

Stapleford

Ne Nuntium Necare!

MESSENGER

December 2024

Volume 83 No 12

Price 90p

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Friends of St Andrew's

Tony Hore 843796

Gift Aid secretary

Lisa MacGregor 07523 668731

SERVICES at St ANDREW'S

See the St Andrew's Noticeboard for this month, and the church website at standrewstapleford.org for full details. The services include:

9am BCP or CW Communion

10.30am Communion, Services of the Word, Messy Church and Forest Church

SERVICES AT OTHER CHURCHES

Our Lady of Lourdes, Sawston (Roman Catholic)

Sundays 8.45am and 11.15am

Shelford Free Church (Baptist)

Sundays 10.30am

Christenings and Weddings

Christenings take place during Sunday worship.

For both Christenings and Weddings, contact the parish vicar.

Stapleford MESSENGER

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The subscription for the Stapleford MESSENGER delivered to your home is £9 per annum (£25 by post): single copies 90p.

From the Rev Dr Simon Taylor

THERE is a lovely scene in the TV series *The Big Bang Theory* – endless repeats are on Freeview at the moment – in which Sheldon, the neurodivergent scientist at the centre of a group of friends, goes to his friend Raj's astrophysics lab to look at some data. To keep Sheldon busy while calibrating the telescopes, Raj sits him down with a huge mass of unexamined data, asking him to look for anomalies, because they might point to undiscovered planets or asteroids. Within seconds – Raj expected to keep him quiet for a while – Sheldon says he has found something. He has spotted prime numbers in the pages of dense data, which he says look red to him, and twin prime numbers (those separated only by one integer) look pink and smell of gasoline. We get the idea that Sheldon is not like other people.



Neither was Mozart, incidentally. His brain seemed to function differently too. I read a book about music and the brain once; he supposedly said that when he had the idea for a new composition, he could see it physically laid out in front of him like a landscape.

Back to primes. A prime number – I expect you know this – is a number that can only be divided by 1 and by itself, so, 2, 3, 5, 7, 11 and so on. I have no idea whether 1 itself is counted as a prime. I remembered the Sheldon episode when it was announced that on 12 October 2024 Luke Durant, a programmer, had identified the world's largest known prime number after a year of effort. Prime numbers have names, apparently. This one is M136279841, which seems a little prosaic for something



so special. It has more than 41 million digits, and is a Mersenne Prime, one that can be written in the form $2^p - 1$. Its discovery is significant because the historical record of the discovery of ever-larger primes tells us something about the evolution of computing. The system Durant used – no longer a single computer for this sort of thing – was hardware, software and cloud computing put together by the GIMPS community (the Great Internet Mersenne Prime Search). Well done him and them.

Discovery of these large primes has little practical use at present. Smaller primes are useful, in computer security systems and similar I think, but not these monsters. So in a way the discovery is inconsequential, which

is slightly sad. Temporary as well: this record discovery of something useless will only stand until the next one comes along. Nonetheless I am so glad all these wonderful people are out there doing their thing! Life would be so much less rich without them. 'Temporary and not useful' is a good label for so much we own and do. But Durant gets that there is rather more to life than permanence and utility. For him the challenge was to explore the limitations of the laws of physics, specifically the restrictions on the content and speed of computing. He said "I wanted to push the boundaries of the known universe in whatever small way I was able. These enormous prime numbers are, in some senses, the largest unique pieces of information in the known universe."

He is right, I guess. Mighty big numbers with unique properties are, by definition, unique pieces of information, and the largest one is, well, the largest.

But he is also wrong. There is something unique but much greater. One of the readings from the bible that crops up during our Christmas services every year – this year at the Lessons & Carols on 15 December and the late service on Christmas Eve – is the prologue to John's gospel, chapter 1 verses 1-14. 'In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.' And so on. Now there is someone who is different from you and me. Go and read it. It is majestic stuff. In it John summarises what is to come as his gospel unfolds. He reduces into pithy familiarities the idea that the infinite became, for a time, finite, and the eternal clothed itself with the temporary. In short, God the Son became one of us. 'The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us.' So, definitely sotto voce because it is not even quite Advent, Happy Christmas to you all.

Of course John also tells of human reaction to the life of Christ. 'He was in the world, and though the world was made through him, the world did not recognise him. He came to that which was his own, but his own did not receive him.' Dismally sad. My heart aches for you if that is you!

Really, it does. Jesus, you see, is not just a person, but the infinite ever-glowing light of the world, the light that always shines in the darkness, the light that the darkness can never overcome. He is, as John puts it, 'full of grace and truth'. That's the one – He is the one – whom we celebrate at Christmas. Not temporary, but everlasting. Never to be exceeded. And consequential too. 'To all who did receive him, to those who believe in his name, he gave the right to become children of God.' It's an open invitation. Come, see the Christ-child this Christmas.

**May you and yours be greatly blessed by Him this year and always,
Simon**

St Andrew's Noticeboard

1 DEC	9 AM	BCP COMMUNION
	10.30 AM	CW COMMUNION & TOY SERVICE <i>Collecting gifts for the Red Hen Project</i> Jeremiah 33.14-16; Luke 21.25-36
	6 PM	CHORAL EVENSONG for ADVENT Joel 3.9-21; John 3.1-17
2 DEC	7 PM	MONTHLY PRAYER MEETING
8 DEC	9 AM	BCP COMMUNION
	10.30 AM	SUNDAY WORSHIP Malachi 3.1-4; Luke 3.1-6 <i>Prepare the way of the Lord</i>
	10.30 AM	MESSY CHURCH IN THE JOHNSON HALL
15 DEC	9 AM	BCP COMMUNION Zephaniah 3.14-20; Luke 3.7-18
	4 PM	CHRISTMAS LESSONS & CAROLS
22 DEC	10.30 AM	CW SUNG COMMUNION Micah 5.2-5a; Luke 1.39-55 <i>All generations will call me blessed</i>
24 DEC	3.30 PM	CAROLS & CHRISTINGLE
	9.30 PM	MIDNIGHT IN BETHLEHEM Isaiah 52.7-10; John 1.1-14
25 DEC	9 AM	BCP COMMUNION
	10.30 PM	ALL AGE & FAMILY COMMUNION Isaiah 9.2-7; Luke 2.1-20
29 DEC	9 AM	NO SERVICE
	10.30 AM	SAID SUNDAY WORSHIP 1 Samuel 2.18-20, 26; Luke 2.41-52

The church is open every day as a place to come and pray or enjoy a moment of quiet reflection.

FROM THE REGISTERS

- 29 OCTOBER – Funeral of Pamela Matlock
- 15 NOVEMBER – Funeral of Denise Craney
- 21 NOVEMBER – Thanksgiving for Bill Donaldson

Time to renew or take out a subscription to the *Messenger*

THE annual cost remains at £9 or £25 for postal subscriptions.

There are three ways to pay; please choose whichever is easiest for you.

1. Pay your deliverer by cash or cheque made payable to 'Stapleford PCC'.
2. Post or deliver an envelope containing cash or cheque to Valerie Powell, 53 Bury Road, Stapleford, Cambridge, CB22 5BP. Please include a note of your address for our reference.
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The Stapleford Messenger Team

Deadline for the January *Messenger*

Please submit copy **NO LATER THAN WEDNESDAY 4 December**

By email (Word or similar attachment) to staplefordmessenger@gmail.com

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Windows

EVERY morning the first thing I do is open the curtains and look out of the window. First sight of a new day. Maybe you have shutters, nets or blinds but still gaze out. The day breaks with a familiar scene which varies with each season. Always something to appreciate, if given a chance. I allow myself the opportunity to stand and stare for a while, take a deep breath and get on.

The bus, train or, if I'm lucky, car windows reveal views whilst travelling. In the dark it can prove difficult to detect your stop. Bright lights shine and familiar landmarks might not be recognised.

Much is revealed through windows. Christmas lights, decorated trees, garlands and candles neatly framed. Curtaining pushed aside makes it hard to look away. Lovely, welcoming and homely. Other people's rooms appeal, choice of wall colour, placing of mirrors giving way to thoughts of change. I like deep bay windows with thick seat pads for sitting. Greatly favoured are round windows. Durham Cathedral has a splendid stained glass version like a vibrant flower. Front doors with coloured glass intrigue, grandly curved arches too. Such shapes would be hard to curtain. Sometimes, though, covering is not felt necessary. Large glass panes are often left, a bold statement. I like cosiness. Winter dark and cold needs cheery lights, candles and thick comfy cushions.

Gardens have greenhouses. English Heritage, Audley End has magnificent old ones with much character. Opening the doors on Bridge End Gardens is quite an experience too. The glass and frames have age. Ely Cathedral's ancient bubbled glass near the Lady Chapel causes distortion. Worth detecting. Jesus College, Cambridge has glorious little gems of stained glass windows. They feature the work of William Morris, Burne-Jones, Ford Maddox Brown and Pugin. Glowing tones, windows to delight.

After the last Advent calendar window is opened and final candle lit, we reflect. 'Eyes are the window to the soul.' Sadness will be seen if our *Messenger* comes to an end.

Happy Christmas and thanks to all the magazine team. **Judith Lee**

*Season's Greetings to all
our readers
from the Messenger Team*

CHRISTMAS @ St ANDREW'S

Toy Service

10.30 am 1 December

*Give a new toy, game or book
to the Red Hen Project*

Evensong for Advent

6 pm 1 December

Traditional Lessons & Carols

4 pm 15 December

Christingle Service

3.30 pm Christmas Eve

Midnight in Bethlehem Communion

9.30 pm Christmas Eve

Christmas Day

9 am Traditional Communion

10.30 am All Age Service



St Andrew
STAPLEFORD

www.standrewstapleford.org
- church for the whole community -

Messenger Good News

GOOD news that we have volunteers willing to take on the role of Production Editor! Many thanks to all who stepped forward in response to our appeal. That was very heartening. And that includes thanks to those who did not really want to do it but were willing to be of service if necessary.

And a bit more good news. I hope you know about the *Messenger* Fund. St Andrew's, which owns the *Messenger*, decided a few years ago to allocate a large chunk of the profit to the Fund, which is then distributed by a church and village committee to good causes.

The latest payouts, of £1,000 each, will be going to the Nachingwea Link, the Community Warden Scheme, Stapleford Cricket Club, Stapleford Community Primary School, Shelford and Stapleford Strikers Football Club, and the Shelfords & Stapleford Scouts. **Simon Taylor**



The January Messenger is under way!



St Andrew
STAPLEFORD

Nachingwea



Stapleford

Join friends and families for a fundraising Christmas tea at the Pavilion on Stapleford Rec, in support of education and health projects in the village of Nachingwea, Tanzania.

Choose from a delicious selection of sandwiches, scones and cakes.

With stalls selling gifts, plants, Christmas cards and homemade jams and chutneys.

For more information please email: nachingwealink@standrewstapleford.org

Free to attend but your donations welcomed!

Christmas tea at the Pavilion

2-4pm Sunday 1st December

Festive sandwiches, scones and
cakes * Christmas cards
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The Messenger lives!

YOU have seen elsewhere in the magazine that the *Messenger* will carry on into 2025 after all, and we are extremely pleased that a solution has been found to take our village magazine onwards (and upwards?). We have found people to take over Frank's role as Production Editor - setting up the pages with content from you, via the Inbox Administrators. Both these roles will now be shared between two or three people, so the new way of doing things will take a while to bed down. Please bear with us while this is happening. The January issue in particular may be a little late, and a little slim, and the copy date has to be a little earlier – 5pm on Wednesday 4 December.

Because of the changes, can we ask contributors to the magazine to help us. Regular contributors know that we have a house style for consistency and readability, and it would be great if everyone can follow it, instead of relying on us to sort your copy out. Just look at an issue of the magazine to see what we mean. The main things to be aware of are:

- Send text as a Word attachment in an email to staplefordmessenger@gmail.com.
- Send pictures/photos/logos as JPG attachments to the email, and make sure they are credited and you're allowed to use them. If you submit an article with words and pictures in, send the pictures as separate JPGs as well as in with the text.
- Put your title like this e.g. Supporting the Red Hen Project; Mothers' Union toiletries collection i.e. use upper and lower case letters, do not put everything in capital letters.
- Put your name (or the author's name if that's not you) at the bottom of your article.
- Always deliver before the copy date.
- Put dates as e.g. 4 June, not 4th June or June 4th.
- Times should be e.g. 8am-10.15pm; 10.30am; 11pm.
- Numbers should be as words up to nine, then can be numbers. (measurements and time can be numbers e.g. 3 cm; 6 minutes).
- 1st not 1st.
- For local landline phone numbers, there is no need for 01223.
- Avoid underlining – use bold instead.

- For websites, there is no need for https or www e.g. bbc.co.uk. Keep URL addresses short; remember people have to type them in if they are copying them from the magazine.

Thanks very much for helping the new people out, and keep the stories coming in! **Messenger Team.**

Letters to the Editor

Please include a contact postal address with all correspondence

From: Monica Jacot, Bar Lane

RE: Thank you

CHLOE, Sam and I would like to thank everyone of you in the Stapleford community, friends, neighbours who have sent us 100s of loving cards & letters of condolence; and the 300 plus of you who attended our beloved Frank's funeral and wakes.

We feel very loved and supported. For many of you Frank was the "Staple" in Stapleford.

We are very grateful for the donations made in Frank's memory to the Cambridgeshire Community Foundation which as I write the total stands at £2,603.25 including gift aid.

(Frank's obituary is on page 16)

From: D Roberts, Bury Road

Re: Bury/Haverhill Road

I AGREE with the Parish Council Chair's report (Stapleford Messenger November) re the disappointment that the 20mph application for both roads has been rejected on safety grounds, I would have thought speeding vehicles though our village would have been a safety concern, however it's encouraging the problem has been recognised. The police will confirm speeding is recorded along these roads whenever checks are carried out.

Also, in the chair's report I note that sinusoidal ramps are proposed for Mingle Lane and Church Street to slow traffic. Both these roads are already 20mph. Surely Bury/Haverhill Roads are as deserving for sinusoidal ramps.

We're waiting for your story!

HAVE you a story to tell or an event to publicise? Or perhaps you have an opinion to share on an issue that is important to you. If so, drop us a line on staplefordmessenger@gmail.com - after all, it's your magazine and we would love to hear from you.

St Andrew's Choir - Come and join us!

REHEARSALS
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Stapleford-Nachingwea Link

Weekend celebration of the 43rd year of the Link



A CONCERT of light music for all the family was held in St Andrew's church on Saturday 19 October. The concert was given by two local musicians, Luke and Philip, and five members of Homerton College Music Society, through the Society's Outreach Programme, reaching out of College into

the community for the benefit of a charity, today celebrating the 43rd anniversary of the partnership between St Andrew's Stapleford and St Andrew's Nachingwea.

We enjoyed performances on the harp, organ, piano and some vocal items.

On the following day we warmly welcomed members of Stapleford Community Primary School Choir with their families and their Choir Director, Lucy, to the church service.



As well as their lively singing in Swahili, Congolese and English, the children made flags with the Tanzanian flag on one side and the St Andrew's flag on the other and marched around the church as they sang.

Comments received from those attending included:

- "Both the Saturday Music Concert and the Sunday Thanksgiving Service were enlightening and entertaining and it was wonderful to see so many people engaged in the Link work."

- "It was such a joy to hear both the school and church choirs and to see the church packed with school children and their parents."





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- “It was such a happy atmosphere in church today and at the concert, which was most rewarding.”

Very many thanks to all who participated and helped in so many ways. The resulting generous donations amounted to just over £600, which will directly help to provide for children in the church and community of Nachingwea.

Trish Maude, on behalf of the Link Committee



Mothers' Union



WE were all saddened to learn of the passing of our dear friend and member, Denise Craney, whose kindness and generosity of spirit will be long remembered. Denise was Branch Leader of Stapleford Mothers' Union for many years. Many members attended her funeral on 15 November.

Linton MU is hosting the Deanery Advent Service on 2 December at 11am, followed by a bring and share lunch in Linton church. The Wave of Prayer for Ely Diocese is from 10 to 12 December, and we have decided to hold the short service at our Annual General Meeting on 12 December (2.30pm, Johnson Hall). At the AGM we shall be looking back at our activities during 2024, via the Annual Report, and Mary will present a Treasurer's Report.

Thank you to all in the parish who have contributed to the Toiletries collection for the Cambridge Women's Refuge - your generosity is greatly appreciated by all those in the Refuge, who may have arrived with nothing.

Our first meeting in 2025 is on 23 January, when Mary will tell us about her recent visit to Kazakhstan (photo, right)



All good wishes for a Merry Christmas from the Committee and me.

Hilary Street

Frank Jacot

24 March 1964 – 28 September 2024

FRANK lived in Stapleford from the 1970s. He was a pupil at Stapleford Primary and then Sawston Village College. He died, much too young, in late September, leaving his widow Monica, children Chloë and Sam, and a wider family and vast circle of friends and acquaintances. He was boundlessly gregarious, talkative, generous and up for fun, a hugely important part of the social glue of our village; or, as someone put it in a letter to Monica, the 'staple in Stapleford'. We shall miss him enormously.

Below is Monica's tribute to Frank at his funeral. Further tributes, and a full recording of the funeral and order of service, are on standrewstapleford.org.



I FIRST met my beloved Frank in July 1988 at the Cambridge Festival Ceilidh at St Bede's school. My friend Marie had invited me with a group of friends, the boyfriend of one was playing in the Cambridge Crofters folk band who were running the event. Frank was on the other side of the hall with his friend Jeff Dean. Frank saw me across the room and came over to ask me to dance. We stripped the willow and he literally whisked me off my feet whilst dancing the basket. As any ceilidh lovers amongst you will know, this required me to put my arms round his shoulders and let him dance in a circle whilst allowing gravity to lift me up.

Frank's height and boundless enthusiasm made it easy for him to accomplish. After that, he never let go of my hand and we danced together all evening.

I recall us driving off later in his white VW Jetta with the sun roof down and his favourite Kool and the Gang cassette playing 'Fresh' in the background -uplifting 80s corny lyrics and I was smitten.

He wooed me with a glass of Dubonnet, a favourite tippie of Queen Elizabeth and her mother. Our second date was at the Plough at Coton. He announced with a sophisticated air, at merely 24 years of age, that he always had the Rainbow Trout.

He collected antique silver (not records or HiFis), played classical music, sang choral works but also loved soul and disco.

He loved snow-capped mountains and skiing – the first photos he proudly showed me on his mantelpiece were of him (the one on the back of the order of service) and also with his mother and father at the foot of the snowy slopes. I found these photos alluring because my favourite childhood TV programme had been ‘Belle and Sebastian’, a French 1960s children’s programme dubbed in English which I watched with my mother aged 3. I had been enchanted by the white Great Pyrenees fluffy dog Belle and her owner 6-year-old Sebastian and their adventures in the French Alps. Frank took me on my first of many skiing trips with his family in February 1989 to the Austrian Tyrol. We went on to have many more skiing adventures in Austria and in the French and Swiss Alps, including with his French cousins Olivier and Veronique who are also here today.

I knew life with Frank was always going to be an adventure; it would be one lived with spontaneity and a zest for life with so many activities and interests which made being with Frank great fun and exciting.

I enjoyed hill walking (as did he) but he took this to the next level by saying on a Friday evening “how do you fancy going to the Peak district for the day? If we leave tomorrow at 5.45am we could be climbing a peak by 8.30am.”

Frank always said one’s life is not defined by your career. Yes, he had a successful 30 year plus banking career at Barclays as a qualified chartered banker and financial adviser. However, Barclays was merely a small aspect of his life.

In my early days of dating and married life he was Stapleford Tennis Club men’s and mixed doubles captain arranging teams and matches. He was involved in the club’s twinning exchanges with a village near Heidelberg. He played in a local hockey team and had a side-hustle teaching clarinet with pupils after his Barclays workday. He was an active member of Stapleford-Villedômer twinning exchange trips, which I joined. We took part in the Stapleford Twinning Association casino fund raising evenings. The first casino evening for which I was croupier was at Saffron Walden golf club. The double roulette had made me anxious but he allayed my fear of the maths involved (he said, “Don’t worry darling there is a crib sheet to tell you what winnings to give out”).

I have always loved new experiences and Frank introduced me to sailing. As someone who loved reading the Arthur Ransome ‘Swallows and Amazons’ books as a child, I was thrilled to be able to re-enact the whole series including the final ‘We didn’t mean to go to sea’. I had done hill walking and camping before I met Frank but I then got to sail in the Lake District and beyond. Frank invited me to crew with him for our retired



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friend Reg, sailing his six berth 23 foot Westerly Centaur on weekends from the Orwell yacht club along rivers and estuaries of East Anglia. One May Bank holiday in 1991 when Frank and I had both completed our respective professional exams, my mother had asked what were we going to do to celebrate, expecting me to say a meal out. Not wanting to alarm my poor non-swimming mum, I simply said we would be away for the weekend somewhere by the south coast. In actual fact, that evening we sailed and motored overnight from the River Orwell across the busiest shipping lane that is the English Channel, with Reg, in his small yacht arriving in Calais – just in time to moor up early in the best spot in the harbour. We could then watch others sail in as they too joined us for the Little Ship club rally, whilst we ate our fresh croissants for breakfast followed by our baguettes and French cheese and red wine for lunch on deck – it was bliss.

Later, Frank Jacot Travel Services would book our family last minute travel trips all over Europe and beyond.

We had a shared love of music in all genres and singing in choirs. I will so miss Frank's singing in the shower in the morning bursting into song blasting out a loud "LAAA" in the note of A.

Frank invited me from the very start of our relationship to choral evensong at St Andrew's to hear him sing in the church choir and I have continued worshipping here ever since.

He also joined my choir Collegium Laureatum that I was singing in when we first met, as did Canon Rev Chris Barber and his wife Mary Barber. Chris Barber was to later marry us and I am delighted that Chris is taking part in the service today and Mary is here too.

Frank and I loved listening to all live music, be it classical, opera, at the Proms or bands performing, be it at Latitude or Cambridge Folk festival, Radio 2 Live in Hyde Park, or Jazz in Paris or dancing to live DJ sets in Croatia.

He romantically proposed to me one July evening in 1989 whilst we were walking through Stapleford allotments by a bed of dazzling blue cornflowers. He was a very loving husband full of romantic gestures, cheekiness and good humour. He was also a very hands-on dad to Chloe and Sam, and always so proud of whatever they did. He later became so dotty and smitten about our fur child, our dog Bess.

He had a fondness for romcom movies particularly from that fine purveyor of the genre: the Richard Curtis production line. That famous speech in 'Four Weddings and a Funeral' from WH Auden's poem seems very apt for the shock and grief that I feel at the moment.



AA

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*He was my North, my South, my East and West,
My working week and my Sunday rest,
My noon, my midnight, my talk, my song;
I thought that love would last forever: I was wrong.*

As I close my tribute it seems fitting to align mine with those immortal lines sung by Brian Wilson during the closing credits of 'Love Actually':

*God only knows what I will be without you
but as long as there are stars above you ;
you never need to doubt it,
I will make you so sure about it.*

Frank, after our 34 year wedded double act you helped make me the person I have become, we loved each other and you made me so sure about it.

God bless - may you rest in peace.

Memory tags for the Stapleford Christmas Tree



THIS year, we're adding something extra special to the new Christmas tree located near to the Stapleford Spar, and we would love for you to be part of it!

Join us in celebrating and remembering loved ones by adding a memory tag to the tree.

If you would like to remember someone special, email me (mfrench@staplefordparishcouncil.gov.uk) by 12 December, and we'll make sure your memory tag is ready for you to hang on the tree.

Matthew French



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Women's Institute



DURING our meeting in October, I asked several members (individually) why they belong to Stapleford WI, and what they like about our group. With their permission I am revealing their responses.

The first member I spoke to replied she “liked everything”! Having been a member since 1995 she says she looks forward to our meeting every month and added that she thinks “we have a supremely active and vibrant committee”.

One member said she comes each month for the friendship and “it’s a good evening out”. I then asked a new member the same questions and she said the group is “friendly, welcoming and enthusiastic with an interesting programme”. Another member echoed previous comments by saying “it’s a nice social occasion with very interesting talks”, and also mentioned “the numerous and varied activities which you can choose to be involved in or not.”

Another new member explained that “I had been looking for groups to join and this WI group attracted me. I like the courses offered by The Federation. There are lots of trips and choice. I am making new friends too.” I shall end with the response from one of our oldest members who joined in 1958 when there were over 90 members! She enjoys “the range of topics which the WI embraces” and has

particularly enjoyed being an active and interested participant in the Federation drama players. She also described us as a friendly, social group and commented how much she enjoys coming to the meetings each month. She concluded by saying how far the WI has progressed from its humble beginnings over 100 years ago. It certainly has, and if you would like to know more about all we do



after reading our members’ comments, please come along to one of our meetings on the fourth Thursday of each month (apart from December) in the Pavilion, where you are assured of a warm welcome. Check out our website, staplefordwi.weebly.com. or speak to Sallie Dixon on 843847.

Several members I spoke to referred to the interesting talks we have at some of our meetings and for this we must thank Yvonne Allison, our committee member who works hard to arrange a variety of speakers to appeal to different tastes. Our speaker in October was Brian Saddington who gave a fascinating, informative and at times humorous talk about his 40

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years' service in the Fire Brigade. He described the training he had received and some of the highs and lows of such a job. Brian explained the serious aspects of the work of Fire Officers and also interspersed his talk with some very entertaining anecdotes.

Our next meeting is in January when our talk is titled 'Blood Runners'.

Let me end by taking this opportunity to offer all readers, on behalf of Stapleford WI, every good wish for Christmas and 2025. **Joyce Dobson**

Yesteryear

SYLVIA Morris looks at events in the month of December over the years. Punctuation, spelling and capital letters are exactly as printed at the time.

1830

COLLECTION. The Treasurer of Addenbrooke's Hospital has received the sum of nine pounds, being a collection at Stapleford Church after a sermon preached by the Rev. Edward Daniel, for the benefit of that institution, on Sunday last.

1867

DIED. Sudden death of Village Blacksmith. On Tuesday last, an inquest was held at the house of Peter Drew, touching the death of Joseph Jordan, blacksmith, who died suddenly a day or two before, while shoeing a horse. He was what is termed pointing the shoe nails, and fell down and died soon afterwards. Dr. Ramsey was of the opinion that death was caused by apoplexy. Verdict accordingly

1917

COMMON DISEASES. Reading through the logbook during the opening years of the century three things stand out. The first is the number of times that the medical officer of health closed the school for one or two weeks because of epidemics of common diseases such as chicken pox, measles, mumps and whooping cough and also those which are now very rare such as scarlet fever, diphtheria and consumption (TB). In fact nearly every year the logbook records the names of pupils who had died from diseases that are now very rare and quickly cured.

1922

MP'S WISHES FOR THE NEW YEAR. I desire to express my very best wishes for a happy Christmas to all my constituents and I hope that the New Year will bring for all a prosperity which the policy of the government will foster and increase as the year progresses.

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I hope they may spare me a thought during the holiday season and I can assure them that I, on my part, will not forget those I have so recently met while visiting the many villages and who gave me such a generous reception. I have a strong desire to know personally more of the electors and, by so enlarging the circle of my friends who did me the honour of returning me as their member, to learn in what way I can best serve them. I am, therefore, looking forward at an early date to having the pleasure of going to many districts which I have not yet had the opportunity of visiting.

1947

The parish council had received a complaint regarding the untidy state of the small field next to Lordship Close recently occupied by the military, and to the danger of children playing there. It was proposed that the clerk writes to the HQ East Anglian District, Colchester, and inform them that the PC consider it a waste of public money to still keep this land requisitioned, besides being a danger to the children playing owing to broken sheets of corrugated iron, etc, left lying about.

1960

“Magpie Café. Change of usage from Transport Cafe to Petrol Station, superior cafe and motor showroom. A general discussion ensued from which it emerged that the Council were of the opinion that a change of usage would not be more detrimental to the surrounding properties than its present use and might even be an improvement. The Chairman and Clerk were instructed to view the detailed plans, if any were available, and to act accordingly”. *(From the Parish Council Minutes)*

Bin collection dates this month

	GREEN	BLUE	BLACK
3 December	✓	✓	
10 December			✓
17 December	✓	✓	
24 December			✓
31 December		✓	

A critical moment

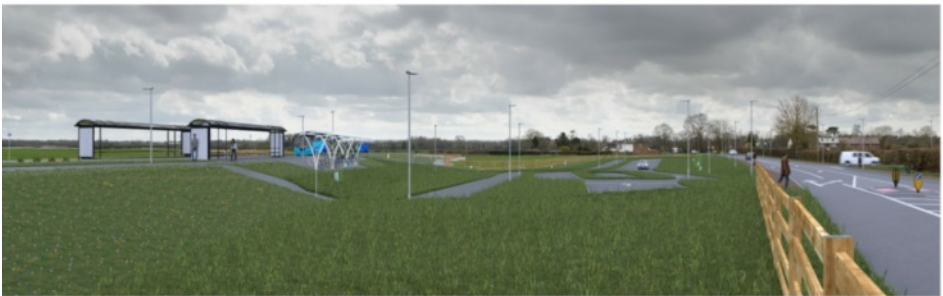
Your last chance EVER to save your countryside



A PIVOTAL decision has been made that affects the future of our community and environment. The Cambridgeshire County Council has voted to proceed with plans to build a 5-mile road through the countryside between the A11 and Cambridge Biomedical Campus. Known as the Cambridge South East Transport Scheme (CSET) the road will be used by buses and now faces a

public inquiry. **This is your last chance to save the countryside by supporting a better alternative.**

The bus road plans have faced substantial opposition from local residents, environmental groups, businesses, and Parish Councils because it is so damaging to our special countryside and rural setting and will unleash development all along its route. Despite these objections, our politicians have pushed ahead, when a **better, more cost-effective alternative exists.**



The top photo shows the edge of Stapleford village before work starts and the bottom photo what it could look like after one year.

The Better Alternative

The alternative solution is to build 1 mile of bus road and 1.2 miles of bus lane alongside the A1307, where congestion is an issue. This would have much less environmental impact and cost £100 million **less** than building 5 miles of road. Importantly, this would achieve similar transport and economic benefits and could achieve faster results by opening up each phase of the project as it's completed. For more information about the alternative and a comparison, head to bw4b.org/the-better-way.

What You Can Do to Help

Now, **more than ever**, it's vital for the community to come together and take action. Here's how you can help:

- 1. Make a donation:** We urgently need to raise funds for legal and professional fees to make the strongest argument possible against the bus road at the public enquiry. The costs are very significant indeed and whether you can donate £50 or £5,000, without this, we will not be able to fight it effectively. We urgently need to have instructed solicitors, a barrister and expert witnesses who will deliver their evidence to the public inquiry. Donate at cambridgeppf.org and click on Protecting Cambridge & Campaigns.
- 2. Volunteer to help:** We need people who can help by going door-to-door to speak to fellow residents or distributing information - please get in touch at hello@bw4b.org.

Time Is Running Out

The fight to save our countryside is in its final stages. If you oppose this project, the time to act is now. This is **your last chance** to prevent 5 miles of bus road from permanently scarring our landscape and losing the greenbelt and the unique character of South Cambridgeshire forever.

Together, we can protect our environment, our community, and our future. The alternative scheme in the A1307 corridor saves £100 million, delivers similar benefits faster, and is much better for the countryside and environment.

Please take a look at our website, bw4b.org, which shows the impact on your village.

We urge you to please email us at hello@bw4b.org as soon as possible to offer your support.

Thank you for your continued support. **Better Ways for Busways!**

Better ways for Busways! Is a non-political group that supports better public transport solutions in South Cambridgeshire.

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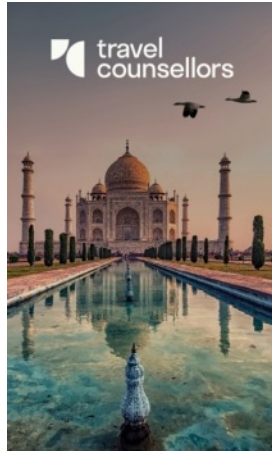


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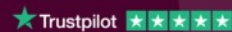
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2G3S



DR Bike continues to run its volunteer-run weekly bike repair sessions at the Old Slaughterhouse in Stapleford, 3pm to 5.30pm every Tuesday. Children are welcome to come and learn how to look after their bikes and do simple maintenance and repairs, but please attend with them (for safeguarding reasons). For more information, contact drbikestapleford@gmail.com. You can also book a time slot at that address, though this is not essential.

I hope if you attended our transport evening, or the film Fugolburna, or the Repair Café, that you found it worthwhile. All our activities aim to support you in making environmentally-friendly choices and to be more aware of the importance of wildlife and nature to our wellbeing and that of the planet for our descendants.

Some of our members attended the SCDC Local Climate Action Conference at Cambourne, and met other organisations and individuals working to meet the challenges of the climate / nature emergencies. Some of our members also went on a march in London calling for Clean Water. The Cam Valley Forum arranged transport for local people, as overabstraction and pollution of our local rivers are so relevant in this area. The National Trust, RSPB, and Wildlife Trusts were all represented at the event.

Looking forward to 2025....

AGM and social on 7 January at 7.30pm at Cox's Close Community Room, Stapleford. Come along and meet us!

Repair Café at Shelford Memorial Hall on the afternoon of 22 February – put it in the diary if you have things to repair!

If you are interested in green matters and the environment at all levels (individual, local, national, international), send an email to mail2G3S@gmail.com to sign up for our newsletter, or to get more information about our meetings. We are a friendly group and welcome anyone who wants to come along to one of our events or to find out more about how we can live more sustainably. Also see our Facebook page and our website 2g3s.staplefordvillage.org.uk/. **Helen Hale**

Birth Announcement

JAMES and Lori Street of West Chester, Pennsylvania, are delighted to announce the arrival of Jesse on 22 October, a brother for Julian, and a second grandson for Peter and Hilary.

Stapleford Strollers: Walk 129

To Worsted Street and back: a circular walk from Balsham

To get to the start of the walk

THERE are several ways to get to Balsham from Stapleford. A good way is to take the A1307 past Wandlebury, then turn left on to the A11 beyond Babraham. Come off the A11 at the first junction, and then go right for Balsham. The Bell, from which this walk starts, is on the right at the far end of High Street, where the road swings sharp left.

Distance of walk

Just over 3¼ miles. It can get quite muddy in places along the route and that needs to be borne in mind.

OS Map

OS Explorer 209. Many people now use the maps on their Smartphones, but the website the-hug.net offers free map extracts to print off. The route map provided should also help.

Extra Information

The widely used 18C misnomer, Via Devana, for the Roman Road, assumed it was part of the route between the Roman settlements of Colchester and Chester (Devana being the Roman name for Chester). It was not; it ran from near Haverhill to Cambridge and is known as Worsted Street.

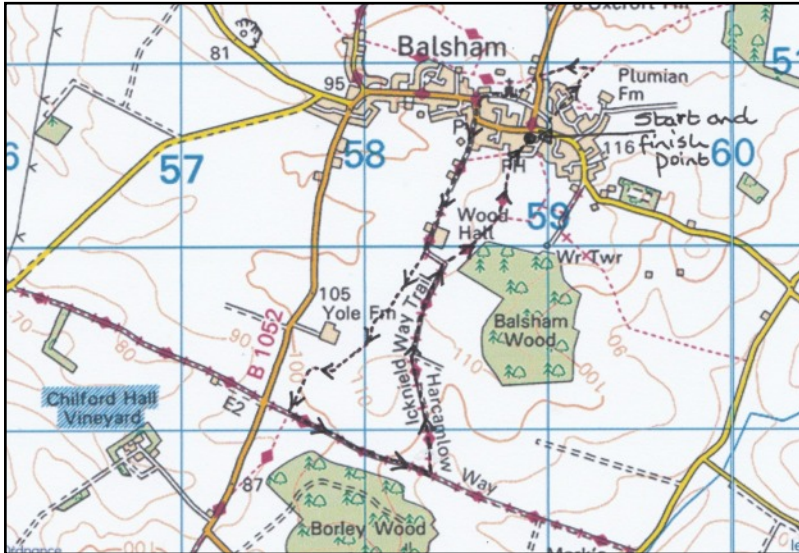
To the northwest of Balsham is Fleam Dyke. This is an Anglo-Saxon earthwork, initially built by them as a defensive feature, but later used as an administrative boundary. It runs for three miles from Balsham to Fulbourn, has a footpath running along it and makes an excellent walk.

Route of the walk

From The Bell, turn right, then cross over the road to go down Burrell Way. Look for an alleyway between gardens at the point where the road swings left and follow the alley until you come to another road. Cross over and go straight across along another path.

Carry on ahead and go through a metal gate into a field. Turn immediately left along the path that skirts the field and follow it until the left-hand corner, cross a footbridge and continue ahead, through a gate, until coming to a road.

Cross the road and follow the path past the left-hand side of the church. After the churchyard carry on ahead, along the road, and go left past 'The Bandstand'. Cross over the main road. Walk down Woodhall Lane to the



right of the coffee shop and carry on until a metal walkers' gate is seen on the right.

Go through the gate and walk between paddocks to two more gates. After these, walk diagonally right across a pasture to another gate in the middle of the far side. Go through and keep walking diagonally right across another field to reach yet one more gate, this time in the far right corner. After the gate, follow the path ahead until you come to a large, cropped field. The path now heads directly ahead across the field and, at the far side, there is a gate. Go through this gate and turn left onto the Roman Road.

Continue on the wide track until a footpath is seen on the left. Turn left here and continue along this track (Icknield Way Trail) until it swings left. At this point, look on the right for a footpath gate and go through it. Carry on beyond, initially between paddocks, going through more gates and a stile until reaching an open, cropped field.

Go straight across the field. Beyond the field is Balsham; walk across an area of grassland leading into the village and then carry on ahead between houses. After the houses, look for a path from the left and, at this point, cross over the end of a cul-de-sac (Bartons Close). Go ahead and cross the end of another part of Bartons Close. Carry on, along a fenced path which leads into the car park of The Bell. **David Barnes**

The Stapleford Strollers do not accept responsibility for any accident or mishap that may happen to any person who follows this route.

A lifetime in the parish

MARTIN Ginger from the *Messenger* team has been to talk with Kay Coe, who at the age of 94 has witnessed many changes in the parish since she moved here in 1958 at the age of 28 with two small children. She is still as sharp as a tack and much of this interview has been edited by her. The growing years have done little to dim her recollections, how, after her arrival, she joined the Women's Institute which boasted a membership of over 90.



St Andrew's was a very welcoming church to newcomers and Kay enjoyed attending. She also became a lifelong member of the Mothers' Union.

At that time Stapleford and Shelford shared three butchers, a dairy, fish shop and a greengrocers. There was a baker who delivered bread, sometimes still warm from the oven. There was a hardware shop and a little wool shop which was very convenient for knitters. There was a traditional grocers with bacon sliced to order and a good post office.

With the influx of more young families there was a new energy. The school expanded and an enthusiastic PTA organised the building of the leisure rooms and the swimming pool. In the 1960s Green Hedges school was built in Bar Lane for children with learning difficulties and had good support. Also in the early 60s the Umbrella Club was formed "to cover everything" from amateur drama to madrigal, singing and other interests. Later the Chestnut Club was formed to cater for older residents and contributed much over 50 years. Sadly, Covid was largely responsible for its demise.

The annual village show was a very important event and for years it always started with a procession of decorated floats.

The village was on the cusp of change from a rural area. There was no Dukes Meadow or Vine Farm. There was no health centre as patients went to surgeries in doctors' houses. Babies were still delivered at home and weekly baby clinics were held in the Shelford Memorial Hall.

So many changes in 60 years. We now have the Arthur Rank Hospice nearby and a new retirement village being built. Also nearby is the Stapleford Granary, a centre for culture, entertainment and the arts. There are still two good pub restaurants. Buses are fairly reliable, and the train service is improving. Hilda Bradford, who many will remember, called the village "an extended family" and the area still has a village feel and identity.

Martin Ginger

Memories of 1930s Stapleford *continued*



BARBARA Asprey left the village school in 1939, and while driving to Cambridge 50 years later she persuaded her husband to divert into Stapleford for a trip down memory lane. Barbara's parents were Stanley and Dorothy Smith who owned the post office and shop, once the hub of village life. After her visit she wrote six articles which were published in

Cambridgeshire Life in 1991.

The Village Institute was the centre of organised social life in the village, but the Post Office was where people called in almost daily to gossip and share news. Barbara writes of her father and mother: "Stanley Smith's first duty of the day was to receive the village mail at 6.30am. Puffing his way through the second cigarette of the day he would plonk the mail on the dining room table. First the mail was sorted into roads, then into house order. As Christmas arrived all the family was called in to help but none could sort as fast as Stanley.

"Sorting finished, the bundles of letters were tied with a special slip knot and placed carefully into a large canvas bag made by the inmates of an unknown HM Prison. Warmly clad Stanley set off on his delivery round pushing a heavy iron-framed bicycle.

"His wife, Dorothy, opened the shop early in good time for the regular customers needing food and fags for the day. Pennies were in short supply during the thirties and many villagers shopped on a daily basis. Some paid at the end of the week while wealthy customers had a monthly account.

"Post delivered, Stanley returned home and Dorothy, in between serving customers, cooked him a huge breakfast. While eating, Stanley was 'at home' to friends and neighbours who entered by the back door, poured themselves a cup of tea and sat down for a good chinwag. Refreshed by food and gossip, Stanley put on his starched white apron and entered the shop.

"Between greeting and serving customers Stanley cut blocks of butter and margarine into half pound blocks, rarely having to add or reduce to the perfect weight. He weighed pounds of sugar into home-made cone shaped bags made from tough blue paper. Sides of bacon were cut up into shoulders, gammons, back and streaky bacon. Most food had to be weighed by hand after being taken from large wooden bins at the front of the

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www.staplefordgranary.org.uk/whats-on/events
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Adults £7 includes glass of mulled wine & mince pie

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(children must be accompanied by an adult)

*Please note that there is an additional cost for the forest grotto & some craft activities

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counter. Biscuits, flour, sugar, dried fruit, dog biscuits, soda crystals and chicken meal. The Post Office counter was a great asset to the business as people needed to buy stamps and collect pensions and felt obliged to buy something from the shop.”

Freda Skinner, known to some as The Old Black Owl, shopped on a daily basis. She was a large conical shaped woman, always dressed in flowing garments of the deepest black. The health of the village was her constant concern and the village shop was the most reliable place to hear the latest news of poor old Harry or Tom who were ‘failing fast’. Mrs. Skinner was the professional ‘layer out’ for the village. One day Barbara asked her cleaning lady what she did and was told, “she gets people ready to meet God.” **Keith Dixon**



King's College Chapel

How this iconic Cambridge landmark came to be

A talk by Paul Shakeshaft

Jubilee Pavilion

Tuesday 10 December at 7.45pm

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Granta Medical Practices

DETAILS of when our surgeries will be open over the Christmas and New Year break are given in the table below.

Please remember to order your repeat prescriptions in plenty of time so that you do not run out of your medication over the holidays. The table shows you when you will be able to collect your prescriptions, depending on the date you place your order.

Don't forget, there are Prescription Collection Points at Sawston, Linton and Shelford. Sign up today via cpicb.grantadispensing@nhs.net to pick up your medication at your convenience over the holidays, 24 hours a

Date	Opening hours	Repeat prescription schedule; order on the day - collect as stated
Friday 20 December	Open as usual	27 December
Saturday 21 December	Open for prebooked appointments only (Sawston/Royston HC)	30 December
Sunday 22 December	Closed	30 December
Monday 23 December	Open as usual	30 December
Tuesday 24 December	Open as usual	31 December
Wednesday 25 December	Closed	2 January
Thursday 26 December	Closed	2 January
Friday 27 December	Open as usual	2 January
Saturday 28 December	Open for pre-booked appointments only (Sawston/Royston HC)	3 January
Sunday 29 December	Closed	3 January
Monday 30 December	Open as usual	3 January
Tuesday 31 December	Open as usual	6 January
Wednesday 1 January	Closed	7 January
Thursday 2 January	Open as usual	7 January
3 January	Open as usual	8 January

day, 7 days a week – including Christmas Day, Boxing Day and New Years' Day.

Be prepared for common health problems by keeping a well-stocked medicine cabinet at home. You can treat many minor illnesses such as colds and coughs, sore throats, and upset stomachs by having a supply of health care essentials such as pain relief (paracetamol/ibuprofen), cough and sore throat remedies, a first aid kit, upset stomach treatment, rehydration treatment and heartburn/indigestion treatment. Having these essentials at home will not only save you time and help you feel better quicker, but will also help save the NHS much-needed resources.

Your local pharmacist can offer you advice and guidance on the best treatment for you. They are available on every high street and in supermarkets, with many open in the evening and at weekends.

Pharmacists can now also prescribe some medications under the Pharmacy First service. Please go to england.nhs.uk/primary-care/pharmacy/pharmacy-services/pharmacy-first/ for further information and eligibility criteria.

Whilst we are closed, if you need urgent medical assistance please use the NHS 111 service. If you have an emergency that poses an immediate threat to life, please ring 999.

For further information on available healthcare services, please go to nhs.uk or our website grantamedicalpractices.co.uk. **Sandra East, Head of Patient Services,** cpicb.grantapatientervices@nhs.net

Tree Project



BY the time you read this there should be some trees and shrubs being planted at the edge of the school field. There is also to be some planting on other public areas on 30 November. We would love some help, either at this session or at a future planting session, please contact

sophiberridge@gmail.com.

See staplefordparishcouncil.gov.uk/stapleford-tree-project for more information.

To register your interest, fill in the form on the leaflet you received through your letterbox, or online at forms.gle/zQvJJZC9zanutgCy7. Don't fear you are overcommitting - all 'adopt a tree' means is that you keep an eye on one near you in the village and give it a good regular watering in dry weather for the first two years! And if you plant a tree in your garden, please send us a photo of it at the above email address. **Helen Hale**

How British rule changed India and changed the British

A talk by Dr. Sean Lang



THIS was a wide-ranging talk covering many aspects of British rule in India and the lifestyle of those who went to live and work there. Sean was able to speak from experience as four generations of his family had lived in India and he was able to illustrate the talk with some family photographs.

British rule started with the East India Company but there was mistrust and dissatisfaction with company leadership which resulted in a widespread mutiny of the Sepoy troops, causing the British government to take possession of the company assets. This uprising in 1857 is sometimes called the First War of Indian Independence. Eventually this huge country of many independent states was absorbed into the British Empire and Queen Victoria became the Empress of India but not every state was under direct British rule. Many smaller states continued to be ruled by their princes, while the big states (called presidencies) each had a governor general.

As in Britain there was a census in 1861 which showed that there were nearly 126,000 British people living in India but only 42,000 were civilians so 84,000 were soldiers and their dependents.

Most of the civilians were administrative staff and they tended to live close together in bungalows which, in spite of the names, were actually grand houses. Sean showed a photo of his grandparents' large bungalow and another of the end of terrace house they lived in when they returned to England. He also showed photos of his grandmother dressed in very ordinary clothes as a young woman in Ireland and another of her in a grand dress in India. For the men 'the club' was where they spent their time socialising, with occasional ladies' nights. The wives spent their time organising the household servants and sometimes in missionary work or teaching. They were well off by the standards of their contemporaries in Britain but had to put up with the heat and tropical diseases, especially malaria.

Until 1911 Calcutta {Kolkata} was the administrative capital of the Raj, but in the summer the whole government moved to Simla in the hill territories where it was cooler. New Delhi, started in 1912 and designed with wide straight avenues and open spaces and impressive administrative



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buildings became the new capital. Edwin Lutyens was involved in the planning and also the design of some of the important buildings.

Indians gradually took over the running of the country - law and order, the railways and businesses - so that by 1947 the British were no longer needed. India was given independence and the British Raj came to an end.

Keith Dixon

Messenger Marketplace

FREE but donations for good causes in Tanzania and Uganda are welcome:

- Man size 'Sant-Ana' electric bike imported by WooshBikes. Ready to go, the claimed range without pedalling is up to 70 miles on the flat.
- Unisex 'Cambridge' model 'Powacycle', battery needs rebuilding (top photo).
- Dawes 'Discovery 501' pedal cycle in good condition.
- 'The Handy' 2,500W Impact Shredding machine.
- Pfaff 6000 knitting machine with stand (lower photo).



Contact Bill or Valerie Powell on 843415.

If you have anything to sell (up to £50), lend (FOC) or give away, email staplefordmessenger@gmail.com with 'Messenger Marketplace' in the subject line. We will accept ads offering free help and also requests for items.

Terms and conditions can be found on the St Andrew's Church website, standrewstapleford.org/Groups/339086/Stapleford_Messenger.aspx. **The Messenger Team**

Want your Christmas tree collected in January?



ARTHUR Rank Hospice Charity's Christmas Tree Recycling Scheme is back and bigger than ever with new postcodes added for 2025!

In partnership with Just Helping, their teams of volunteers will be collecting used Christmas trees from CB1-CB5, CB21-CB24, CB25, SG8 and SG19 from 9 to 11 January. To register your tree (and avoid needles in your car) visit arhc.org.uk/tree-recycling. Registrations will close 5 January.

December at Great Shelford Library

WE will be running our usual events during December.

Story, Rhyme & Duplo Time – Every Tuesday at 10.30am.

For children aged 0 to 4 years. Come and enjoy stories and rhymes led by our wonderful volunteers. This is a free drop-in event. Parents/carers please stay with your children.

Craft & Chat – Every Friday morning 10.30am to 12noon. No need to book.

Tea & Games – Every Friday afternoon 2pm to 3.30pm. No need to book.

Stay and Play – Thursday 12 December. For children aged 0 to 3 years. 2pm to 3.30pm. A relaxed drop in session for families with young children, £2 per family. Toys provided.

LEGO and Duplo Club – Fortnightly, Monday 9 and 23 December 4pm to 5.30pm. Come along and have some fun making Lego models. All materials provided. Suggested donation £1. Suitable for ages 2 to 10.

Children’s Games Club - Fortnightly, Monday 2 and 16 December 4pm to 5.30pm. Come along and have fun. Board and card games provided. Suggested donation £1, no need to book. Parents/carers please stay with your children during all library activities.

Art Club - Every Saturday morning 10.30am to 12noon. Suitable for ages 4 to 10. Drop in event. £1 donation. Parents and carers must supervise their children at all times.

Christmas and New Year Opening Hours

Great Shelford Library will close for Christmas at 1pm on Tuesday 24 December and reopen at 10am on Friday 3 January.

Mel Abbiss, Community Librarian

Library opening hours			
Monday	3pm-7pm	Friday	10am-1pm and 2-6pm
Tuesday	10am-1pm and 2-5pm	Saturday	10am-1pm
Wednesday	10am-1pm	Sunday	Closed
Thursday	Closed		



A royal visit for Wandlebury

CAMBRIDGE
PAST, PRESENT
& FUTURE

ON 5 November HRH the Duke of Edinburgh visited Wandlebury Country Park to help mark the occasion of 70 years since the charity acquired Wandlebury and turned it into Cambridge's first country park.

The Duke's visit began by meeting the charity's staff, volunteers and apprentices from the National Stud at the Godolphin Stallion Memorial located inside Wandlebury ring. Godolphin was one of three horses that were the founders of the modern thoroughbred horse racing, and is reputed to be buried at Wandlebury.

Cambridge PPF CEO James Littlewood and Countryside Manager Ed Wombwell accompanied the Duke on a walk past some of Wandlebury's iconic spots, including the beech woodland and the Iron Age ditch, introducing him to the 2,000 year history of Wandlebury, and the charity's plans to expand the park and create new habitats. The Duke met Wandlebury's extremely popular weekly healthy walking group along the way, and stopped for a coffee at the park's pop up café The Coffee Station.

The Duke visited Wandlebury's Education Centre where he was introduced to volunteers from the charity's wider projects, including Hinxton Watermill, Bourn Windmill, Coton Nature Reserve and the Blue Plaque scheme who spoke about these heritage and nature sites and their importance to the Cambridge area. He also met children from St Luke's C of E primary school



Photo: Cambridge Past, Present & Future

visiting as part of one of Wandlebury's Iron Age education projects.

The Duke met a large crowd of Wandlebury's members, visitors, supporters and corporate partners who had gathered for the finale of the visit, to plant a tree as part of a new copse of three trees - a new project to transform farmland into wildlife habitat.

Wandlebury donors and supporters will be able to bid to plant the two other trees that will eventually reside next to the Duke's tree. Please contact Milly Iturra to sponsor one of these very special trees, development@cambridgeppf.org.

The Wandlebury 70th birthday appeal is live on the Cambridge PPF website, cambridgeppf.org/wandlebury-70th-birthday-appeal.



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Puzzle corner

4 x 4

Identify the four groups of four clues and the connections between the clues in each group

MAGDALENE	TAYLOR	LISTER	ROWNTREE
JESUS	HELLER	POPPINS	BANKS
STALIN	HURLEY	BYRNE	BATISTUTA
GASKELL	BERRY	ROSE	GARCIA MARQUEZ

Soundalikes

Solve the clues.

All the answers sound like a word that can be found in the Christmas story as told in Luke 1:5-2:20 (NIV Bible, 2011)

e.g. smell (5) = scent, which sounds like SENT

female sheep (3)

precipitation (4)

first murder victim (4)

club (4)

opposite over hypotenuse (4)

de facto Swiss capital (4)

engrossed (4)

town 10 miles SE of Stevenage (4)

space for ship (5)

herb in the mint family (5)

moan (5)

sedate (5)

thank you in Provence (5)

creator of Taskmaster (surname) (5)

portion (5)

Andrea, Caroline, Sharon & Jim (5)

setting (5)

completely (6)

financial gain (6)

chess piece (6)

place of pilgrimage (7)

Houdini's country of birth (7)

at a greater distance (7)

gifts (8)

Set by Hermes – answers on page 51

Not a good call

BT's move to digital voice technology and the effect on rural dwellers



The countryside charity
Cambridgeshire
and Peterborough

FOR some time we've been concerned regarding the move by BT and other Internet Service Providers (ISPs) to replace the old copper wire telephone system with digital voice technology (also known as Voice over Internet Protocol – VoIP). BT originally hoped that this work would be completed by December 2025. However national concern and campaigning, particularly regarding the impact this would have on the elderly and vulnerable, has seen this deadline moved to end-January 2027.

We've become aware of other issues that may seriously and negatively affect rural dwellers and rurally-located businesses. Our concerns include:

- **Mobile phone signal:** There will be an impact on those living in rural areas where there is no or variable mobile signal, and those who do not use computers. This is likely to have a particular impact on the elderly, as around 95% of those over 65 still have a landline in their home and may not necessarily have a broadband connection.
- **Broadband servers:** As well as good mobile phone signal, digital voice technology is reliant on stable and secure broadband provider servers. What happens if servers go down – possibly for days – which has happened to at least one server run by an ISP, removing broadband from some of their customers right across the country including some in Cambridgeshire?
- **Telecare devices and alarms:** The switch to digital landlines will affect telecare devices and other equipment in the home and workplace. It was understood that BT would adapt their Redcare alarm service to operate across digital landlines. BT have now made the decision to withdraw their Redcare alarm signalling services from the market completely by 1 August 2025. Consequently, anyone with monitored electronic systems that use BT Redcare or any other landline signalling will need to make alternative arrangements before the cut-off date. The onus is on the telecare/alarm user to contact their device supplier and telephone provider, to check if it will work with the new system, or if upgrades are needed.
- **Power cuts:** a digital phone will only work in a power cut if it has a battery back-up, because it uses home electricity. Providers are advising people to use mobile phones as a backup. For those dependent on a

landline phone, providers should offer a free of charge 'resilience solution'. This could be a mobile phone (assuming you have a signal!) or a battery backup unit that connects to your landline phone and provides power in case of a power cut – these batteries will run out in the event of a prolonged power cut.

- **Batteries:** More rechargeable batteries, means increased risk of fire and explosion from them, as has happened with battery-powered e-bikes and scooters.

Silver Voices (silvervoices.co.uk) campaigned for the current deadline of December 2025 to be extended and enhanced protections to be developed and introduced; we support their campaign.

Age UK has more detailed information about the changes – see ageuk.org.uk.

For more information about CPRE Cambridgeshire and Peterborough, visit cprecambs.org.uk. **Tracey Hipson**

Peter Pan

Little Shelford pantomime 2025

A PANTOMIME with a difference. Lost boys who really do get lost. Featuring Gary and Colin as Mrs Hooks one and two. A pair of Shakespearean crocodiles and three twins (THREE twins?). A team of construction workers who come to the rescue so the show can go on, and on, and on

This is the Little Shelford pantomime 2025. An exciting mix of traditional and something else altogether. Stuffed with familiar characters and some you will never have heard of (or would rather not hear of again). You just cannot afford to miss it:

Wednesday 8 to Saturday 11 January at 7pm
in Little Shelford Memorial Hall.

Tickets available (£5 children; £10 adults) from 1 December from any of the following:

Little Shelford – Rachel Ford – 07974 698495,
Great Shelford – Holly Gregory - 07876 615753,
Stapleford – Sarah Coppendale - 842498,
Sawston – Susan Hunter - 07796 295167,
or e-mail coppendales@btinternet.com.



STAPLEFORD CHORAL SOCIETY

Conductor: Adam Pounds

Christmas Concert



7.30pm
14th Dec



£12 adults, children free



Henry Morris Hall,
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www.staplefordchoral.org.uk

Magog Singers



MAGOG Singers end of term concert will take place on Tuesday 10 December at 3pm in the Jubilee Pavilion.

This promises to be a delightful half hour of music in the heart of the village.

Light refreshments will be served and there will be a cash collection for charity. **Kathleen Foreman**

Sawston Cinema

Thursday 5 December 7pm (doors open 6.30pm) 102 minutes £5
Wicked Little Letters (15)

Based on a stranger-than-fiction true story, 'Wicked Little Letters' follows two neighbours: deeply religious local Edith Swan (Olivia Colman) and rowdy Irish migrant Rose Gooding (Jessie Buckley). When Edith and fellow residents start to receive wicked letters full of unintentionally hilarious profanities, foul-mouthed Rose is charged with the crime.

Thursday 12 December 7pm (doors open 6.30pm) 108 minutes £5
Typist Artist Pirate King (12A)

The growing friendship between two women as they hit the road in an electric car looking for endings and reconciliation.

Marven Centre, Sawston Village College, New Road, Sawston CB22 3BP
Tel: 712825. Email: cinema@sawstonvc.org

Puzzle corner answers

4 x 4

MAGDALENE, POPPINS, BERRY, ROSE – famous Marys
 LISTER, ROWNTREE, HELLER, STALIN – famous Josephs
 TAYLOR, BANKS, HURLEY, GASKELL – famous Elizabeths
 JESUS, BYRNE, BATISTUTA, GARCIA MARQUEZ – famous Gabriels

Soundalikes

ewe (YOU), rain (REIGN), Abel (ABLE), wood (WOULD), sin(e) (SIGN), Bern (BURN), rapt (WRAPPED), Ware (WHERE), berth (BIRTH), thyme (TIME), whine (WINE), staid (STAYED), merci (MERCY), Horne (HORN), piece (PEACE), Corrs (CAUSE), scene (SEEN), wholly (HOLY), profit (PROPHET), knight (NIGHT), Lourdes (LORD/LORD'S), Hungary (HUNGRY), farther (FATHER), presents (PRESENCE)

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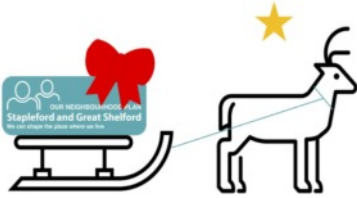
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The Travelling Companions, Augustus Stapleford Esq., 1862
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A neighbourhood plan-shaped Christmas present for our villages?



AT its November meeting, Stapleford parish councillors voted to approve the submission to the local planning authority of the Stapleford and Great Shelford Neighbourhood Plan and all of its supporting documents. Great Shelford parish councillors had the opportunity to

do the same at their full council meeting on 20 November. Whilst this is far from a perfunctory process, at the time of writing this article (8 November) there are signs of a propitious outcome. The NP is, after all, being produced by a volunteer group of residents and councillors on behalf of the two parish councils; the councils have received monthly progress updates over the past three years and authorised various aspects of it along the way; and my detailed report on the submission version of the NP was met favourably by Great Shelford councillors in October.

All being well, we will soon be able to announce submission of the NP to South Cambs District Council via parish council websites and local Facebook pages, although you may also hear my enormous sigh of relief carrying across the fields.

Once submitted, SCDC will conduct a 'Regulation 16' consultation over five weeks to receive comments on our submission NP. These comments will be passed onto an independent examiner appointed by SCDC (and agreed by the parish councils) to determine whether our NP meets the legally binding 'basic conditions' required of it. I'll write more about the examination process another time; suffice to say that if the examiner ticks the box against each of the basic conditions, then there will be only one more hurdle to jump (a community yes/no referendum) before the 21 planning policies in our NP become legally binding and used in the determination of all planning applications coming forward in Stapleford and Great Shelford parishes.

All that remains for now is to thank residents for their continued support and input, and to wish everyone a very merry Christmas. **Jenny Flynn, Chair, Stapleford and Great Shelford Neighbourhood Plan steering group**

Parish Council Chair's report for November

JENNY Flynn (Chair of Stapleford and Great Shelford Neighbourhood Plan steering group) attended the meeting. The plan is almost ready to be submitted to Greater Cambridge Shared Planning. A vote of thanks was given to Jenny and the steering group, and to the planning consultant Rachel Hogger, for their work in preparing the plan which will, when finally ratified, influence every decision on planning.

Mrs Flynn aired concerns over the future of development and the weight the Neighbourhood Plan will have in the decision-making process, specifically whether the Cambridge 2050 Development Corporation will be required to accept the Neighbourhood Plan as supplementary planning guidance when development around Cambridge, and potentially in Stapleford and Great Shelford, occurs. Concerns were expressed over national schemes and whether the Neighbourhood Plan would have any influence. Major infrastructure projects such as East West Rail could override the Local Plan as such projects have their own status. It is important that the Neighbourhood Plan is made and is in line with the 2026 Local Plan.

Mr Brian Scally from Blu Ink Architects attended the meeting and discussed the proposal for refurbishing the Pavilion to date, including updating the Parish Council on converting the roof from a cold to a warm construction to increase thermal efficiency, new thermally efficient doors and windows, potential improvements to walls subject to further investigation, and internal works. A scope of works and cost plan are to be produced. The project will go to tender in the new year. Grants will be sought towards the cost of the work.

Cllr Michael Gatward was appointed Stapleford Jubilee Pavilion Refurbishment Project Lead.

Cllrs Fane and Jackson-Wood reported on CSET (Cambridge South East Transport). A TWQAO (traffic works order application) for the Busway is being progressed but funding has still not been agreed. East West Rail consultation commenced on 14 November.

UK Power Networks' work is now completed in Stapleford.

Overhanging vegetation on the footways was discussed. In some areas overhanging vegetation makes the walking area narrow to unacceptable width. This is discrimination to anyone with a physical or visual disability. Overgrown vegetation on footways can be reported to the local highway

authority, which is responsible for removing it, and for the repair of uneven footways. The landowner is responsible for cutting back vegetation that overhangs the path, but the highway authority can enforce this, at a cost to the landowner. The Parish Council is able to provide advice but has no statutory responsibility. It is strongly recommended that any complainant takes photos and, if possible, measurements and reports this directly on the Cambridgeshire County Council website as discrimination under the Disability Discrimination Act 1995.

A defibrillator cabinet has been installed in the telephone box next to the Rose pub and is awaiting the installation of the defibrillator. It will be registered shortly and will then be operational.

The government is consulting on remote council meetings and members of the public are invited to complete the consultation by going to gov.uk/regional-and-local-government/local-government and scrolling down to Policy Papers and Consultations and then following the link to 'Enabling remote attendance and proxy voting at local authority meetings'.

The next Parish Council meeting is on 5 December at 7pm in the Pavilion. Members of the public are invited to attend. **Gillian Pett, Parish Council Chair**

Royal British Legion



THIS year has been a busy one for the Sawston and District Branch, with the highlight being the D-Day80 event held in the Challis Gardens in Sawston during the summer, with more than one thousand people attending.

It was a wonderful day bringing village communities together and raising funds for the Poppy Appeal, our branch and for local charities. Next year, we hope to do something similar to mark both VE Day and VJ Day.

We hold a Branch Meeting on the last Wednesday of every month with the exception of December. The next Branch Meeting will be on 29 January at the Chapelfield Way (just off Link Road) Community Centre, Sawston beginning at 7pm. The meetings include a speaker with the next one intriguingly titled 'Life under the ocean waves' given by Reece Mills.

We also meet for breakfast once a month at the Plough, Duxford – the next one being 25 January at 9.30am, so please do come along and make new friends. Neither the meeting or the Breakfast Club is limited to members only. **Ann Barton, Branch Secretary, 07898 732307**

Stapleford Parish Council

staplefordparishcouncil.gov.uk



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Stapleford Parish Council normally meets publicly on the first Thursday of every month. Please check our website for the latest details



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