lined up for the afternoon, including live music, a traditional Punch and Judy show, and a circus entertainer. Visitors will also have plenty of local craft stalls to browse and a variety of games to play. For refreshments, the Bowls Club will be operating the bar while the Cricket Club runs the barbecue, and with tea and cake in the Pavilion, do come along hungry and thirsty.

The crowd-favourite Fun Dog Show also makes a welcome return. Owners of all breeds are invited to enter their canine companions into classes. To help plan your afternoon around the arena, please see the timetable above. Attendees are kindly reminded of two quick practicalities to ensure the day runs smoothly. Seating is limited, so please bring a picnic blanket or rug for the grass. Additionally, please keep plenty of cash on hand, as many of our traditional games and small independent stalls are unable to accept card payments.

We look forward to a marvellous turnout. Do bring along family, friends and neighbours for what promises to be a most enjoyable village afternoon.



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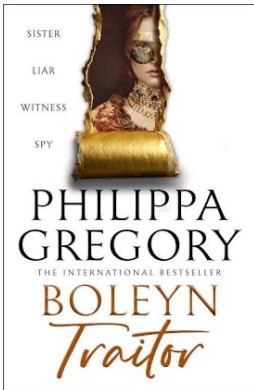
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Between The Covers – Stebbing Style: Suggested Holiday Reads



BOLEYN TRAITOR - PHILIPPA GREGORY 2025 - (Paperback 2026)

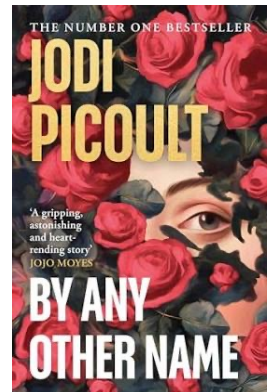
This popular author combines her deep knowledge of the Tudor period with a keen eye for a good story. Jane Boleyn served as a lady-in waiting to five of the six wives of Henry VIII, as he turned from being a dazzlingly popular young king into a bullying, overweight tyrant. It is unclear whether Jane played an active role in the downfall of her neglectful husband, George, and her sister-in-law, Anne Boleyn, but she did act as a spy for Thomas Cromwell and also gathered important information for her odious uncle, the Duke of Norfolk. Despite this, she appears to have served the next two queens well, i.e. during Jane Seymour's short reign and the birth of a male heir, and the even shorter period of Anne of Cleves, as the German bride made the tricky transition from being a ridiculed,

unwanted Queen to becoming, instead, Henry's "beloved sister"! Jane, however, returned to an increasingly dangerous and unstructured court. She became the chief lady-in-waiting to the giddy, untutored teenager, Katheryn Howard, who was recklessly embarking on a love affair while, at the same time, trying to conceal her earlier, troubled past.

BY ANY OTHER NAME - JODI PICOULT - 2025

A few months ago, I had an enigmatic text from a friend who knows of my admiration for William Shakespeare. It stated: "What if the "he" is, instead, really a "she"? She followed this by saying that I should read a new book by Jodi Picoult. This suggests that many of Shakespeare's sonnets and plays were not written by him at all but, instead, were bought by him from an impoverished but talented Italian poet. The novel is in two parts. It starts by introducing a modern American playwright called Melina Green, who is facing rejection because of her sex. She feels particular anger towards an influential New York critic, Jasper Tolle, who had earlier given her a scathing review. Melina's good friend Andre later submits her work under the heading "Mel Green", which does then attract attention. Andre is persuaded to act as the author, with Melina as his assistant, which leads to many complications, especially as the dreaded critic, Jasper, re-enters the story.

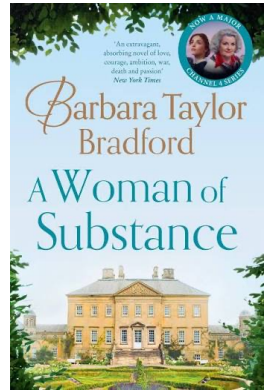
The other part of the novel takes us back to the court of an ageing Elizabeth 1st and the life of a real-life personality, Emilia Bassano, who comes from an Italian/Jewish family of impoverished court musicians. At an early age, Emilia becomes the courtesan of the elderly Henry Hunsdon, the Lord Chamberlain. She lives in style in London, with the freedom to mix with the actors at court and at the London theatres, including Christopher Marlowe, who is impressed by her writing. She also falls deeply in love with the Earl of Southampton. When she later falls pregnant, her life changes dramatically for the worse. She is hastily married off to a drunken, evil-tempered member of her family of musicians. To supplement her income and to protect her son, she secretly sells more and more of her work to Shakespeare.



WOMAN OF SUBSTANCE - BARBARA TAYLOR BRADFORD - 1979 - this edition 2026

This doorstep of a novel was a huge hit back in 1980. It has recently been televised on Channel 4. Despite the lengthy descriptive passages which some modern readers may not like, this engrossing story keeps the reader hooked. It tells the rag to riches story of Emma Harte, a young, pregnant, 16-year-old parlour maid at Fairley Hall, who, to avoid shaming her family, runs away to Leeds, vowing vengeance on the whole Fairley family.

In Leeds and Armley, she is helped by Blackie, an odd job man, also bent on making a fortune and David Kalinski, a clothing manufacturer. The story of her rise to incredible riches, her love affairs and chequered family life, takes place from the end of the nineteenth century, through two World Wars and up to 1968.

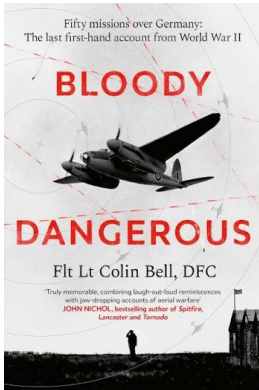


BLOODY DANGEROUS - FLT LT BELL, DFC - 2026

A new contender to Captain Tom's crown may now be Colin Bell, who, at the age of 105, has published his life story! This indomitable ex- flying officer later worked as a chartered surveyor until he was 98 and abseiled down the Royal London Hospital for charity when he was 102!

Witnessing the devastation of the London Blitz at first hand, increased young Colin's determination to join the Air Force. It had earlier rejected him, preferring more academic public or grammar school boys. Colin didn't fit either group but, after enrolling at a tutorial college to sharpen up his maths, he was successful. He was then fortunate enough to be chosen to be trained up as a military pilot in America alongside their own cadets. He thoroughly enjoyed the sumptuous American food

after wartime English rationing but found the rigid training and discipline there very harsh. In fact, over a third of the large British contingent was sent back to England in the first few weeks! Colin, after regretting his earlier rebellious ways, became a strongly recommended commissioned officer and was immediately picked to be an instructor for American pilots. He stayed in America gaining valuable flying hours until early 1943 and returned to Britain highly qualified. He also heeded an American friend's advice and quickly proposed to his beautiful WAAF girlfriend before someone else did! The couple were married in July 1943 and remained together for seventy three years! In the Spring of 1944, Colin joined a new unit within the elite Pathfinder Group which was equipped with his favourite wooden Mosquito bombers. He flew 50 missions, many of them with Doug Redmond, a brilliant navigator, and gained a DFC. With their excellent combined skills and a lot of luck, particularly in his last raid, Colin survived the war in Europe and ended his military career still flying his beloved Mosquitos, but delivering diplomatic mail instead of bombs!



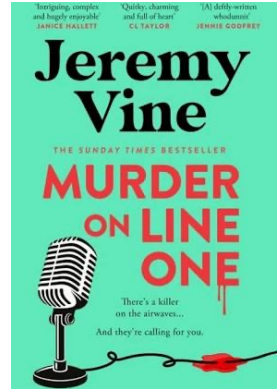
MURDER ON LINE 1 - JEREMY VINE - 2025

Jeremy Vine cycles daily across London to host a Channel 5 morning programme and, until he started receiving death threats, also took to social media to tell of his run-ins with angry motorists. He also fits in a popular lunch-time slot on Radio 2 and used to host Eggheads, a daily quiz show. He has now found time to become a successful author, his latest efforts slotting into the "cosy-crime" slot, alongside Richard Osman and Rob Rinder.

Murder on Line 1 features Edward Temmis, a sacked DJ in Sidmouth, Devon, whose life has collapsed after the death of his beloved son. He is hanging on to his new job at a garden centre by his fingertips. To give his barren life some meaning, he has resolved to help Stevie, a troubled young girl, who believes that her beloved grandmother has been murdered.

He has also become very attached to Kimberley, the estate agent wife of a policeman. The threesome come to realise that several former fans of the DJ have been the victims of a romance scam and set out to discover how these unreported crimes are connected to the radio station.

Enjoy your holidays! *Diana Roe*



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SUNDAY 21ST
- PORSCHE BY THE LAKE 2026**
SATURDAY 27TH



JULY

- CLASSICAL AFTERNOON TEA BY THE LAKE**
SATURDAY 4TH
- MUSIC AT THE MANOR: QUEEN TRIBUTE**
SATURDAY 18TH
- 'LADY WINDERMERE'S FAN' & 'THE WONDERFUL WIZARD OF OZ'**
- OUTDOOR THEATRE**
SATURDAY 25TH

AUGUST

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SATURDAY 1ST
- ALPACA AFTERNOON TEA**
THURSDAY 6TH
- DINO DAY**
SATURDAY 8TH
- MUSIC AT THE MANOR: JERSEY BOYS TRIBUTE**
SATURDAY 15TH
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SATURDAY 22ND
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St Mary's: From Restoration To Celebration



ST MARY'S
STEBBING

Church Re-opening

It's done! After a truly herculean effort by Bakers of Danbury, the project team and volunteers, St Mary's was ready to reopen its doors on 29th March. Boxes were unpacked, furniture carefully put in place, and final touches, including the digital screen and last-minute electrical works, were completed just in time. With everything swept, polished and prepared, we were delighted to welcome over 270 guests for an historic and memorable Sunday afternoon service, led by Rev. Sue Hurley and featuring guest speaker, Archdeacon Kate Peacock.

Visitors enjoyed a video showcasing the project's incredible journey, followed by a delicious hog roast and prosecco reception. Thanks to the dedication of our volunteers, everything ran seamlessly, with orderly queues and a lovely atmosphere as people chatted while waiting for food.

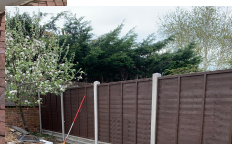


Church Open Day

The following weekend, on Easter Saturday, the church reopened for a busy and vibrant Open Day. The new Cornerstone Café was in full swing, serving barista coffee alongside delicious homemade cakes and cookies. Visitors enjoyed guided trips up the bell tower, where our bell ringers shared their knowledge before inviting guests to try ringing for themselves. Meanwhile, our exhibition on The Way Forward project drew strong interest, including from a visitor representing Historic England. With the renovation now complete, we are hopeful that St Mary's will soon come off the "Heritage at Risk" register.

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The afternoon saw a wave of families descend on the church, drawn by the ever-popular Easter crafts and the infamous egg hunt, this year featuring a special appearance from "Batty" the bat. Children excitedly searched the church for the familiar character, who has featured in assemblies at Stebbing Primary School led by Esther and Caroline, our Heritage Engagement Officer and Historian in Residence.

The crafts were a huge hit, including a memorable inflatable chicken head! Rev. Sue Hurley and her fantastic team of volunteers did a truly outstanding job, and everyone we spoke to commented on what a wonderful afternoon it had been for the children.



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History Evening

Hot on the heels of the Open Day came an evening collaboration between the Stebbing Local History Society and The Way Forward project, which welcomed over 130 attendees. Guests enjoyed two fascinating talks: Ben from Colchester Archaeological Trust shared insights into discoveries made during the excavation works, while Anthea Hawden from Raking Light explored the medieval graffiti and its significance within St Mary's. With visitors travelling from a range of locations and plenty of positive feedback, this first collaboration can certainly be counted a great success.

Our Games Night the following week was a quieter affair, perhaps due to the timing, so we're planning to trial a daytime or weekend event next time.



Take Note Concert

What a treat we had on Saturday 25th April! Local concert band Take Note delivered a stunning programme of adventure-themed music, blending well-loved favourites such as Star Wars and Titanic with lesser-known pieces. With close to 100 guests in attendance—and a bar serving drinks and snacks—it was a fantastic showcase for the new, flexible space inside St Mary's. One of the many highlights was the solo performance by teenager Bea Earle, who captivated the audience with an outstanding a cappella rendition of Come Fly With Me, alongside other pieces accompanied on guitar. Performing with confidence far beyond her years, she surely has a bright future ahead.



Springtime Spectacular

Our Springtime Spectacular returned on Saturday 2nd May and what a wonderful day it was! Blessed with beautiful sunshine and warm temperatures, St Mary's and the car park field were buzzing with activity from start to finish, as families, friends and visitors from across the local area, came together to enjoy a true community celebration.

There was something for everyone throughout the day. Children enthusiastically took part in stream dipping, crafts, scavenger hunts and badge making, while the ever-popular bell ringing returned once again. One of the highlights of the afternoon was undoubtedly the birds of prey display. From tiny owls to magnificent larger birds, visitors who chose to take part were able to enjoy an up-close experience and appreciate just how beautiful these creatures really are. Seeing the delight and amazement on children's faces as they carefully held the birds was particularly lovely to witness. Our Bake Off competition also proved a great success, and this year's winner, 10 year old Finn, wowed the judges with his berry themed cake.

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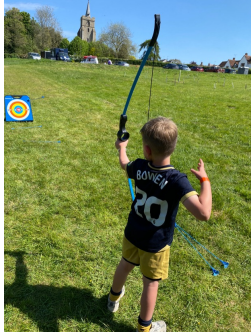
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The atmosphere throughout the day was relaxed, friendly and full of conversation and laughter. Visitors enjoyed spending time inside the newly restored church as well as outside in the sunshine, while food vans and the Cornerstone Café kept everyone well supplied with refreshments and homemade cakes.

We are hugely grateful to our fantastic volunteers, activity leaders and local businesses who helped make the day such a success, and to everyone who came along and supported the event.

All these events are a wonderful reminder of what The Way Forward project is all about: creating opportunities for the whole community to come together and enjoy St Mary's in new ways.



Coming up

Games night, half term children's kaleidoscope workshop, gin night, moths in the churchyard and Cornerstone Café every Monday and Tuesday. Go to the What's On page on our website, www.wayforwardstebbing.org for more information and to book tickets for events where relevant.

We'd love to hear from you! Have you got an idea for an event? Get in touch.

Sarah Maddox
Project Administrator
sarah.smvtwf@gmail.com

Parish Paths Partnership (P3) News

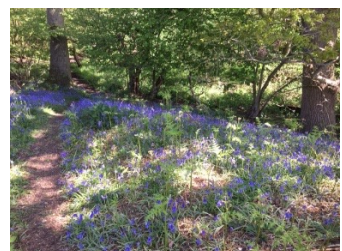
Well, the weather did clear up, and we are now into our Work Proposal list. The bridge above Brick Kiln Farm was replaced. The broken bridge at Yew Tree farm was replaced by ECC and the Finger Post re-erected. The earth bridge on FP7 is still very narrow and could be dangerous in the wet.

Just before Easter we laid 10M of hardcore on FP21 towards The Mount which we all know gets like a ski slope in the winter. Unfortunately, we didn't get quite the balance of stones to finings that I expected, not that we had any choice in the matter, hence we had to lay some dry mix to blind the top surface. Now that the grass and nettles have started to grow, we have turned our attention to grass cutting and we will leave the path until the Autumn to see how it settles down. I would like to point out that, while it was something I have wanted to do for some time, none of it would have happened without the help and co-operation of the Cricket Club, the Parish Council, and a local resident who transported two 1 ton bags of ballast up the High Street to site for us, not to mention the efforts of the P3 team.

How often do you go to start a job and find something more serious needs doing first? Just as we started grass cutting, we thought that the cutting cords on our wheeled strimmer were a bit short and on examination they were found to have broken off – in trying to replace them we discovered that the drive belt was about to break so that had to be ordered and replaced. Now, everything is back together, both of our brush-cutters have been serviced and we are geared up to try and keep on top of the upgrowth.

Please use the footpaths and enjoy them, there is a free brochure of walks available in the village shop, just don't drop litter, dispose of your dog poo properly and if you do find a problem, please let me know.

Brian Martin - 07929 476361



Dorcas Society News

On the first day of Spring, March 20th, it seemed very appropriate to be holding our Annual Spring Soup Lunch. Having put Winter behind us, or so we hoped, everyone seemed in the mood to enjoy themselves and the three varieties of soup on offer, all proved to be very popular. The Village Hall was filled, not only with people, but chatter and good humour and it was so pleasing to see that some of our first timers from the Autumn Harvest Lunch, had returned to support us again. As I have said many times before, it really is a great pleasure for us all, to be involved in such a truly community event.

At this point, I like to remind everyone that we are always keen to hear of anyone who could possibly benefit from a small gift, some flowers or even just a card, for any reason at all. Please don't hesitate to contact any of us.

In the meantime, hopefully Summer is on the way and we hope everyone will enjoy some sun and warmth. Looking ahead to October, which does seem ridiculous in the middle of May, I should just like to mention that our next event will be the Harvest Lunch on Friday, October 9th and we do hope that many of you will join us.

Rosie Pitkethly.

The Dorcas Society: An Invitation



We would like to invite you to our

ANNUAL HARVEST LUNCH

on Friday 9th October 2026

At the Village Hall – 12.30pm
Tickets £9.50 per person

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Tickets available from: Ann Pattenden 856476 or Rosemary Pitkethly 856155

Letters To The Editor

I recently attended a blood donation session (my 121st donation!) and I was asked if I had recently managed to recruit anyone to the cause. I had to confess that I hadn't. Hence this note in the hope that more people will consider enrolling and, in particular, encourage younger friends and family to consider it. You have to be at least 17 years of age and it really only needs an hour of your time a couple of times a year. None of us knows when we might need a transfusion and the service is crying out for new donors. Please go onto the website for more information: www.blood.co.uk

Donor sessions in our area are held at Flitch Green and Braintree as well as Chelmsford and Bishop's Stortford.

Pat Harrison

Grateful Thanks to Grange Farm & Dunmow Runners

The trustees of the John Buttolfe Charity would like to express their thanks to Grange Farm and Dunmow Runners for the generous donation of £500 which was raised from part of the proceeds of the Stebbing 10 Remembrance Day Race. This donation will help the charity provide assistance to elderly residents within the parish through a number of grants made every year to individuals and organisations, including "Over 60s" and "Meals on Wheels".



Each year, Grange Farm and Dunmow Runners organise the Stebbing 10 Remembrance Day Race, which is held on Remembrance Sunday and celebrated its 23rd year in November 2025.

If you know of an elderly resident, within the parish of Stebbing, who may benefit from the support of the John Buttolfe Charity, please do get in touch. The John Buttolfe Charity is registered with the Charities Commission number 208063.

Tricia Howland, Chair

For further information, please contact: Patricia.Howland@btinternet.com

Stebbing Parish Council Chairman's Report 2025-2026

It has been another busy year for Stebbing Parish Council, which I will detail below.

You will recall that at the end of May 2025 we were running two parish councillors short which made it difficult to run each of our committees. However I am pleased to report that Ben Martin joined us in June 2025 and Margaret Rufus in October 2025. Unfortunately for the parish council Sandi Merrifield, who had been a long standing parish councillor, resigned. Her wealth of knowledge on all things planning is sorely missed. Again we were joined by Chris Riddell so we are currently running with the required number of councillors.

A further blow to the parish council was the resignation of Greg King our parish clerk of many years. Much of the Summer of 2025 was occupied in obtaining a new clerk. We were able to appoint Amy Wharton from October 2025. She is rapidly learning the ways of Stebbing parish and its residents – no mean feat!

Highways and Street Lighting

The Speed Indicator Devices (SIDs) have now been in action for over a year and really are proving to be a deterrent when in their various locations. Unfortunately due to the enormous cost of each SID we will continue to move them around. Further analysis on those in the High Street will take place later this year.

Amazingly we are still pursuing the change of the 30mph posts through the conservation area from silver to black. We will now have to start again in late May with a new County Councillor.

In addition we will also be discussing the erroneous 30mph signs at Duck End with our new county councillor

With regards to the revised Local Highway Panel (LHP) procedure it has been something of nothing due to the impending Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) in 2027. This has meant that all monies have been assigned up to the LGR start date. Essex will then be divided into 5 areas and Uttlesford will be joined with Epping Forest and Harlow so District councils will be no more. As you can imagine the detail is yet to emerge on how this will impact Parish Councils, but I suspect more work will come our way. More on this in next year's report.

The signage, reported last year, at Porters Hall crossroads has, in part, been repaired / cleaned. We have asked for more work to be done but the LHP do not see this as a priority. However there has been a further accident on 22nd April with 3 cars involved. Again we will take up with our new County Councillor when they come on board.

Yet again our footpaths are in very good shape due to Brian Martin and his team of helpers. Both the Stebbing footpath maps and the new Stebbing walks book can be found free in the Village Shop. Many thanks Brian and Bernard.

Planning

Last year I reported that the Uttlesford Local Plan was out for consultation. I can now state it has been agreed and has now come into force. It does give our planning team a better framework, along with the Stebbing Neighbourhood Plan (SNP) (more of this later) when making comments to Uttlesford on planning applications.

I also reported that the two developments in the High Street had been put up for appeal on two counts. It was with a great relief (and a lot of hard work by councillors and residents) that both appeals were quashed. One of the main pieces of evidence against was the use of the SNP by all. Thanks to everyone involved.

We are now currently awaiting the outcome of two further large planning applications – one behind Hornsea Villas and one off Poundgate. Both objected to by the PC and many residents.

One planning application which was granted by Uttlesford planning committee was the land formerly called “Hens for homes” where a number of bungalows (sorely needed in Stebbing) will be built.

Playing Fields

We have continued to maintain the grounds and equipment in all three playing fields with the cricket club playing their part on ground maintenance at Mill Lane. All three fields continue to be used by all ages in the village with regular football and cricket matches during the relevant seasons. There is now a defibrillator at Alcott field.

Stebbing Green

Routine maintenance has proved effective in ensuring that Stebbing Green is kept to a high standard. As befits such a green it should not host daffodils so they have been removed this year. Regular checking of trees is undertaken to avoid any Health and Safety issues. Last year I mentioned we were having problems getting the green registered as a Conservation area. All issues now appear to be cleared and we await UDC ‘s decision on awarding a Conservation Area. Results will be given at the June/July parish council meeting.

Greener Stebbing

The twice-yearly Litter Pick is as popular as ever and over 20 bags of rubbish are collected on each pick of just over an hour.

The Kingdom Walk grows from strength to strength and now has little issues with mountain bikers.

The team has secured a Zero Carbon grant from UDC to enhance the orchard (land bequeathed to the village by Daphne Rogowski) adjacent to Stebbing Green . We asked for £8,000 and received £4,000 so further grants are being applied for. Great thanks is given to the Village Hall committee, especially Linda White and John Pitkethly, for their input and

advice given on the orchard as trustees of the land. It is hoped to increase the number of trees, consider a forest school and work with all ages to make it a productive and enhanced space for the village to enjoy.

Parish web site

We are continuing to enhance the information on the site to have a more inclusive site. The What's Happening page is gaining momentum and more information is added as we receive new dates.

Stebbing Neighbourhood Plan (SNP)

The team has started to update the plan so it is in line with the newly "made" UDC Local Plan and our housing allocation. We have recently completed the issue and collated responses from a questionnaire issued to all residents on what housing they see we need (and where) in the village to meet our allocation. Thanks to everyone who completed the questionnaire.

Emergency Plan and Co-ordinator

As a parish council we are obliged to have an Emergency Plan in place which in our case would cover flooding or an aircraft landing in the village. We are currently updating the plan but need a new Emergency co-ordinator. Please see our advert on p16 for a volunteer.

Finally

Stebbing Parish Council would not be able to undertake the essential workload that it does without its Clerk. In this year, initially Greg King, and then with Amy Wharton from November 2025. I would like to thank Greg for all his hard work over a number of years, his efficiency and sense of humour when liaising with contractors and parishioners and thus enabling projects and activities to be completed. We wish him well in his retirement. A hard act to follow but Amy is getting her feet under the table and I am sure she will be an asset to the parish as we move into 2026/7 year.

Thank you also to the other chairs of committees for all their hard work throughout the year. I would also like to thank all my fellow councillors who as volunteers work hard giving their time without payment for the benefit of Stebbing.

Judith Farr

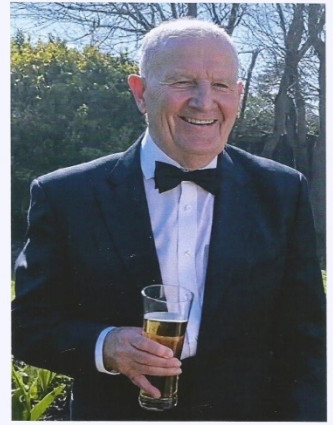
Chairman Stebbing Parish Council

Obituary: Paul Hopwood

4th April 1941 – 14th April 2026

Paul was born on 4th April 1941, in the Isle of Ely, the youngest of four children. In his early years, the family moved to Upper Clapton, where he attended Detmold Primary School before going on to Upton House Senior School, Clapton.

At the age of 11yrs, Paul joined Springfield Boys Club, where his lifelong love of football first took root. By 14yrs, Paul was progressing through various teams. It was during these footballing years, that Paul formed many of his closest friendships – bonds that lasted a lifetime.



One Sunday evening at The Redhouse, Paul caught sight of a beautiful lady named Pat – he asked her to dance and, ever the gentleman later offered her a lift home. Pat however, politely declined – she had her own car. Undeterred, Paul did the next best thing and arranged to meet her for a drink the following Thursday at the Queen 'Vic' in Theydon Bois. Pat agreed to that drink and in time, to marry him.

Paul & Pat were married in 1970 at St Mary's Church, Walthamstow, beginning a partnership that would span an incredible 56 years. Married life began with their first big decision together; buying a home in Chingford. It was here that Paul became a proud father to Amanda and Joanne and later welcomed his son, Paul junior, along with his grandsons, Jonathon and Joshua, into the ever-growing family.

Paul never lost touch with his football friends over the years, and they remained an important part of his life. At Pat's 70th birthday celebration, Paul decided to do the honourable thing and stand up to give a speech. With great sincerity, Paul began thanking his friends and many more, only to miss out the most important person of all: the birthday girl herself! A small oversight which has, quite rightly, provided the family with plenty of laughter ever since.

Paul took immense pride in walking each of his daughters down the aisle, warmly welcoming Jason and Paul into the family. Paul would often say he couldn't have asked for better sons in law and he meant it.

Paul was a devoted Grandad to Jonathan, Joshua, Emily, Elle, Ruby and Freddie and more recently, great-grandad to Anna, who brought him enormous joy. Paul relished being the 'fun Grandad' – taking Ruby out to play golf and cherishing time spent with his grandchildren as they grew older and at family gatherings, celebrations and any occasion that might involve a well-earned beer in hand.

At the age of 65, Paul retired and embraced a slower pace of life, doing the things he loved most. He took great pride in his garden, which became a true reflection of his care and attention.

Paul also joined Stebbing Bowls Club and enjoyed many a Tuesday afternoon with friends at The Boars Head in Dunmow – usually accompanied by a pint or two and plenty of conversation.



Paul & Pat eventually settled in Bran End, Stebbing, where they have spent the past 15 years surrounded by beautiful countryside.

Paul had always been fit, active and someone who looked after himself, so the news in March of this year was all the more shocking, when he was diagnosed with a tumour in his leg. Before treatment could begin, Paul became unwell, the news was devastatingly revealed to be lung cancer. Paul faced this with great strength and courage, but sadly his passing came very quickly. Paul died peacefully on the 14th April at Broomfield Hospital, surrounded by his family

“Paul’s life was full of passion, love and laughter – a life well lived, leaving behind cherished memories for all who knew him”

Pat Hopwood & Edwina Winter

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A Spring Of Community, Connection & New Energy

Spring at St Mary's has been nothing short of remarkable. Since reopening our doors, we've seen our community step forward with generosity, creativity and a real appetite to get involved and it's been wonderful to witness.

Our Open Day set the tone for the season. Volunteers worked across every corner of the event guiding craft activities, helping families create their own spring gardens, chatting with guests to gather thoughtful feedback and keeping the café stocked with delicious homemade bakes. The launch of Cornerstone Café was a particular highlight, made possible only through the planning, preparation and dedication of a small but mighty group of committed coffee drinkers from the village. Their enthusiasm has helped us build something truly special.

One of the most encouraging things this Spring has been the number of new and younger faces(!) joining in. People who hadn't volunteered before have stepped forward with fresh energy, curiosity and a willingness to try something new. Our first Games Night continued that spirit. A handful of volunteers came along to offer a warm welcome to those visiting St Mary's for the first time, helping people feel at ease and even challenging them into trying games they'd never played before. It was relaxed, friendly, and full of laughter.

At the Take Note concert, the atmosphere was lifted even further by our two dancing barmen who not only served drinks with a smile but also proved they still had a few moves left in them. The band was fantastic, but the bar team certainly gave them a run for their money!

The Springtime Spectacular brought everything together. It wasn't just a celebration of the season, it was a celebration of community. Volunteers old and new took on roles they'd never tried before, stepping out of their comfort zones to help prepare and run the event. Seeing people take the lead on new activities, support one another, and throwing themselves into the day was a real testament to the spirit of St Mary's, Stebbing.

As we head into Summer, there's plenty more to look forward to. We have a growing calendar of events and a wide range of volunteer roles to suit every personality and schedule. Whether you prefer to lead from the front, work quietly behind the scenes, or simply offer an hour here and there.

Cornerstone Café has been such a hit that we've already extended our opening hours within the first month, and we're now looking for more budding baristas and friendly front-of-house faces. If you fancy learning how to make a flat white, or would simply enjoy being part of a warm, welcoming team, we'd love to hear from you.

St Mary's is thriving again, not because of the building itself, but because of the people who fill it. Thank you to everyone who has given their time, energy and enthusiasm this Spring. You've helped create something vibrant, welcoming and full of heart. Here's to a Summer of even more connection, creativity and community.

To get involved or for more details, please contact:
Helen Murphy, Volunteer & Training Coordinator The Way Forward
helen.smtwtf@gmail.com

Stebbing Ladies Group News



Following on from our talks given by Mike Perry on 'The Story of The Flitch Trials' and Amanda Sutherland's exhilarating talk on 'My Career through Film, TV and Theatrical Costume Design', we will, by the time you are reading this, have been treated to an evening of 'Magic and Reveal' with Jim Conway. This fascinating and enjoyable itinerary of events continues into the Summer....

Sunday June 7th we are running a stall at the **Stebbing Summer Fayre**, fingers crossed that the weather will be much kinder this year. Hook a Duck and Name the Dog, so something for the youngsters and young at heart.

Friday June 19th we are hosted, once again, by Stebbing Bowls Club for an evening of Bowls and BBQ.

Wednesday 22nd July our Summer Social evening will be held at Andrewsfield Milli-Bar.

Stebbing Ladies Group meet on the 4th Wednesday of the month (excluding August and December) and new members are always welcomed, so don't forget to stop by and say hello at the Summer Fayre.

Wendy Haynes

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Puzzle Corner:

Great Dunmow & Stebbing Local History Puzzle

In this issue, test your knowledge of the unique history, folklore and landmarks right on our doorstep. Unscramble the letters in brackets at the end of each clue to find the answer.

1. Great Dunmow's name originates from early Saxon terms meaning _____. (WMDAEO NO ETH LHIL)
2. In Stebbing, the Friends Meeting House built in 1674 is famous for being the oldest surviving _____ building of its kind in Essex. (QKERUA)
3. The famous four-yearly Flicht Trials award a side of bacon to couples who can prove they haven't wished themselves unwed for a _____. (YRAE DAN A DYA)
4. Great Dunmow grew significantly in Roman times because it sat directly along the major military road known as _____. (ESTAN TRSETE)
5. Situated just north-west of Stebbing Church, the moated earthwork known as "The Mount" is the remaining site of a medieval _____. (ETSACL)
6. Located in Great Dunmow, _____ is where inventor Lionel Lukin tested the world's first unsinkable lifeboat. (COTRDOS PDON)
7. The breathtaking Grade II listed _____ near Great Dunmow feature an iconic Italian garden designed by Harold Peto. (GNRDESA FO ASNETO OLDEG)
8. In 1288, the manor of Stebbing briefly passed to the famous Scottish noble house of _____ after a rogue, unsanctioned marriage. (ADUGLSO)
9. The former railway line connecting Dunmow to Braintree and Bishop's Stortford has been transformed into a scenic walking and cycling path called the _____. (TFCLIH WYA)
10. The historic 16th-century _____, completed in 1578, still stands proudly as a landmark in Dunmow's Market Place. (DOL NOTW LLAH)
11. Archeologists at Porters Hall Farm in Stebbing famously uncovered the remains of a complex _____ settlement, including a bathhouse. (RMANO)
12. In the 14th century, Great Dunmow's quirky bacon-winning tradition was famously immortalised in literature by Geoffrey Chaucer in _____. (EHT CANERTRUBY SEALT)
13. The local airfield _____, straddling the edge of Stebbing, was a vital wartime base established in 1943 for the USAAF and RAF. (ANWEEDSRFLID)
14. Dunmow's medieval heart originally grew around _____, before a market charter in 1253 shifted the town center to the High Street. (RHCHUC END)
15. The beautiful _____ pub in Stebbing is the village's sole surviving historic licensed house, with records dating back to 1756. (TEHWI THRA)
16. The village of _____, located just south of Great Dunmow, is the *true* historic home where the Flicht Trials were first recorded in 1104. (ETITLL MOUNDW)
17. To ensure complete fairness, the jury for the Dunmow Flicht Trials is strictly made up of six bachelors and six _____. (MIDNSEA)
18. In 1839, the highly self-sufficient parish of Stebbing was heavily reliant on its thriving trade industry, boasting six working _____. (AMNTIGSL)

Directory of Advertisers

Beauty	Get Selfish Skin Therapy The Retreat Beauty & Holistic Spa Ugly Betty's Waxing	Page 42 Page 58 Page 48
Builders	DW Surface Specialists Dunmow Handyman Services GS Craft T&S Building	Page 72 Page 16 Page 71 Page 10
Care & Support	Caremark	Page 4
Car Valeting	Shammy's Car Valeting Service	Page 8
Celebrant	Chrissie Astell	Page 52
Chimney Sweep	Ross Brown (formerly A Tite Chimney Sweep) Daystone Chimney Sweeps The Chimney Sweep Company Walden Sweeps	Page 70 Page 72 Page 32 Page 4
Cleaning	BS General Cleaning Company (Windows)	Page 48
Complementary Therapies	The Hive Beauty At The Barn Reflexology Solution Focused Hypnotherapy	Page 25 Page 38 Page 42
Dentist	Market Place Dental	Page 28
Dog Training Dog Boarding Dog Grooming	Purdy's Pals Pet Services Bumbles Dog Boarding Bubbles At Bumbles	Page 38 Page 40 Page 40
Entertainment	Judith Lawrence Presents Little Easton Manor	Page 15 Page 52
Fencing	Rowley Fencing	Page 71
Financial Planning	De Courcy Financial Planning Just Mortgages	Page 26 Page 25
Fitness	Core & Calm Reformer Pilates Nordic Walking Stebbing Tennis Club Vital Energy Pilates, Yoga & Biomechanics Yoga 4 Hearts & Spines	Page 26 Page 70 Page 32 Page 56 Page 72

Food & Drink	Andrewsfield Milli-Bar Meadow Oak Distillery	Page 73 Page 36
Funeral Directors	Daniel Robinson & Sons Michael J Walsh Funeral Directors	Page 74 Page 79
Furniture	Goddards Interiors	Page 36
Garden Maintenance	Lawn & Border W Reeve Garden Projects Willows Waterscapes	Page 28 Page 54 Page 48
Health & Safety	Houghton Safety Services	Page 72
Media	Media Coms	Page 74
Medical	Dunmow Private Medical Clinic	Page 54
Painters & Decorators	Doug Sanders Decorator Martin Reeve Plastering, Coving & Decorating MJ Reeve Interior & Exterior Painting RB Plastering Projects	Page 4 Page 70 Page 10 Page 73
Pest Control	AJ Pest Control	Page 70
Pet Supplies	Hornsea Animal Feeds	Page 67
Physiotherapy	Braintree Physiotherapy Clinic	Page 10
Plumbing	Vogue Plumbing & Heating	Page 58
Property Clearance	T4 Contracting	Page 38
Retirement Living	The Hawthorns	Page 44
Roofing	Mark Patch R Wheeler Roofing Services	Page 18 Page 18
Security	Eastern Fire & Security	Page 69
Solar Energy	Igloo Environmental	Page 51
Taxis	Luxury Taxis Simon's Taxis	Page 38 Page 73
Tutors	Jessie Hood Languages Services	Page 32
Vet	Moloney Vet Clinics	Page 44

Stebbing Directory

AFSS/Stebbing School	Office	856260
Badminton	Mark Hayden	07791526278
Beavers	Nieky van Veggel	scouts.stebbing@gmail.com
Bell Ringing	Neil Bromley	820898
Bowls Club	John Pitkethly	856155
Carpet Bowls (Afternoon)	Pat Hopwood	856183
Carpet Bowls (Evening)	Roger Butson	856348
Church (Administrator)	Emma Nicholls	pilgrim.parishes.enquiries@gmail.com
Church (Vicar)	Sue Hurley	revsuehurley@gmail.com
Cricket Club	Adrian Farr	856691
Cubs	Simon Fisher	scouts.stebbing@gmail.com
Dorcas Society	Rosie Pitkethly	856155
Footpath Rep	Brian Martin	856664
Friday Morning Market	Kim Matthews	856112
Friends Meeting House	Angela Newbrook	856464
Garden Club	Denise Puttnam	07760 488145
History Society/Archive	Derek Towler	856680
Judo Club	Faith Pitman	07595 331073
Ladies Group	Gina Going	855943
Meals on Wheels	Sue Riley	856548
Over 60s	Doreen Cumming	856408
Parish Clerk	Amy Ferraro	855805
Parish Paths Partnership	Brian Martin	856664
Primary School	Lucy Heys	856260
Porters Hall	Fran Morgan	admin@portershall.co.uk
Rainbows	Liz Hooper	lizhooper@hotmail.co.uk
TOTs & Co	Rev Sue Hurley	859158
Stebbing Scene	Karen Clark	07710400581
Summer Fayre	Karen Clark	07710400581
Tennis Club	Ian Ford-Robertson	07967751262
Village Hall	Donna Kiberd	01787 703993
Village Stores	Julie Gray	svsmanager1@gmail.com/856380
White Hart	Emily Luther	856383

Please help us stay up to date – tell us about changes: karen@howetraining.com

MICHAEL J WALSH
FUNERAL DIRECTORS
A DIGNIFIED AND CARING APPROACH

Michael J Walsh Funeral Directors is a local family run business that have been providing a professional and caring service to the Great Dunmow area for over 100 years.

As well as providing traditional burial and cremation packages, in June 2022 we completed the building of Dunmow Crematorium, which we run alongside our established Funeral services.

Michael J Walsh, with our dignified and caring approach, offers the expertise and experience necessary to ensure you give your loved one the perfect send off.

Full Service Cremation

£3,465

FUNERAL INCLUDES:

- Our professional services.
- A standard oak veneered coffin.
- Traditional hearse to Dunmow Crematorium.
- Cremation fees for a Full service at Dunmow Crematorium with 2 hours between services.
- Attendance of funeral director and bearers.
- Officiant fees.
- 50 copies of the order of service.
- A single image on screens and music throughout the service.
- 25 photo music tribute.
- Traditional coffin spray of flowers.
- Handling donations and tribute page.
- Collection of cremated remains.

DUNMOW
CREMATORIUM

No Hearse Full Service and Wake (for 50 people)

£3,765*

FUNERAL INCLUDES:

- Our professional services.
- A standard oak veneered coffin.
- Transport of deceased to Dunmow Crematorium.
- Full service at Dunmow Crematorium with 2 hours between services.
- Officiant fees.
- 50 copies of the order of Service.
- A single image on screens and music throughout the service.
- 25 photo music tribute.
- Seasonal coffin spray.
- Wake after the service at Dunmow Crematorium Chapel Barn with sandwiches and cake for 50 people.
- Collection of cremated remains.

***We know seeing a hearse at a funeral can be upsetting, therefore with this service the coffin will be placed in the crematorium before the congregation arrives. A full service will then take place with no hearse or bearers required.**



Funeral Cost Estimator

We all know a passing is difficult, that is why at Michael J Walsh Funeral Directors and Dunmow Crematorium we like to be as transparent as possible, by giving you the reassurance that the funeral cost will be kept to a minimum, with no unexpected surprises when it comes to receiving the bill. Which is why we have included a cost estimator on our website. You can find this under the funeral tab on walshfunerals.com

Please see our website walshfunerals.com for more details or phone us on **01371 856274** or email info@walshfunerals.com

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Thanks to our advertisers, we are able to produce a professionally printed magazine, which is delivered free to every household in Stebbing.

Our priority is to entertain and inform village residents, but we hope that in doing so we can ensure that advertising with us is worthwhile. For most people in the village, when seeking a local tradesmen or services, the natural first source of information is the *Scene*. If you have a local service or product that you'd like everyone to hear about, why not place an advert?



We can only produce a magazine that meets the needs and satisfies the interests of Stebbing residents if we have plenty of contributions. We rely on you to send us articles and reports of events and social activities in the village. We welcome photos, reports, and announcements, that cover all aspects of life in Stebbing. Let us have your views on the magazine and on how we can improve and develop. If you have an opinion, a moan, or a suggestion, then please contact one of the team.

Please send contributions to:

Karen Clark (articles, letters & advertising)

karen@howetraining.com

Jon Clark (queries about delivery)

jon@adaptainer.co.uk

Jackie Kingdom (obituaries)

jackiekingdom@btinternet.com

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All contributions are welcome. Email is preferred where possible, but even handwritten contributions are welcome (if we can read them)

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