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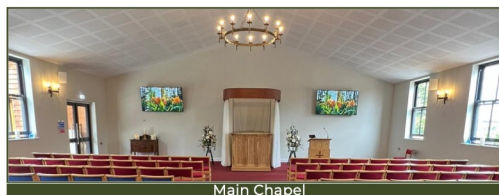
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Dates For Your Diary: Autumn 2026

Ride & Stride	St Mary's Church	10.00am	Saturday 12 th September
Medieval Churches Talk	St Mary's Church	1.30pm	Monday 14 th September
Local History Society Talk	Village Hall	8.00pm	Monday 14 th September
Parish Lives Exhibition	St Mary's Church	All day	Monday 14 th September – Friday 18 th September
Lunchtime Organ Recital	St Mary's Church	12.30pm	Tuesday 15 th September
Make A Church Kneeler	St Mary's Church	All day	Wednesday 16 th September – Friday 18 th September
Village Market Macmillan Coffee Morning	Village Hall	10.00am – 11.30am	Friday 25 th September
Jazz Evening	St Mary's Church	7.00pm – 10.00pm	Saturday 26 th September
Garden Club Talk	Village Hall	8.00pm	Monday 28 th September
Stebbing Village Stores AGM	Village Hall	7.30pm	Wednesday 30 th September
Dorcas Society Annual Harvest Lunch	Village Hall	12.30pm	Friday 9 th October
Race for Kids Walk (see p43)	Start at White Hart Pub	10.30am	Saturday 10 th October
Dance Evening (see p48)	Village Hall	7.00pm – 11.00pm	Saturday 10 th October
The Great Stebbing Litter Pick	See p24 for Locations	10.00am	Saturday 17 th October
Barn Dance	St Mary's Church	7.00pm	Saturday 24 th October
Garden Club Talk	Village Hall	8.00pm	Monday 26 th October
Local History Society Talk	Village Hall	8.00pm	Monday 9 th November
Garden Club Talk	Village Hall	8.00pm	Monday 23 rd November
Stebbing Summer Fayre 2027	Mill Lane Cricket Field	12.00pm – 5.00pm	Sunday 6 th June 2027

District Councillor's Corner: It's Summer – Have You Been Busy, John?



Dear Residents

This question was put to me by two residents enjoying a walk with their four-legged friends on one of our wonderful footpaths and whom I met in the middle week of August. I think they perhaps thought I would say “No – it’s the Summer and the Council is in holiday mode”. The answer is actually very different and so, I thought I would provide readers with a short summary of my recent activity as your District Councillor.

What Do I Do?

Uttlesford District Council members typically meet about six times a year when all 39 Councillors attend in person in the Chamber at Saffron Walden. It is there that Cabinet Members present written reports upon the Council policies and activities for which they are responsible and answer questions put to them by other Members. I am one of six members of the Uttlesford Cabinet, which provides the political Administration of Uttlesford and whose function is to agree and implement Council policy across the entire range of its activities. We hold monthly Cabinet meetings (which are held in public, broadcast live and recorded) in anticipation of which fortnightly informal briefings are held by us with relevant senior officers.

Cabinet may be held to account not only by Council but also by the Scrutiny Committee, which meets in public on about five occasions a year with its business also broadcast and recorded. My Cabinet Portfolio covers the District’s three Planning functions (Policy, Development Management and Building Control) and also Stansted Airport related matters. The Strategic Director for Planning is one of four members of the UDC Senior Executive Team and he reports to the Chief Executive. The Director and I meet fortnightly to discuss new issues arising and review matters on a rolling basis within the Planning portfolio. My Cabinet colleagues hold similar meetings with the Strategic Director responsible for their own Portfolio.

I represent UDC upon Stansted Airport Consultative Committee (“STACC”) a body set up under the Civil Aviation Act to provide a consultation forum for its users and relevant local authorities with the operators of the airport as to its impact on users and local communities. STACC meets quarterly and a standing item is a detailed report from the airport’s Managing Director as are reports concerning aircraft routeing, performance, noise, night flight statistics and permitted exemptions.

What Has My Portfolio Department Been Doing Lately?

The Planning function continues to be very busy. The day to day process of receiving and considering over 1,300 planning applications annually continues unabated. The majority are householder applications for extensions etc, but a considerable level of detail is required to be considered in new build schemes by the development management officers before arriving at their decision or, in the case of larger schemes, their recommendation to the Planning Committee. The emergence from “designation” by the Government (because Uttlesford had been refusing too many major planning

applications which had then been overturned by the Planning Inspectorate) and the adoption of a Local Plan after 21 years has enabled Uttlesford over the past two years to recruit a body of graduate planners into all functions of the department which has improved service levels/response times.

Important policy work has been completed so that Uttlesford now has in place a Design Guide which will improve the design of new buildings including their better relationship with our landscapes and heritage than has been the case for a stereotypical design favoured by volume house builders. We have been able to introduce through the Local Plan very advanced climate change policies so that new houses (and where possible extensions and conversions) will be net zero carbon in operation and also, which will be very relevant if Summers continue as 2026, their design will be such that they will not be susceptible to overheating.

It is not just new development that has come in for attention. Uttlesford has over 3,700 listed buildings (152 located in Stebbing) and since tackling climate change is a key priority of the new Local Plan, a guide has been produced which outlines measures that owners and occupiers of historic buildings can consider improving energy efficiency and reduce their energy costs as well as enhance comfort within the home. I suggest it's worth reading:

<https://www.uttlesford.gov.uk/media/14465/Energy-Efficiency-and-the-Historic-Environment/pdf/Uttlesford-Energy-Efficiency-Guide.pdf?m=1781200332680>

Community Infrastructure Levy ("CIL") is being introduced on 7 September so new dwellings permissioned thereafter will attract a levy of £150/m² built or about £13/14,000 for a three-bedroom dwelling. In future, 25% of the CIL levied in relation to development in Stebbing will be payable to the Parish Council to be spent on relevant infrastructure within the Parish.

A major challenge this Summer has been the enforcement of planning controls at Willows Green, Felsted where, while UDC's offices were closed over the first Bank Holiday in May, Gypsies and Travellers created hardstanding, fencing, drainage and other infrastructure for 12 pitches on agricultural land owned by them but did so without applying for nor securing planning permission. This breach of planning controls has led to enforcement action and the securing of a High Court Injunction by UDC against them. I have attended Court on three occasions in connection with the steps taken by UDC's enforcement and legal officers.

Finally, new learnings are ahead! A radically revised National Planning Policy Framework has just been published and new requirements have been imposed by the Government on how planning decisions will be made in future resulting in a significant reduction in the powers of Planning Committees. All of this will take some getting used to on the part of not only UDC officers but also the Parish Council and others submitting representations to planning applications.

Stansted Airport & Aircraft Noise

Many residents living on the High Street and Church End have raised concerns at noise levels experienced from overflying aircraft as they depart on the eastbound Noise Preferential Route ("NPR") from Stansted. Interestingly, two important Surveys on attitudes to daytime aircraft noise and the effect of night noise on sleep have been published by CAA and Department for Transport. They are the most significant surveys undertaken since 2014 and the former reveals that people are now more annoyed at much lower noise levels than they were in 2014. The Surveys will be brought to Stansted Airport Advisory Panel, a UDC Committee which I chair, during this Autumn to consider their relevance and determine any revisions in the Council's policy which might be appropriate.

Through my membership of STACC, I arranged for a mobile noise and performance monitor to be installed in a Church End resident's garden during Summer 2025, for which I am very grateful. Using the evidence collected, I intend to explore whether the CAA's ongoing review of national aircraft routes could adjust the NPR centreline away from its current alignment, reducing overflights of the village centre. We shall see.

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: cllevans@uttlesford.gov.uk

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The Pilgrim Parishes

After the intense Summer heatwaves, I'm sure that we are all hoping for a cooler September as we move on towards Autumn and the start of the new academic year, something which has, historically, always followed harvest. School wasn't compulsory until 1880 and, back then, most children were expected to work in the fields alongside their parents and so the school year was arranged to avoid the busiest times for farming. In the Autumn, as pressure eased, children were once more allowed to attend school.

This year harvest was completed quite early, and many fields have already been ploughed allowing us uninterrupted views across the open countryside, highlighting our local landmarks which, quite often, are our village churches, each one with its own unique outline of a tower, spire or steeple.

And it was the clear visibility of steeples that led to the equine sport of Steeplechasing which first began way back in 1752 as riders raced each other across country between two designated church steeples, with the horses and their riders having to negotiate whatever obstacles lay on the most direct route. Thankfully, these days such races are held on actual racecourses.

Obviously, many of our churches were built long before 1752 and yet they still continue to serve as places of worship as well as present-day landmarks. But, as ancient buildings, they do need ongoing maintenance and upkeep. In Essex there is an organisation called 'Friends of Essex Churches Trust' (FECT) who raise money specifically to award grants to help preserve and improve Christian places of worship in Essex.

September is the month when they organise their main fundraising event called Ride and Stride. It is held on the second Saturday in September and is open to all. Instead of being a competitive race like the first steeplechases, participants seek sponsorship to visit different churches on foot, bicycle and even occasionally on horseback, often making use of our wonderful network of footpaths, bridleways and local byways.

As the FECT website states: -

"This is FECT's biggest fundraiser, raising money for grants to places of worship across the county. Every church has its own special project: installing a kitchen or toilet, mending roofs or the spire etc – anything that preserves our wonderful community assets for future generations to use and enjoy. The more money we raise through Ride and Stride, the greater the number of grants we can make."

So very encouraging when one reflects that it was Jesus who, about two thousand years ago, told his close friend and disciple, Simon Peter: - *"And I tell you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church."* (Matthew chapter 16 verse 18)

And that is just what happened, starting with small groups who met in each other's homes, the good news about Jesus spread far and wide, leading eventually to nearly every village in our country having their own parish church.

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Churches that today are often open for casual visitors as well as holding regular services to which all are welcome to attend whether one is a committed Christian, or new to the faith and wanting to find out more, as well as everyone else in-between.

Our local churches, and I quote: – *“are wonderful community assets for us and all future generations to use and enjoy”*.

And, I know from experience, that all our churches in the Pilgrim Parishes offer a warm welcome to everyone, whether regular churchgoer or someone visiting for the first time.

So, please pray for fine weather on Saturday 12th September, for all those taking part and their kind sponsors as well as those providing refreshments in our different churches as funds are raised to help with the ongoing maintenance and upkeep of our historic church buildings.

Anthea Gray

Are You A Carer?

If you do something for someone else because they can't do it for themselves, then you are an unpaid carer.

You might help a spouse, parent, relative, friend or neighbour living with dementia, Parkinson's, a physical limitation, age-related frailty or any other condition that means they couldn't cope without you.

Dunmow Carers Support Group is run by carers for carers. We set up the group to make sure that unpaid carers across South Uttlesford (Stebbing, Dunmow, Thaxted and surrounding villages) are supported and informed about the services available to help them. Come along and talk to others who truly understand the challenges and can help you feel less isolated.

We meet on the 2nd Wednesday of the month 11am-1pm at the Rowena Davey Day Centre, Chequers Lane, Dunmow CM6 1EQ.

It's completely FREE.

If you can't leave your cared-for, please bring them with you. We offer volunteer-led activities in an adjacent area to support them while you meet with other carers and enjoy some much-needed respite.

We look forward to welcoming you.

For more information, please contact Christine Chester on 07305 716310 or email christine.chester@ceessex.org.uk

Stebbing Local History Society:

The Gibson Family & Stebbing Emigration

This article was first published in a 2005 edition of the Stebbing Local History Society Journal. This story has been told with the help of Diane Hannah of Queensland whose family this is and to whom we are indebted for the photographs and the early life of her family in Australia.



The first generation Australians in the picture, Annie, Sarah, Rose and Robert were the children of Emily Murray nee Gibson who emigrated to Queensland in 1874. She was the eldest child of Henry Gibson and Rebecca Sharp and born in 1856 in Stebbing, so around 18 years of age when she left England. Henry and Rebecca emigrated with the family aboard the 'SS Zoroaster' which left London 3rd June 1874 arriving in Brisbane on 25th September. The family by then consisted, in addition to Emily, of Frederick, Hannah, Alice, Alfred, Christopher, Elizabeth, Rose, and Henry. Alice stayed behind in England and tragically Henry who was only one year old, died a few weeks after his arrival in Queensland.

A further child Louisa born a year later died after only six months. But worse was to follow in 1876, when Henry's wife Rebecca died and a year later Christopher died at the age of 11. Henry must have wondered if he had taken the right decision.

It is difficult for us now, with easy air travel and relative affluence, to imagine what an enormous gamble it was for families to go to the other side of the world, with little likelihood of ever seeing the family they left behind again and no certain knowledge that their or their children's life would any easier. But the reasons why many choose to leave were described by the Essex Standard;

"The condition of the agricultural labourer is as bad as it can be. He toils like a slave, lives like a pig and too often dies like a dog, with no pleasure but an occasional debauch at the alehouse, no prospect but that of the workhouse for an old age of rheumatism and misery. "

Farm labourers were not just poor they were an underclass with no security of employment or housing and almost no prospects of improving their lot. Agriculture, the only real industry in Stebbing at this time had taken a down turn and many families were struggling to feed their children. I think we can be sure why Henry Gibson took the decision to emigrate when he did and why he chose Queensland. In 1873 the National Agricultural Labourers Union (NALU) which had an active branch in Felsted led the creation of new branches in other local villages including Stebbing. The Union represented hope, it provided the prospect of higher wages and for some a way out and a new life. It was part of the Union's strategy to reduce the labour surplus that was holding down wages by encouraging migration to the northern industrial cities and organised emigration to the then colonies. Many took the offer and the local papers were full of accounts of the high wages being earned in Northern towns. In that year of 1873, Charles Jay, who was one of the local Union leaders, and a Queensland emigration agent toured central Essex. In early August Jay announced that on the 12th, 25 will leave Essex for Queensland, on the 26th some more will go. "I am now inundated with applications from Essex to go. "

Although we have no record of him speaking in Stebbing it is almost certain he did as he was reported to have visited all the Union's branches. The Union offered free passage to Queensland, free kit, grants of £1 per man, 10s for a wife and 5s for each child. The following description is given by Charles Jay about one of the first large emigration parties to leave the County for Queensland aboard the St. James in April 1874.

"On the 14th inst. some of the finest peasantry of the Eastern Counties joined the St. James for Queensland. It was a remarkable day in the eastern Counties; every station from Woodbridge in Suffolk had passengers for Queensland. Kelvedon was rather a big gathering, but at Witham junction the largest party came together, some from Braintree, some from the Dengie Hundred and some from neighbourhood around Witham.... it looked as if the Royal family must be expected at Witham, for every available space was filled by people come to see some two hundred working folks leave the country. Cheer after cheer came from the onlookers and the starters; for miles from Witham every cottage seemed to expect the train to pass, for someone was prepared to wave a parting flag; hedgerows seemed to contain beings for the purpose; ploughman stood still and waved their hats, and at farmhouses the servant appeared either at the door or window and excitedly waved her flag. At the county town [Chelmsford] it will not be soon forgotten, and masters and pastors will be more persistent than ever in refusing to sign any emigration papers. Long streets in Chelmsford command a view of the rail; they were quite alive with women at the doors waving their parting flag."

Henry must have been a member of the Union and his own departure shortly after in June would have been similar. A little while later in a dispute with farmers who were banning union members from their farms, the union's North Essex committee again recommended emigration.

"If your native land spurns her sons of of toil, you have the courage enough to cross the broad seas in response to those who would gladly welcome the peasantry of England. Queensland and New Zealand will gladly receive you... Shake the dust from off your feet and for ever bid farewell to the land of your oppression."

Generally the established Church, farmers and landowners opposed the NALU but there were exceptions, amongst them was the Rector of Goldhanger who asked why labourers should not form their own organisations when farmers were also combining.

For the Gibson family the early days continued with tragedy, Emily's husband James Murray was drowned in 1909 and Frederick's wife, Alice died of burns. At least one of the children came back to Europe to fight in the first World War but seems to have been very unsettled by the experience, on return he moved into the country areas, never married, and lost touch with his family. Henry remarried and became a farmer in the Brisbane area and died at the age of 61 when a branch of a tree fell on him and fractured his skull. His eldest son Fred became a dairy farmer and in 1902 became the first Chairman of Wynnum Shire Council.

Stebbing Local History Society Speaker Programme

Monday 14th September

Martin Bridge: Buildings and other structural dating using dendrochronology.

Monday 9th November

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

Parish Council Update

Emergency Coordinator

We are pleased to announce that we now have an Emergency Coordinator in place for the parish. The role is to help the Parish Council and our community be better prepared should an emergency or unexpected situation arise.

The Emergency Coordinator will help with local emergency planning and coordination, including helping to share information with residents and supporting the community during an emergency situation that may affect the village. Having someone in this role will help us to build on our existing emergency arrangements and make sure that we are better prepared to respond should the need arise.

A big thank you to everyone who has volunteered their time and support. We will provide further information about our emergency arrangements as they develop, so watch this space for future updates.

Allotments Available

We currently have two half-allotments available for residents who are interested in cultivating their own fruit, vegetables, flowers or other produce.

We are particularly keen to hear from people who are able to make a regular commitment to maintaining and cultivating their plot, helping to ensure that the allotment site remains well cared for and productive.

As these two plots are becoming available at this time of year and require some attention, there will be no charge for taking on either of these particular half-allotments until the new year. This provides an opportunity for prospective allotment holders to take on a plot, get it into good order and begin preparing for the next growing season.

If you are interested in taking on one of the available half-allotments, please contact the Parish Clerk at clerk@stebbing-pc.gov.uk for further information about the plots and arrangements.

New Parish Council Post Box

We now have a new post box for Parish Council correspondence at the Village Hall. The post box provides a convenient location for residents who need to leave correspondence for the Parish Council. It will be checked regularly and correspondence dealt with through the usual Parish Council channels.

Our thanks to the Village Hall Management Committee for allowing us to share the box at the Village Hall.

Thank You

As always, we would like to thank everyone who continues to support and contribute to our community. Whether through volunteering, getting involved in local activities, looking after shared spaces or simply sharing your ideas and feedback, every contribution helps to make our parish a welcoming and active place to live.

The Annual St Mary's Church vs Stebbing Cricket Match: Friday 26th June



"Once more unto the breach dear friends – once more!!" A great Shakespeare line which sums up the efforts of the church team!

On the hottest day of the year about 37C degrees, we deliberated if it should take place. Undaunted we decided to go ahead but with 15 overs per team, not the usual 20 overs.

Many thanks to the local supporters, about 80 in total, who came out to witness the gladitorial combat. They all huddled under the trees for shade.

The church batted first and some great innings from Gary Bentley (25) and Jeremy Maddox (27) sent us on our way to a score of 108 after 16 overs (we snuck in one extra over!).

Then Stebbing batted and they soon launched in with fine innings from Nick Foxton (30) and Kevin Meakin (25) set the scene for an epic challenge. Team Shooter, Ed, Archie and Henry, contributed well as they always do, taking wickets to try and reduce the onslaught. After 11 overs Stebbing scored 109 so we all decided to call it a day – so no great surprise there as the Stebbing village team won again!!

A massive thank you to the Cricket Club who were a great help as always – Ben Riley, Wally Crow and Paul Hazle in particular.

A very special mention must be given to the BBQ team who battled the heat under a gazebo for shade and kept us all fed – they were Paul Hazle, Peter and Louise Milner and Hamish Calder. Also to our valiant bar tenders – Cath Beaven, Bob Gardner, Colin and Mandy Mason and Di Troup who kept everyone hydrated!!

A lovely occasion as ever in our wonderful village of Stebbing.

Here's to next year for another attempt for the church to get a third win in about 20 years – miracles do happen!!

The Vintner
(Chris Beaven)



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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

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Stebbing Cricket Club News



My previous article for Stebbing Scene recorded an away win for Stebbing in their first match of the 2026 season back in May. Here we are nearing the season end and, as I always find myself writing this article on the submission date deadline, I can report another away match this time against Terling on Sunday 16th August. Stebbing opened the batting setting what was thought to be a modest target of 141 however, with ball in hand, then took 4 Terling wickets for 45 runs and went on to seal a win.

The game is worth reporting as a great example of none league village cricket. Terling has an extremely picturesque ground and the afternoon seemingly included a sighting of a passing WW2 Lancaster bomber. Post-match Daniel on the SCC group chat commented "Gents – a great example today of village cricket played in a great setting and in the right way. Massive well done to Peter G-D scoring 50 not out and Sanjee holding up the tail and adding vital runs. Bowling saw Charlie with safe hands take two catches and a run out. Not to mention Mark, Mel and Jake with huge maiden overs, catches and wickets. Oh yeah, Gary B took a catch too" Tim Harrison, Terling chairman, commented "we enjoyed it too – it's nice to see friendly village cricket still exists. I know our ladies and youngsters had a great day so thank you. Let's hook up again next season".

In between the above matches we had Stebbing Summer Fayre and of course the ever popular match against the Church. Many thanks to everyone who supported the fayre and the club BBQ which made a valuable contribution to club funds.

The Church match took place during one of several heatwaves and as always was a very enjoyable evening. I'm sure that event will be covered in detail elsewhere in Stebbing Scene.

Even though we continue to enjoy some great games we also often struggle to get a team together. This is all too common in village cricket and we really do need your support. Age, gender and ability, maybe especially that last one, are not issues.

Our pavilion refresh continues, all the old strip lights have been replaced with LED units, and the wall mural continues to take shape thanks to fantastic artwork by Jo and Michelle. I'm looking forward to including a picture of the finished work.



No one can have failed to notice that drought has turned both the outfield and square a uniform brown. Usually we lose a match or two to rain! June saw some early rain but barely any in July and August. No doubt it will eventually rain and I just hope the grass recovers. Time will tell!

Ben Riley club president.

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Over Sixties Club News

Members of the Over Sixties have had a few busy enjoyable months

In May we went to Papermill Lock where we enjoyed lovely sandwiches and delicious cakes from the cafe. Some members went on a boat trip, some walked the tow path others just enjoyed the beautiful weather and enjoyed the riverbank.

June was our annual Strawberry Tea, delicious home made scones were consumed.

In July we had our annual seaside outing. This year we revisited Southwold, although our bus journey was very long, we arrived to enjoy the warm breezy weather. Some enjoyed fish & chip lunches and a lovely walk from the High Street to Pier, ice creams enjoyed on the way

The Future

Meetings are at the Village Hall at 2pm. There is always tea, coffee and of course delicious homemade cake. For more details contact Edwina 856520 or Doreen 856408

September 16th Music Quiz with John Green
October 21st Harvest Lunch 12.30 for 1 pm
November 18th Flower Arranging with Christine Middleton
December 9th Christmas lunch

Judith Greenway

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

**EVERYONE WELCOME –
PLEASE COME AND SUPPORT US**

Cheques payable to: New Dorcas Society 2006; or cash please

Tickets available from: Ann Pattenden 856476 or Rosemary Pitkethly 856155

Mad Medic

Hello everyone, I hope that life is treating you well. I have just been laughing to myself, dear Mrs 'Blunderful', what a joy. "Hello Valerie, Jean from bingo can't go tonight, her grand daughter is ten inches deflated". Bless her, I presume ten centimetres dilated, in labour?



Today I'm going to share the story of one of my precious children with you, it is very sad. Her name is Mumptha.

Mumptha was a a precious part of my life, she fled home after being repeatedly raped and beaten by her alcoholic stepdad. After the death of her mother, Mumptha rescued her brother and baby sister. They left in the night to hide in the shadows of the railway station near my base in a Mumbai suburb. Mumptha was eleven, baby Geeta only months old and still weaning. I discovered that courageous little girl sleeping in a railway alcove, busy platforms only feet above her. Foraging in bins for food scraps, begging from passengers too tired to shoo her away as she train hopped during the night. They survived and Geeta grew used to smelly goats milk.

I was able to gain their trust, seeing to medical needs, giving wholesome food and UK jelly babies. Most of all, cuddles and love given unconditionally. Seeing their eyes light up was joyful.

Then came the day when I woke up at 05.00 with a terrible feeling of apprehension and foreboding. I felt physically sick as I threw on some clothes, grabbed my usual out and about paraphernalia and ran towards the station. Perspiration almost blinded me as I ran towards the already busy railway bridge to the last platform. Heart beating erratically, the putrid smell of human faeces rising up to greet me, I reminded myself that this was Mumptha's home. Fear gripped my chest like a vice, Mumptha was nowhere to be seen, our mutual code of contact broken, our usual confirmation that all was well.

Only this time, all was not well.

I spotted a piece of pretty material sticking out from the back of a bin near the ticket area. It was a party dress I'd bought for Mumptha as a treat; she would never have parted with it - she was saving it for Geeta. Tugging at the material, it resisted my effort and so I opened the bin. What I saw will haunt me for the rest of my life.

Mumptha's glazed eyes stared at me, lifeless pools, blood that had oozed from her mouth already congealed. My poor little angel had been raped and murdered, her little brother had run in fear carrying Geeta to safety.

I'm telling this story, one of far too many like this. because my children are too precious to be forgotten. There are happy stories and stories of success against all odds as well but I never want to be complacent. So the sad stories keep me fighting for the children every day. Thank you for reading Mumptha's story.

Take care, keep safe and well, love Valerie ❤️

Stebbing Primary School News:



I would like to begin by saying a huge thank you to all of our lovely volunteers who have supported our school this year. Our volunteers help children with their reading and give our pupils extra time to read one to one with an adult. We really appreciate you all. If you are interested in volunteering at Stebbing Primary we would love to welcome you! Please get in touch.

This year our school has gone from strength to strength. We are continuing to grow and are now very close to being at capacity with only six spaces left across the year groups. This year, as with every year, has come with challenges. We have overcome the huge budget constraints and our staff have risen to the challenge of continuing to do more with less. We are creative with the resources we have!

We have welcomed a number of visitors this year and also given our pupils the opportunity to bring their learning to life by taking a range of school trips. We have enjoyed being able to use the Church community space for a couple of events including the iSingPOP concert.

We are saying goodbye to our lovely year 6 class and wish them the very best of luck in their future endeavours. We will miss them all!



Over the last couple of years we have made changes to the way our school set up supports all pupils who attend. In particular, we have focused on our high needs SEND cohort and created the Nest. This has been a very successful project and enabled all children in our school to be provided with the best possible education which is very much suited to their needs. Here are a few photos of the wonderful environment and curriculum that has been created.

We are very excited about the new school term and what next year will bring.
Best wishes,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading 'Lucy Heys'.

Lucy Heys, Headteacher



Stebbing Tennis Club News



Summer has been another fantastic season at Stebbing Tennis Club, with the courts busier than ever as members of all ages have enjoyed a packed programme of tennis, coaching, competitions and social events.

One of this year's biggest success stories has been the introduction of our regular pickleball sessions. Led by Head Coach Mark Clark, the sessions have quickly become a favourite with both members and newcomers, offering a fun, sociable and easy-to-learn sport that has attracted players of all ages.

Our coaching programme continues to go from strength to strength. Weekly adult coaching, Tennis Xpress courses, Cardio Tennis, ladies' mornings and social mix-ins have all enjoyed excellent attendance, while junior coaching and summer camps have continued to introduce more local children to the game in a fun and supportive environment.



We are especially proud to celebrate the achievements of one of our youngest members. Maddie has recently been awarded the LTA Ratings Tournaments Silver Award after competing in an incredible 286 competitive matches. She has also secured a place on the prestigious Billericay Lawn Tennis Club National Pathway Programme. It is a wonderful achievement and reflects the dedication, enthusiasm and hard work she has shown both on and off the court.

June also saw the return of one of the club's most cherished traditions - the 20th anniversary Gnome Charity Tournament. Thirteen pairs took part in a day of competitive but friendly tennis, raising an impressive £590 for Melanoma UK. This year's event held particular significance as it supported one of our club members' brother, Patrick Berry, who is currently undergoing treatment for melanoma. In a fitting end to a memorable day, Patrick and Tracy Warren lifted the famous Gnome Trophy, with Sue Spinks and Hein Leonhardt finishing as runners-up.

The fun didn't stop there! Our first Race Night once again brought members, friends and villagers together for an evening of friendly competition, plenty of laughter and a little bit of lucky betting. It was another fantastic social event that highlighted the club's welcoming spirit while helping to raise valuable funds for our ongoing clubhouse improvements.



On the competitive front, our league teams have continued to enjoy another strong season, with excellent performances across the Essex Small Clubs and Halstead & District leagues. Meanwhile, our regular Thursday evening and Sunday morning social sessions remain as popular as ever, providing plenty of opportunities for members to enjoy friendly tennis throughout the week.

As we look towards the autumn, tennis continues for all ages and abilities, with coaching, league matches and social sessions running. Whether you're looking to learn a new sport, improve your game, meet new people or simply keep active, you'll always receive a warm welcome at Stebbing Tennis Club.

For more information about membership, coaching or upcoming events, please visit our website or follow us on Facebook and Instagram for all the latest news.

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

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Stebbing's 13th Annual Tractor Run

This year saw the 13th annual Stebbing Tractor Run, a tradition begun back in 2014. Once again, it proved just how much heart there is in our village.

The organising team, shown here were pleased to present a cheque for £10,900 to the Essex & Herts Air Ambulance at their airfield base at Earls Colne.

This brings the total raised since those early days to a most remarkable £109,347. Every penny has come from entry fees, sponsorship, and the kindness of so many – the greater part given over the years in support of our local Air Ambulance. None of this would be possible without the people of Stebbing who lined the roads, waving the tractors on their way.



From left, David, Dick, Mick, Peter & Mac

After 13 years, my wife Pat & I are stepping back from the organising and passing the reins to others as we are most keen to see what has become a regular event continue into the future. What began as a modest idea has become something we can all be proud of.

Any offers of help for next year would be gratefully received by the new team. You can email me at the address below and I will see that it gets passed on.

Dick Hughes, dickhughes63@btinternet.com

The Great Stebbing Litter Pick

Saturday 17th October @ 10:00am

Meet at one of these locations:

Village Hall Car Park – Mill Lane
Alcott Field Entrance – Between Collops Villas/Oakfield
Brick Kiln Lane/The Downs Fingerpost - Bran End



Wear Boots/Wellies, Gloves & High Viz Vests – Bring a Litter Picker

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Amy Wharton, Parish Clerk at clerk@stebbing-pc.gov.uk

Restaurant Review: Karl At The Farm Restaurant Café

It was a couple of weeks ago that our Editor gave me her customary nudge as to the next publication date, but this time it came with a specific request – that I review Head Chef Karl's new eatery.

So, having collected fellow Stebbingite Bob Falconer, off we went to the beautifully converted barn that is now The Farm Restaurant & Café located directly behind the Priors Hall Farm Shop in Lindsell.

Open from 9am, 7 days a week, The Farm is a mecca for those with early appetites, although The Farm Full English at £16 should come with an award for plate clearance, its so big! Fortunately a smaller version plus veggie option at £12 would cater for mere mortals such as Bob and I! Granola Bowl, Waffles, Sourdough options plus a kids (Little Farmers!) offering complete the morning menu, along with three bagel options which are available all day and are truly yummy at £10-£12 each.



At 1pm morning gives way to lunch. The Farm is fully licensed but no beer on draft – this is not a pub! But a touch that Bob and I particularly liked was the offer of half carafes of wine with a Colombard white, Cinsault rose and Carignan merlot all available at £13 per half carafe. There is no pretence at an extensive wine list, but with Majestic Guv'nor red (£19.50) and a Gavi La Luciana (£24) a bottle, wine drinkers can still have fun and really good value with the need for house wine duly satisfied.

The kitchen is open until 3pm on Sunday, Monday & Tuesday and 4.30pm during the rest of the week. The lunchtime menu is supplemented by two daily black board specials and although not particularly extensive (yet?), the menu is good value with the choice of warm flatbreads stacked with goodies such as hummus roulade, burrata with parma ham or grilled harissa cauliflower etc etc, a particular and innovative win and delicious at just £15 each.

Yes, there is also a Priors Hall supplied beefburger (£16) with smoked baconnaise etc and a minute steak (£20) with the best peppercorn sauce I have ever tasted, but also chips to die for with both.

Finally our bill including a bottle of Gov'nor plus two carafes, three flatbreads, burger & steak came to just £36 each. Great value.

Kevin Farr



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The Hundred Parishes Society: Chancel Screens

We always encourage people to visit parish churches; they are usually the oldest building in any community and their interiors have great variety. Here, I will discuss one particular feature – the screen which forms a partition, both physically and symbolically, between the laity or congregation in the nave, the main part of the church, and the clergy in the chancel.

The screen, sometimes referred to as a chancel screen, often has a lattice design to allow people worshipping in the nave to see through into the chancel. Chancel comes from a Latin word meaning lattice.

Several of our churches have finely-carved 15th-century wooden screens including Albury, Finchingfield, Henham, Manuden and Wendens Ambo.

Some screens are called rood screens. Above these screens is a “rood” - a representation of Christ’s crucifixion, usually flanked by two saints, most often Mary and St John. Rood is a Saxon word meaning cross.

The Hundred Parishes has some fine examples of rood screens. They are usually carved in wood but in St Mary’s Stebbing parish church the 14th-century screen is carved in stone. This is a really rare feature.

Little Canfield’s wooden rood screen is believed to date from the 14th-century.

A carved 15th-century wooden screen can be found in Sawbridgeworth’s Church of Great St Mary with a depiction above it of the risen Christ installed as recently as 2000 AD.

The Church of Holy Trinity at Takeley has a relatively modern rood screen, installed around 1910 and featuring a wooden carving of Christ on the cross with a saint on each side.



St Mary's Church, Stebbing

I have named just some examples around The Hundred Parishes. Please explore our local churches, perhaps while following one of the walk descriptions that can be downloaded from www.hundredparishes.org.uk

Ken McDonald, Secretary

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Cornerstone Café: Growing Together Through Summer

It's been a season of growth, connection, and celebration at St Mary's Cornerstone Café. Week by week, we've welcomed new faces as locals and visitors have popped in for the first time, regulars are bringing friends (including the four-legged variety!), and volunteers are stepping forward to help shape the café's future. The atmosphere has been buzzing, and it's been wonderful to see the café becoming an even stronger hub for conversation, support, and community spirit.

As the café continues to grow, we're still very much in need of volunteers to join our coffee crew and help us welcome visitors, serve refreshments, and keep the café running smoothly. If you enjoy meeting people, being part of a friendly team, or simply want to support a community space, we'd love to hear from you.

We're also looking for bakers and cake donors to help keep our counter stocked with the homemade treats everyone loves. Whether you bake regularly or just fancy contributing now and then, every cake makes a difference.

Celebrating our volunteers



One of the highlights of the Summer was our Volunteer Recognition evening, a joyful event dedicated to the people who give their time, energy, and heart to keep our community thriving. We marked the occasion in true St Mary's style with a BAFTA/Oscars themed outdoor movie and picnic complete with ice-cream van, popcorn, and plenty of laughter. It was a chance not only to say thank you, but also a moment to take great pleasure in reflecting on the impact volunteers have had across all our recent projects.

We were also delighted to welcome volunteers to the café to meet with our evaluation consultant, Lucy, who is helping us capture the story of the project. Their insights, experiences, and ideas are shaping how we continue to grow and serve the church and wider community.

Looking ahead: BBQ, games and more

There's plenty more on the horizon. At the end of August, we'll be hosting a Family BBQ & Games event. A relaxed mid-afternoon/evening of food, fun, and light-hearted community competition.

And September is shaping up to be a busy month too, with lots of opportunities to get involved, volunteer, or simply come along and enjoy what's happening at St Mary's.

If you'd like to join in, support an event, or find out more about volunteering, please get in touch with Helen Murphy, Volunteer & Training Coordinator at helen.smvtfw@gmail.com

Stebbing Garden Club News

Thank you to everyone in the village and from further afield who supported The Garden Club Plant Stall at the Stebbing Summer Fayre in June. Our members volunteering on the stall on the day really appreciated the interest shown in the huge variety of plants, grown and donated by members and were happy to give advice wherever possible. Sales exceeded expectations and the proceeds will fund our speaker programme well into next year. The Club's stall at the Friday Morning Market, only two weeks later, was just as enthusiastically received and we plan to hold a Produce and Plant Stall at the Friday Morning Market Macmillan Coffee Morning on the 25th September. The recent hot weather has affected growing conditions and made gardening difficult for everyone, but we hope to put together a sale, the proceeds of which will also benefit Macmillan.



Members were offered the chance to enjoy two Summer outings once again this year. The first was a guided tour of Downing College Cambridge followed by afternoon tea. With temperatures in the mid 30's our host made sure that we were in the shade as much as possible whilst the history of the buildings and gardens were explained. He had also made arrangements for our tea to be served in an air-conditioned room in one of the historic college buildings. Both the tour and the afternoon tea were an absolute treat and well worth the discomfort of travel in such heat.



Our second outing was a visit to Beeleigh Abbey near Maldon. This is a fascinating property dating from the 13th century and set in three acres of riverside gardens. Some members had visited the property a number of years ago when the Abbey was owned by the Foyle family, however it has been under new ownership since late 2024. The current owners have a keen focus on conservation and biodiversity. The head gardener guided our tour and pointed out the new areas of planting and the recent work planting hedgerows, the grazing of Jacob sheep in surrounding fields and also the 15 cedar wood beehives. The place name itself, 'Beeleigh' dates from around 940 AD and means a clearing in the trees where beehives are kept.

I highly recommend a visit although these must be prebooked and the garden is only open on specific days. The last two open days for 2026 are September 4th and 11th - both Fridays but there are many more during the Spring and Summer months. For further information search www.beeleighabbey.co.uk

If you are interested in joining the club, our next meeting is in the Village Hall, Mill Lane on Monday 28th September at the usual time of 7.30pm for our speaker at 8pm. The subject of our talk will be bulbs and corms. All talks are free to members with visitors welcome for a £3 charge on the door.

Denise Puttnam, Secretary
stebbinggardenclub@hotmail.com



Garden Club Calendar

- Monday 28th September Barry Gayton: Bulbs and Corms
- Monday 26th October TBC
- Monday 23rd November Jane Steward: Meddling with Medlars



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The Daphne Rogowski Orchard Project: Progress Report

There has been a lot of activity surrounding the Orchard Project since last reported in the Spring 2026 edition of Stebbing Scene (page 49)

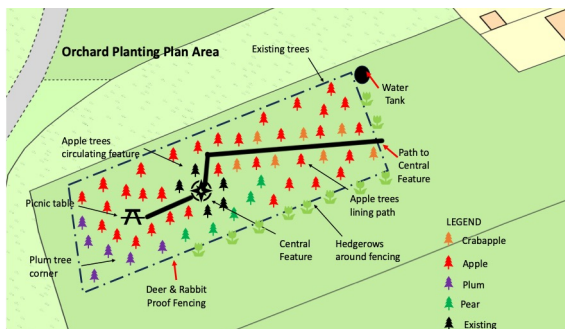


At that time we had received a grant of £4,000 from Sustainable Uttlesford, barely enough to cover the orchard fencing. The parish council then decided to take a stall at the Stebbing Summer Fayre to raise money to buy fruit trees and were successful with 16 donations being made, plus 4 donations for trees from the Stebbing Fayre Committee.

Since then we have received grants and donations, specifically for the orchard project, totalling £25,000 from Stansted Airport, Lottery

Funding and District Councillors. This enables the whole project to progress as planned and allows an element of future maintenance to be covered.

One of the important features for the orchard was to agree its layout design and options were produced for the fayre and voted on by the community. The layout shown below won with its tree lined walk to a central feature and a picnic area beyond that. Now, with the funding and design in place, the implementation may begin.



Progress to date is as follows:

- The fencing has been set-out and will be erected in September when the ground will be softer for drilling in posts and installing rabbit netting.
- We have opted for a variety of 40 fruit trees that have been ordered through three suppliers and are expected to be delivered in early

February 2027 when we plan to hold a volunteer planting day (details of this to be confirmed later in the year).

- A water supply application is being progressed with Affinity Water as the trees will need watering for the first two years of their lives until they are established enough to support themselves.

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Stebbing Village Stores: Local Is Best – Let's Keep It That Way!

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What a hot Summer we've had – including in the village shop! It has been a relatively quiet couple of months in the shop but we would like to thank you, our customers, for your understanding as to why the blinds were down and the lights were dimmed on some days in the shop. Also, for your forbearance when stock items you were looking for had been moved to the cool of the basement - and for the days when your favourite, hot sausage rolls were not available.

On one of my August shifts I was thanking a customer for her patience and she said, "Not a problem. Imagine for a moment what it would be like if there was no village shop?"

We chatted. The obvious scenarios came to mind: No milk for breakfast; no soft drink for a morning walk; no fruit for the children's packed lunch; no ground almonds for a cake; no bin bags; no cat food; the birthday card and stamp you suddenly remember you need; the sweet treats after school; a bottle of wine for the evening; delicious local bacon, sausages, ham and meats

There would be no more quick dash up the village, it would mean getting in the car and driving to Tesco or similar.

But is that all? We'd miss bumping into someone we haven't seen for a while; the exchange of village news in a place where people naturally meet. We'd miss the quick chat at the counter; the familiar faces of volunteers behind the till.

Our village shop isn't just a place to buy something. It is part of the fabric of village life. It provides convenience, but it also provides connection. It gives people a reason to walk into the village, see familiar faces and perhaps have a conversation they didn't expect to have.

Of course, we can't all buy everything locally, and nobody is suggesting that we should but perhaps, from time to time, we could ask ourselves a simple question: **"Could I get that from the village shop?"**

Because every purchase helps. Every visit helps. And every hour given by a volunteer helps. Next time you walk through the shop door, take a moment to look around.

Stebbing Village Stores AGM, Wednesday 30th September, 7.30 pm

Come along to our next AGM at the Village Hall and find out more about the shop.
Chat with other villagers over drinks and nibbles after the meeting.

All welcome.

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Welcome Back To Stebbing Primary School

Every September brings a familiar rhythm to Stebbing Primary School. After the quiet of the Summer holidays, our classrooms fill once again with energy, laughter and the bright potential of a brand-new academic year. As teachers, it is a time to reset and a moment to reflect on where our pupils have been and look ahead to where they are going.

Farewell to the Class of 2026

At the end of July, we watched our Year 6 leavers - the Class of 2026 - walk through our gates as Stebbing pupils for the final time. Watching them grow from tentative Reception children into confident young members of the community has been an absolute privilege. Leaving primary school is a huge milestone, but we send them off to secondary school knowing they carry with them the resilience, curiosity and kindness that define our school community.



A Warm Welcome to the Class of 2033

As one chapter closes, another begins. This term, we are delighted to welcome our newest starters - the Class of 2033 - into Reception!



Watching these four- and five-year-olds arrive in their crisp, slightly-too-large uniforms reminds us all of how fast the primary school journey flies by. There are always a few nervous smiles on that first morning (from parents and children alike!), but it doesn't take long for them to settle into the rhythm of school life, exploring our classrooms and outdoor spaces with smiles and confidence.



One of the greatest joys of teaching Year 6 is watching our new year 6 cohort step into their roles as the oldest pupils in the school. They take on the responsibility of being buddies to our new Reception children, guiding them, helping them at lunchtime and offering a friendly face in the playground. It is a powerful full-circle moment: the very pupils who once needed a helping hand are now the ones extending it.

To our Class of 2033: welcome to the Stebbing family.
Your primary school journey starts now!

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Stebbing Bowling Club News



This season we had a record number of members entering the Essex inter club competitions, for Singles, Pairs Triples and Fours. This was in addition to our regular League matches and Essex County Knockout Competitions.

Our club Champion, Mark Dovaston has been particularly successful in the County Benevolent Trophy singles reaching the last 16! Mark was also part of the team which won, in dramatic style, the Ashford Cup after 14 years of trying!

The Club has also done exceptionally well in the Memorial Shield, reaching the semi-finals, pitched against Braintree, the most successful team in our part of Essex, on 11 August.

In addition we had our friendly matches with clubs around the County, always an enjoyable afternoon home or away.



We welcomed the village school again last month and what a joy it was, the enthusiasm was so evident as I'm sure the photo sums it up!

The Ladies Group came for their annual evening's entertainment followed by a BBQ with all attending saying how much they enjoyed it.

We will be having our other two events, D&J inter club knock out competition on August 22nd and Crown Green Fun Day on September 5th.

There will also be a dance in the Village Hall featuring F' LUKES Rockule Band on Saturday 10th October. See page 48 for all the details.

Thursday's are Club Night during the season come along and give it a try!

Ray Sutton





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Let's Walk Again To Support Children With Cancer: Saturday 10th October 11am

Let's build on last year's success and have even more people join our Stebbing community by signing up for the 'Race for Kids' sponsored by the Royal Bank of Canada.

Great Ormond Street Hospital Charity is inviting families across the UK to take part in the much-loved 2KM or 5KM event on Saturday 10th October - whether walking, jogging, wheeling or scooting.

All funds raised will go towards GOSH charity's 'Build it. Beat it.' appeal to help build a world leading new children's cancer centre which will transform their care.

Cancer is the biggest killer of children aged 1-14yrs in the UK with five being diagnosed everyday.

I am still receiving treatment for cancer myself, so I encourage you to sign up using the link below:

<https://race.qosh.org>

Registration opens soon for the events taking place locally or you can donate on the day. However, there is no pressure it would just be great to see the community coming together in the fight against cancer.

There will be a large group of us in Stebbing completing the walk starting at the White Hart Pub with breakfast refreshments from around 10.30am. The walk will start at 11am and finish at Priors Hall Barn where refreshments will be provided in exchange for a donation to GOSH.

This year there is also a free art exhibition in the church so it really will be a great day out.

Please do join us, everyone is very welcome.

We look forward to seeing you there!

Michelle Keeling



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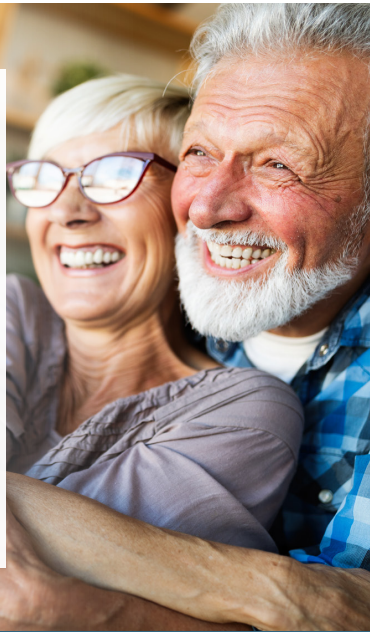
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Autumn's Secret Wildlife

With Autumn coming, prepare yourself for Stebbing's largest life-form to rise up. But don't worry. This is not an invasion of behemoths, just the yearly emergence of mushrooms and toadstools. Underneath the body of the mushroom is a much larger network of strands that thread their way through the soil and woody fibres. These underground webs can be genuinely huge – it's thought up to miles across, possibly growing under the whole of the village!

The poisonous aspect of toadstools is simply their defence against being eaten. It's true that some fungi are extremely tasty and sought after. However, with this poisonous arsenal in mind, it is better to just admire their elegant shapes and colours unless you are absolutely certain what type you are dealing with.

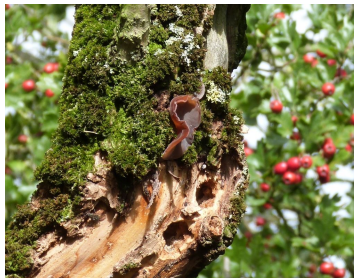


Some toadstool shapes are iconic. Ask any child what a toadstool looks like and there's a good chance they will describe the red dome and white spots of a Fly Agaric. Probably with a gnome sitting on it too. Poisonous Fly Agarics have had a long tradition of use, particularly for attracting and killing flies if mashed in milk. If you want to see one, its best to look around birch or pine trees.

Another noticeable fungus is the Ear Fungus that grows on Elder, supposedly because of Judas' suicide hanging from an Elder tree. It does look remarkably like a leathery ear growing on the side of the tree. Dryad's Saddle, another wood-feeding species, bears a resemblance to a saddle on the tree that might be used by a Dryad or wood nymph.

Many fungi can appear for one year out of nowhere as their spores can easily float for miles in the air, colonising new territory. That means that you never know what you are going to find each year

Richard Wren





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A Look Back At Stebbing Summer Fayre



Let's take a quick pictorial look back at you lovely Stebbing villagers having fun at this year's Stebbing Summer Fayre in June. Our enormous thanks go to each and every one of you that volunteered on the day or simply came out to enjoy the entertainment. Particular thanks go to our committee of 2026: Gill Peartree, Katy Turner, Cassie Stone, John Hartigan & Paul Hazle.



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DANCE EVENING

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Obituary: Janet Dines

28th April 1943 – 28th May 2026

Like so many families in post-war England, Janet's family relocated from inner London to settle in Essex. Janet was born in Kensington to Rupert & Mary Bow in 1955, the family moved to Harlow, where Janet grew up alongside her two sisters, Gillian & Caroline.



Her first job after leaving school was at Boots the Chemist, The Stow, Harlow and later she moved to Standard Telephones, helping in the manufacture of broadcasting microphones. But work wasn't the only thing occupying her time. Janet loved dancing, and it was at The Embers Dance Hall, The Stow, that she met the man who would become her husband, Alan on the 29th February 1964.

Alan & Janet married on 11th March 1967 at St Mary's Church, Harlow and began their married life in Blackmore, before moving to their first flat in Doddinghurst, Essex. They celebrated their 59th wedding anniversary this year! The family soon grew. Sharon arrived in 1970, followed by Susan in 1971 and after their move to Stebbing, Gary arrived in 1973. Janet devoted herself to being a wonderful mother and also worked part-time in various jobs; Stacey's Greengrocer & Florist, Dunmow Co-op, and later she worked in a garden centre, but her greatest joy was always her family.

Card games were always a firm favourite; Bridge, Rummy, 'Oh Hell', 'Uno', Pontoon and Poker being her favourites. She was also wonderfully creative; making wine, gardening, card-making, decoupage and all manner of crafts. Janet's garden was a constant source of pride.

Janet had a lifelong love of dogs and with Alan, bred Jack Russell Terriers. They were active members of the East Anglia Jack Russell Club and served on the committee for many years. At the age of 60yrs, Janet retired from paid work only to embark on one of her most cherished roles; looking after her first granddaughter, Jessica.

Jessica was followed by Harry and Francesca and Janet became a very 'hands-on' grandmother, loving spending time with all three grandchildren.

She never lost her love of dancing. At family parties, it wasn't unusual to find Janet and Alan on the dance floor, happily jiving together, just as they had done since the day they met.

More recently, Janet faced illness with the same quiet determination she approached everything else in life. After hospital stays with chest infections and pneumonia, her focus remained the same as ever – getting home to her family and her beloved garden.

Janet was a great listener. Calm, level-headed and never judgemental. She always had time for people and always offered thoughtful advice. We will remember Janet's laughter, her warmth, kindness, resilience and her remarkable ability to find compassion in life's ups and downs.

By Cerian, Sieczko, Sharon, Susan & Gary

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St Mary's Church: Lots Happening & More To Come!

The past few months have continued to demonstrate just how much St Mary's has become a thriving community space. From Sunday services, to relaxed social evenings and fascinating wildlife discoveries, a growing café and exciting events, it has been wonderful to see so many people enjoying our newly restored church. We've hosted an iSingPop concert by Stebbing School and a special assembly after which the children enjoyed exploring the church. Plus, our programme of community-focused activities has been varied and different, read more below!



Games Events

Our regular Games Events continue to provide a friendly and relaxed opportunity for people to meet, chat and enjoy a little healthy competition. With everything from traditional board games to cards and table games, there really has been something for everyone, regardless of age or experience.



We hosted our first pop in chess event, thanks to Samuel Porter and the Notley Chess Community during August. Visitors were able to challenge a friend or new acquaintance, and Sam was on hand to help with learning the rules for beginners. The café was open for this event helping refuel the brains when they needed a boost!



Families have enjoyed our Summer programme, including our History Detectives archaeology themed drop in, and our Summer Games & BBQ which took place at the end of August.

Gin: A Story in Three Serves

June saw us host our first Gin Night, what an enjoyable evening it was! The tables were beautifully and thoughtfully decorated and the light sparkled. Guests were treated to three carefully crafted gin serves while our very own gin expert, Helen Murphy explained the fascinating history of gin and how it has evolved over the centuries. Delicious

homemade canapés, courtesy of Steve and Sharron Sparrow, accompanied the drinks, and there was plenty of conversation, laughter and friendly competition as everyone tested their knowledge in a fun gin-themed quiz. Everyone was treated to a special mixing spoon as a gift, along with postcards for creating the perfect gin cocktail





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SATURDAY 26TH

WINE TASTING

SATURDAY 26TH

OCTOBER

CLASSIC & INTERESTING CAR SHOW

SUNDAY 4TH

OKTOBERFEST

SATURDAY 10TH

HALLOWEEN

AFTERNOON TEA

THURSDAY 29TH

MURDER MYSTERY

DINNER

SATURDAY 31ST

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CLASSIC & INTERESTING CAR SHOW

SUNDAY 1ST

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SCAN TO
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Discovering the Wildlife Around Us

One of our more unusual events earlier this Summer took place on an unexpectedly cold morning as visitors gathered to discover the fascinating world of moths.



Led by our ecologist, Richard, and moth enthusiast, Kate Smith, the carefully trapped moths gave an impressive variety of species living within the churchyard, many of which most of us would never normally notice. The moths had been safely trapped overnight using specialist equipment designed to attract them without causing harm. On the morning of the event, they were carefully examined and recorded before being released back into their natural habitat.

This event, held as part of Churches Count on Nature and Love Your Burial Ground week, was a wonderful reminder that even the most familiar places can be rich havens for wildlife, with an incredible variety of species waiting to be discovered.



Love Your Burial Ground Week is an annual celebration of churchyards, chapel yards and cemeteries as places of heritage, community and nature. As part of the week, Churches Count on Nature—supported by Caring for God's Acre, the Church of England, the Church in Wales and A Rocha UK—encourages local communities to explore, record and celebrate the wildlife thriving in these special spaces.

Cornerstone Café

Our Cornerstone Café has gone from strength to strength since opening earlier this year and has quickly become a valued meeting place for the local community. Open every Monday and Tuesday from 10am until 2pm, the café serves barista coffee, teas, cold drinks and delicious homemade cakes in the beautiful surroundings of St Mary's. The café has attracted people who work from home, as a break from their regular surroundings, as well as cyclists and walkers.

This Summer we introduced takeaway drinks, take away cake boxes and loyalty cards, making it even easier for visitors to pop in for a coffee while out and about. Whether you're catching up with friends, looking for a quiet place to work or simply fancy excellent coffee and homemade cake, we'd love to welcome you.

The café is only possible because of our fantastic team of volunteers, whose warm welcome has become one of its defining features.

And speaking of which, we hosted our second Volunteer Recognition event in July. It was a beautiful and memorable evening and to read more about it, see our separate article written by our Volunteer and Training Coordinator, Helen Murphy.

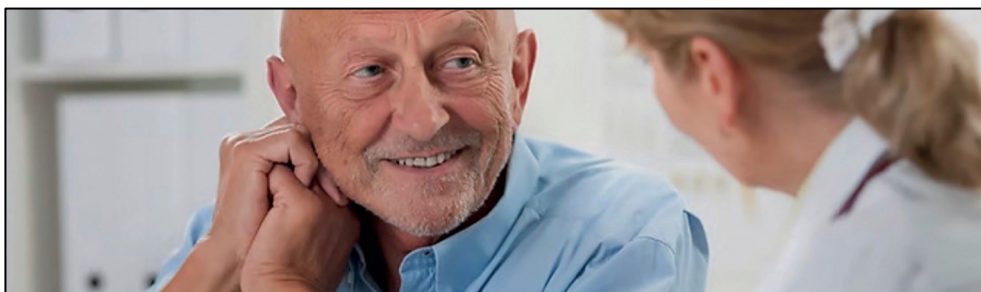
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Looking Ahead

There is plenty still to come over the coming months.

Saturday 5th September at 7.30pm: Film Night

We will be hosting a film about Climate, Nature, Our Future. Join us for this community screening, presented by naturalist and broadcaster Chris Packham, exploring the challenges we face and the solutions available to us. Following the film will be an informal, facilitated discussion where everyone is welcome to share their thoughts and perspectives in a respectful environment.

Saturday 12th September at 10am: Ride & Stride

The 75th anniversary of Ride and Stride will be taking place, with cyclists and walkers visiting a variety of churches in the area, including St Mary's. Our Cornerstone Café will be open to refuel anyone taking part.

From Monday 14th to Friday 18th September, we will be celebrating Heritage Open Days, so do pop in for:

Monday 14th September at 1.30pm: Talk

Medieval Churches Talk. Step into the fascinating world of medieval churches and uncover their stories and secrets with Historian and Archaeologist, Matthew Champion.

Tuesday 15th September at 12.30pm: Recital

Lunchtime Organ Recital. A rare opportunity to hear our organ being played by Professor David Rowland, acclaimed organist and Director of Music at Christ's College, Cambridge.

Wednesday 16th to Friday 18th September: Crafting

Make a Church Kneeler. Try your hand at cross stitch and discover the traditional craft of church kneelers.

Throughout the Heritage Open Days week, we also have our Parish Lives Exhibition: Explore photographs, memories and stories celebrating the people and events that have shaped Stebbing and St Mary's. Have something to share?
Email esther.smvtfw@gmail.com.

For Children – Medieval Discovery Corner. Discover what life was like in medieval times when the church was built!

Saturday 26th September at 7pm: Concert

We will be welcoming the Essex Jazz Collective with acclaimed singer Amanda Marie for what promises to be a fantastic evening of live music, delicious canapes and drinks from our pop-up bar. Don't miss out, scan the QR code (see page 34) to book your tickets!

Saturday 24th October at 7pm: Barn Dance

Our first ever barn dance will be taking place inside St Mary's! More details on our website in due course.



Saturday 5th December:

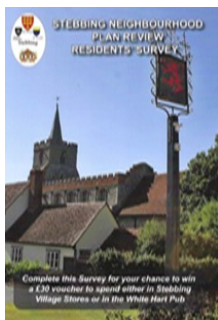
Last year we hosted a Victorian Christmas at the village hall. Now that we are back in the building, look out for our Christmas event which will have a different theme this year. All are welcome. More details on our website in due course.

Whether you've visited once or many times before, we'd love to welcome you back. The Way Forward project may have restored a historic building, but its greatest achievement is seeing St Mary's once again filled with people, conversation and community life.

Alongside our regular Sunday services at 11am, the church is open every day whether that be for an event or just quiet contemplation. Do pop in and explore. Our Heritage Engagement Officer, Esther Skidmore, has been working hard at displays that explain our heritage and we now have a Visitor Guide and a children's activity guide, entitled Top 12 Things To See At St Mary's Church, Stebbing.

Sarah Maddox, Project Administrator

Stebbing Neighborhood Plan: Review & Update



We write to keep Stebbing residents and businesses updated as to the work which has been undertaken by the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group since our last report in the Summer edition of Stebbing Scene.

First, it might be helpful to remind the community why a Review of the Neighbourhood Plan, which came into effect on 19 July 2022, is being prepared and to describe its planning policy context.

On 25 March 2026, Uttlesford District Council adopted a new Local Plan which identifies “allocations” of land where development of housing and employment premises is to be planned across the

whole District in the period until 2041, but also contains detailed and very wide ranging new development policies in support, numbering 71 in all.

In accordance with national planning policy for establishing a housing requirement for each district, the Uttlesford Local Plan provides for some 13,500 dwellings. The figure required, after allowing for planning permissions already granted, is between 700 and 800 dwellings per year in the Local Plan period to 2041.

Many in our village would say that our area has seen (more than) enough development in the past decade or so and therefore why is more needed? However, the District's housing requirement figure needs to be seen in a wider context, as it is anticipated that housing growth in Essex as a whole over the next 20 years is expected to be some 160,000 dwellings. Uttlesford's own population growth has been over 15% in the decade to 2021 and is predicted to grow by a further 14% by 2031. Our population growth is significantly greater than that of the neighbouring Districts of Braintree and East Herts. So, provision for new housing has to be found for both national and local growth.

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The purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development, by managing the use and development of land in the long-term public interest. This is the foundation for planning for future growth. The District Council decided that each of the eight Larger Villages – as sustainable settlements - should contribute towards meeting local housing needs, which, in the case of Stebbing is a minimum of 98 dwellings. This is to be achieved by allocation through the Review of the Stebbing Neighbourhood Plan, an exercise which has to be completed by no later than March 2028. However, it is the aim of the Steering Group to complete the Review, if possible, prior to the fifth anniversary of the Neighbourhood Plan in July 2027.

So, the Parish of Stebbing, along with other Larger Parishes, is required to contribute towards the District's additional housing need. The Neighbourhood Plan Review will identify how to achieve this in the period to 2041 in conformity with the Local Plan Policies and the policies contained in the revised National Planning Policy Framework which has just been published.

In order to ascertain the availability of land for potential development, a "Call for Sites" has recently been issued by Stebbing Parish Council, with detailed submissions required by 28 September 2026. For further information, visit the Stebbing Parish Council website. The submissions will be reviewed and assessed having regard to the Planning Policies mentioned above, as well as the evidence base, and overall whether they would represent sustainable development.

Many residents will recall that an important component in the evidence base supporting the Neighbourhood Plan 2022 and its policies was a Landscape Sensitivity and Capacity Appraisal which was commissioned from The Landscape Partnership. If anyone would like to be reminded of it, it may be read via this link on the Parish Council webpage: <https://stebbing-pc.gov.uk/parish-council/stebbing-neighbourhood-plan/plans-documents/landscape-appraisal/viewdocument>. We are now commissioning an update to the Appraisal which will assist in the site evaluation process.

Once the submissions are assessed, a consultation with the Community will be arranged by way of a presentation/exhibition of potential development locations so as to secure residents' initial views and input on available options. We would hope to undertake this in November 2026.

In the meantime, we are also drafting a Housing Needs Assessment which will incorporate published data and information relating to our community and its residents, which will follow a commonly used structure and style for this type of technical report but it will go further and also reflect findings from our own recent Residents' Survey.

We will be reporting again on our ongoing work in the next edition of Stebbing Scene but also through updated advice via the Parish Council website and its social media outlets.

The Stebbing Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group

Parish Paths Partnership (P3) News

The weather certainly did clear up in June and as we all know, we then roasted. In fact, we were instructed not to work between 11:30 and 15:00, (a good job) we try to get our work done before coffee time and even then, it got too hot for working by August. Actually, the heat did us a bit of a favour in that the grass stopped growing – shame nobody told the brambles, you could almost watch them grow. As the bushes are bearing quite a lot of fruit it seemed a shame to face the bushes back before the wildlife has had a chance to get their share so we have restricted our activities to cutting back brambles by hand and doing the minimum amount of cutting to keep the paths open, which does mean that some paths look a bit scruffy,



The large fallen tree on Byway 37

I don't know if the hot weather had anything to do with it but we have had three fallen trees/branches on byways this Summer, two we could deal with and one enormous one down by the airfield that Essex had to call in the specialists to remove.

One other side effect of the hot weather and the grass not growing is that it seems to have uncovered quite a bit of fly tipping. Why is it that whenever someone gets a new fence the footpaths receive a dump of concrete fence posts, rubble and tree prunings among other things? When will some residents accept that the footpaths are not dumping grounds and that fly tipping is illegal. Sometimes I wonder just what it will take for us not to risk damaging our machines and just refuse to cut these paths.

The narrow earth bridge on FP7 is still very narrow and could be dangerous if and when we do get any appreciable amount of rain but we are still waiting for it to be resolved.

As usual, please use and enjoy the footpaths, the Footpath Map and the Walks Brochure are available, free, in the shop, but if you do find a problem, please let me know and we will try to fix it quickly,

Brian Martin

07929 476361

Stebbing Neighbourhood Plan: Call For Sites



As you will have read in the article on p57, the new Uttlesford Local Plan 2021-2041, adopted in March 2026, requires additional housing to be provided in the Parish between now and 2041 to meet forecast needs in line with National Policy and District requirements.

As one of the designated 'Larger Villages' under the Local Plan, the Parish Council is required to identify and allocate sites to accommodate at least 98 new dwellings. Apart from the obligation to be in conformity with the Local Plan, the review of the Neighbourhood Plan 2022 will also have to be consistent with a revised National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), ie national decision-making policies, which are expected to be published later in 2026.

As a consequence of the above circumstances, Stebbing Parish Council has issued a Call for Sites as part of the preparation of a review of the Neighbourhood Plan.

The Neighbourhood Plan is able to influence the location, size of developments, size of houses and design to ensure that further developments meet the needs of the community and are in keeping with the character of the Parish, including in relation to its landscape, heritage and the conservation areas. The Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group is therefore making this "Call for Sites" to identify possible sites for development.

We would therefore request that anyone who has land available, or could be available in the future, for development to request a form from clerk@stebbing-pc.gov.uk, and complete the form and return to the Clerk by e-mail (or by post as described in it).

Please be aware that the proposal of a site does not necessarily mean that it will be included in the Neighbourhood Plan or that any site included will be granted planning permission for development. All sites will be assessed to determine their suitability and their ability to meet the objectives of the Neighbourhood Plan prior to residents making the final decision as to which site or sites are selected for inclusion in the reviewed Neighbourhood Plan.

Submissions to the Call for Sites must be made by **23.59** on **28th September 2026**.

*Amy Wharton, Parish Clerk
Stebbing Parish Council*

Stebbing Ladies Group News



Hoping this little missive finds you all well, not too overcooked and you are reading this at an ambient temperature?

The Ladies Group would like to thank everyone that supported and volunteered their time to help out on our Hook a Duck and

Name the Dogs stand at the Stebbing Summer Fayre. The duck key rings and stickers were very well received, and the winners of the dogs were extremely happy.

As we enter our Autumn season we continue with varied and interesting subjects:



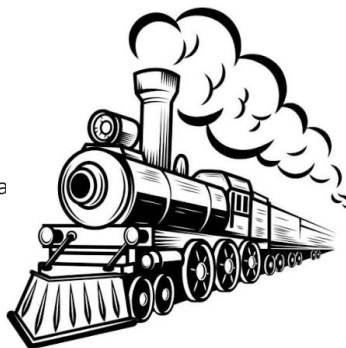
Wednesday September 23rd

(*meeting starts at 7.30pm, the bees need to get to bed)

Maria Little will be joining us for a talk on Bees and Beekeeping. She will be bringing along an exhibition hive and will also be selling jars of her yummy honey.

Wednesday October 28th

We will be learning more about The Flitch Way and Branch Line. Stan Davies will be coming along to guide us through a journey past to present.



Stebbing Ladies Group meet on the 4th Wednesday of the month 7.30pm for an 8pm start* (excluding August and December) at Stebbing Village Hall and new members are always welcomed.

We are a group of ladies who meet up for some thought provoking and entertaining talks, with plenty of time for a chat and a cuppa. We have a raffle at each meeting in a convivial atmosphere.

If you would like to come along you don't have to sign up on your first visit but may come as a guest at a nominal £3 for the evening. A contact telephone number can be found on the List of Contacts within this magazine for any further information.

Wendy Haynes

The Value Of Staying Curious



One of the great pleasures of retirement is having time to explore interests that may have been put on hold for years. Whether it's learning a language, improving your photography, keeping up to date with current science news stories or simply discussing a good book, curiosity doesn't retire when we do.

Keeping our minds active and maintaining social connections are widely recognised as important ingredients of healthy ageing. But learning doesn't have to mean classrooms or exams. Often, it's simply a matter of sharing ideas and discovering something new together.

That principle lies at the heart of Dunmow u3a. Most of our interest groups are led not by professional tutors, but by members themselves. Someone with years of experience in birdwatching might introduce others to local wildlife. Keen gardeners share successful techniques with each other. An experienced bridge player helps newcomers improve their game. Everyone has something to offer, and everyone has something new to learn.

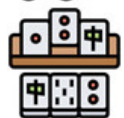
This creates a welcoming atmosphere where people enjoy exchanging knowledge, asking questions and encouraging one another.

Friendships grow naturally through shared interests, and new groups often begin because someone says, "I've always wanted to explore this – would anyone like to join me?"

Perhaps that's the real value of u3a: not simply learning new skills, but remaining curious about the world around us ... and enjoying the journey with others.



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Letter to the Editor



Letter to the Editor

Dear Editor

Daphne Rogowski Meadow Stebbing Green

Some people in Stebbing will remember Daphne Rogowski - a farmer and a true countrywoman. Countless children who attended Stebbing Primary School will remember her regular Friday afternoon visits for story time and the occasional sweets!

On her death she made significant bequests to the village she loved especially the village hall. Part of the bequest was a small meadow at Stebbing Green. For years this had been home to gypsy caravans and various itinerant workers using a variety of housing from simple tents to railway carriages - all with Daphne's approval.

The meadow in the last fifty years returned to just a meadow - uncultivated but a precious wildlife habitat. In 2007 following her death and bequest to the village hall the meadow was looked at anew. It was agreed that in the spirit of her love of country some gentle restoration should take place. To that end mowing and general tidying took place and a central area was ploughed using an old plough and small tractor to avoid compaction. The area was then hand sown with an appropriate wild flower mix suitable to the area and soil type - this was the only cost - Daphne would have approved - she was very frugal!

Since then the meadow has been managed at minimal cost - some diesel for annual mowing or cut and take. It has flourished and managed to survive even with the unexpected arrival of travellers with their ponies – again. Daphne may well not have even raised an eyebrow! A few fruit trees were added and the meadow has settled into an annual peaceful routine, each year bringing different species or prominence of one or other of the many flowers and grasses. A haven for wildlife - deer, rabbits, foxes and badgers, hedgehogs - butterflies, moths and other insects. Daphne would surely be pleased.

Sadly this is about to be changed beyond recognition - not as you might imagine by planned housing but by theoretically well meaning people who think their plans for an orchard, animal proof fencing, picnic benches, mains water etc. all at enormous cost is the way to go. The funding is from the lottery but the village will be responsible for the annual on-going costs of a commercial water supply etc. In the present climate is this an appropriate use of resources apart from the clear deviation from the ethos of the original bequest. A beautiful traditional peaceful country meadow is about to be urbanised and moved into a 'parks and gardens' regime in a village where there is already plenty of provision for this type of open space.

Sue Riley

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Autumn Harvest & Nature Quiz

In keeping with the photograph on the front cover this issue, test your knowledge of harvest lore & English countryside ways



1. Which yellow Autumn fruit, often baked in pies or bottled in syrup, grows on trees and was once known as the 'wine berry'?
2. Which root vegetable, harvested from September onwards, was historically used to make lanterns long before pumpkins arrived in Britain?
3. What name is given to the last sheaf of corn cut at harvest, traditionally woven and kept until the following year?
4. Which berry, dark purple and ripening after the first frosts, makes the classic jelly served with game?
5. Which tree's leaves turn brilliant crimson and orange in Autumn and produces winged seeds known as 'helicopters'?
6. On which date does the Autumn equinox fall, marking the official start of Autumn in the northern hemisphere?
7. If the first frost of Autumn arrives early, what does country tradition suggest about the Winter ahead?
8. Why do deciduous trees lose their leaves in Autumn?
9. Which bird, famous for its long journey South, leaves the UK in Autumn to spend Winter in Africa?
10. Which moon is the full moon closest to the Autumn equinox, appearing larger and brighter?

1. Quince. 2. Turnip 3. The Harvest Queen, Corn Dolly or Kim Baby. 4. Sloe. 5. Sycamore 6. 22nd September. 7. It will be long & severe. 8. To conserve energy. 9. Swallow. 10. Harvest Moon

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Carpet Bowls (Evening)	Roger Butson	856348
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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)

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Jackie Kingdom (obituaries)

jackiekingdom@btinternet.com

Copy date for next issue is 19th November 2026

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

Did you know that this issue, and back copies are available to download at
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