

# STOKE ASH & THWAITE

Early Happy Christmas to you all



*December & January*  
NEWSLETTER  
2023/4

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## Contact List of Organizations for Stoke Ash & Thwaite

Editor	Gordon Leggett	01379 678450
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S/Ash Village Hall (bookings)	Brenda Lock	01379 678383
Management Committee	Geoff Tancred	01379 678568
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### Stoke Ash & Thwaite has 7 Parish Councillors.

If you wish to raise any matters concerning the villages you can do so by attending Parish Council meetings posted on the Parish Council notice board and website or by directly contacting one of the councillors or the Stoke Ash & Thwaite Parish clerk Lynne Cockerton on 01728 862001 [lynne.cockerton@btopenworld.com](mailto:lynne.cockerton@btopenworld.com)

### Stoke Ash & Thwaite Parish Councillors

Cllr Tony Pulham (chair)	07850 385914	<a href="mailto:tony@hpfltd.co.uk">tony@hpfltd.co.uk</a>
Cllr Val Lane	01379 678568	<a href="mailto:vallane2002@yahoo.com">vallane2002@yahoo.com</a>
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Cllr Christine Maisey	01379 730072	<a href="mailto:maisey686@gmail.com">maisey686@gmail.com</a>

**Please note** anticipated Parish Council meeting dates at Stoke Ash Village Hall for 2024. These are on Thursday evenings at 7.30pm, 18th January, 21st March, 16th May, 18th July, 19th September and the 21st November.

**The copy deadline for ALL issues this year will be the 10th of alternate months and for advertisers the 12th**

This edition of the newsletter has been produced in good faith but errors and omissions may occur during the process of production. Please let us know if this is the case so that they may be corrected.

*Please note that the views expressed in readers letters are not necessarily those of the editors. We cannot be held responsible for the accuracy of material submitted for publication; however we reserve the right to include, edit or omit letters as we think appropriate.*

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Well it's that time of year again when we say goodbye to autumn and winter is now around the corner. Summer holidays are behind us and the cold and wet is upon us.

In this issue I have put an extract from a letter from our local MP Dr Daniel Poulter as it relates to the extreme weather and recent flooding caused by storm Babet.

Most of us were affected by it but some came off a lot worse than others. I hope none of you blew up your engines in your car by trying to get through the floods. I was told that there were about 20 cars abandoned along the Wickham to Finningham road so I trust yours was not one of them.

We all have our thoughts and opinions as to why it was worse in some places than others but lets be careful before we start the blame game. Thwaite councillors have already had a meeting with our chair of parish council Tony Pulham on November 9th and after consulting a detailed map of rivers and ditches with expected water flow directions it was found that there were certain 'pinch points' that need to be addressed which will need consultation with River authorities, Highways Department, Farmers, landowners and our local district and county councillors. This will relate both to Thwaite and Stoke Ash.

No one authority or person can resolve the situation and there is a call for all to meet and put forward an urgent combined plan before floods happen again.

Sad to say, our chair Tony Pulham might have been one of the worse affected as I have included some pictures of his flooded house and garden.

We do welcome into the village Richard & Louise Nevill who unfortunately had their home at Framsdon flooded and will be staying in the village until such time as their home is dried out and ready to live in again. They have been advised by their insurance company that it could take 6-9 months!

Thank you to those in the village who have helped Richard and Louise in their sad ordeal, you know who you are.

Thank you to those in our villages who helped out their neighbours and those who took their spades to clear out the gullies along the road edges to allow the water to get to the ditches and rivers. Thank you also to those who owned tractors and helped people to get home from work, including our doctors, nurses and support staff.

We will be able to inform you about rectifying the 'pinch points' more once we have heard from the various authorities concerned.

As this will be the last magazine this year can I thank you all for supporting it with stories and pictures and I trust you will have more for us in the New Year. We wish you all a Happy Christmas not forgetting the Reason for the Season!

*Cllr Leggett*

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# Cllr Val Lane

I was born within the sound of Bow Bells in the London Hospital in September 1953. Like my two older sisters, I was going to be called John, however being another girl they thankfully decided against it. 18 months later my brother arrived and so my parents eventually got their wish of having a son called John. I remember the family home as always being busy with laughter, visitors and kittens. My father had grown up in Bow and was very much an 'Eastender' (bearing absolutely no relation to the BBC's version of east end life). He served in the army being part of the Pay Corps and spent some time in Belgium during the war. My mother was a nurse and had come from a 'well-to-do' family, so they were quite different in their upbringing and approaches to life. One thing they did have in common was their faith and they were very much involved with the local Baptist Church which greatly influenced my upbringing.



I grew up in Seven Kings which was then part of Greater London. My childhood was a happy one having the wonderful freedom of the early 60s, disappearing to the park all day with my brother and fishing for 'tiddlers' without mum having to worry about us – we always reappeared in time for tea! I passed the '11 plus' and followed my sister to grammar school where I was viewed with high hopes by the teachers as the little sister of a high flyer. Unfortunately, (as far as my achievements were concerned) I met my husband to be when I was 15, lost interest in school and scraped by with 5 GCEs.

I was keen to start work and earn money and my dad did not discourage me. My first job was in the city at Barclays Bank DCO (Dominion, Colonial & Overseas) working in the Personnel department. I learned more about the world's geography there than I ever did in a classroom! After a few years, I decided that commuting was not for me and started work locally at the London Electricity Board where I acquired a good knowledge of slot meters and East London geography. After a couple of years, I realised I missed the excitement of London life and returned to the city working for an American Bank, then returning to Barclays which had been rebranded 'International' working in the Personnel and Payroll department.

I married my husband at the ridiculously young age of 20 and went on to have two sons, now aged 45 and 42. When my first son started school, I took a part time job as a local taxi controller, and then in the accounts department of a local hospital.



After my divorce in 1988 I struggled financially but was grateful for the wonderful support of my parents through the stress of being a single parent. I went to evening classes and obtained a GCSE in Law, going on to pass the A level the following year. I had hoped to go on to study for a Law degree, but without financial support from my ex-husband this was not feasible.

My interest in law led me to commence my career with the Probation service, working in Southend Magistrates Court and then the Colchester Courts which coincided with my move from Essex to Suffolk in 1998. Much as I enjoyed working in the Magistrates courts, I needed a further challenge and transferred to Ipswich where I was one of the Probation team serving Ipswich Crown Court. I loved this job; interviewing and writing reports, prosecuting breaches and providing updates about offenders progress (or otherwise) on orders and licences. Every day was different and working alongside barristers, judges, mental health services, solicitors, court staff and the prison service was enjoyable and stimulating. It could be described as 'working with Judges and junkies and everything in between'. I retired from the Probation Service in 2018.



I obtained my motorcycle licence at the age of 44 and travelled on my 500cc bike with friends to the Catalunya area of Spain for a wonderful holiday touring the mountains. I enjoyed it so much, I did it again (upgraded to a 650cc) the following year! I learned to fly a glider at an airfield in Essex and on a singles holiday in Turkey a few years later, I obtained my PADI certificate (diving) and jumped off a mountain at 6000 feet in a paraglider.



My partner Geoff, and I moved to Stoke Ash in 2012 and I have to say this is the best ever place to live! How lovely to wake up to this glorious countryside, and the peace and quiet (it's strange how the A140's noise seems to disappear after a while). When we moved to Stoke Ash, we thought we were just buying a place to live, but what we didn't appreciate at the time was the friendliness of the community we were moving in to. We were made to feel so welcome. I was invited to the WI within days of moving in and after being a member for several years I was eventually persuaded to become president. I am also treasurer for All Saints church and secretary and treasurer for the village hall. Any free time is spent time trying to keep some control of the garden, cycling, knitting, learning to crochet, doing jigsaw puzzles and spending time with crafty friends in the Thwaite 'Craft, Knit & Natter' group. Geoff and I enjoy walking our dogs, Ben and Molly and we love travelling, both in England (in our caravan) and in Europe, especially France.

I have a 4 year old grandson and a granddaughter, born in October who live with my elder son and his partner in Eastwood, Essex. My transgender daughter lives in Surrey.

In the few years that I have been a Parish Councillor, I have found it to be interesting and challenging. Although it is at the bottom of the politics chain, it is an important and integral part of village life and is an opportunity to make a difference, and to serve this wonderful community of Stoke Ash & Thwaite.



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# Remembrance Day

On Saturday November 11th at 11.00hrs, some of us met in Stoke Ash All Saints churchyard to remember those from our villages who lost their lives during the last two World wars, to lay a wreath and to give thanks for the freedom we enjoy today.

Many of us have never experienced the pain and suffering of war and it really came home to me on the Sunday at the Baptist Church when we listened to the video clip 'In Flanders Fields by John McCrae' (you can find this on Youtube).



The video clip is based on three war poems to life. During the first World War, Canadian physician Lieutenant-Colonel John McCrae wrote the poem on May 3rd 1915 after presiding over the funeral of a friend and fellow soldier.

This brings to light the references to the red poppies that grew over the graves of the fallen soldiers at that time. It's so easy for us to forget and also to find fault when we should be the most grateful people in the world, yes our politicians and leaders are far from perfect but we must remember that if the talking stops and people are not truthful, the outcome is not good.

We must have law and order and respect for those who are willing to stand and act on our behalf and each one of us can make a difference to our village, towns and cities if we are willing to do our part.

Please be encouraged that what our parents, grand parents and great grandparents did for us we must also do for our own children and grand children, to love them and create a law abiding society.



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**All proceeds go to help the village of Thwaite.**

**latest being £1000 in 2022 and also in 2023.**

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**January 24th, February 28th and March 27th 2024**

The meal is primarily for those over 65 in the Stoke Ash & Thwaite area who would like to meet up with others who may be living alone and would like to have a meal and chat  
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# Stoke Ash & Thwaite Parish Council – report on meeting held 21 September 2023

Parish Council membership – three vacancies remain for Stoke Ash. Our members would be very pleased to hear from any Stoke Ash parishioner, 18 years and over who may be interested in joining the Council. It is important that all vacancies are filled to ensure the village is properly represented at this lower tier of local government. Meetings are held bi-monthly, January, March, May, July, September and November at Stoke Ash Village Hall. The work of the council covers recommendations to the District Council on planning applications, overseeing the finances of the parish council, monitoring highways, public footpaths, health and safety issues and generally ensuring the wellbeing of both Stoke Ash and Thwaite. The role of a parish councillor can be a rewarding one and the diversity arising from the different enthusiasms and interests of individual councillors to be celebrated. Please do get in touch with an existing councillor or the clerk if you think you may be interested, **we would be very pleased to hear from you.**

Public Session – two parishioners attended the meeting to raise individual concerns. Firstly, delivery drivers regularly parking in a private drive on Roman Way. The resident was advised this should be regarded as an obstruction, photographs should be taken and incidents reported as soon as possible to the police and the delivery company concerned. The other query concerned ditch piping work at Hill Farm which it was stated was causing disturbance and destruction of a great crested newt habitat. It was reported that the incident had been reported to Mid Suffolk District Council planning and District Councillor Tim Weller was in contact with the resident regarding any action to be taken. In the meantime, if the work involved disturbance of a wildlife habitat, any further incidents should be reported as soon as possible to the police and it was understood the rural police department would be able to take action.

Holiday Lets – The Street, Stoke Ash – further incidents of disturbance had been reported. The Parish Council reinforced the need to record the date and time of any incidents and that these were again reported as soon as possible to Environmental Health at MSDC or the police. The Parish Council requested that it was kept informed.

20's Plenty – the possibility of a 20mph speed limit in The Street, Stoke Ash was raised. County Cllr Stringer stated some villages had 20's Plenty signs but these were advisory and not enforceable. A 20mph speed limit would require an application to County Highways with data and evidence backing the application.

**Date of next meeting: Thursday 16 November 2023, 7.30pm at The Village Hall, Stoke Ash. ALL WELCOME**

# South Hartismere Benefice

December Newsletter 2023



*'All is strange, all is journey, and at the same time all is well'*

These were the words that a recent writer used to describe a 17th century painting of *The Flight into Egypt* - that moment at the end of the Christmas story when the Holy Family (Mary and Joseph and the infant Jesus) escaped the murderous fury of King Herod. The picture, reproduced here, is by Adam Elsheimer (1578-1610): half of it shows the night sky and its reflection in the water below; in the centre is the Holy Family, lit by a single lantern; on the left is the welcoming glow of a shepherds' fire.

The words seem to me particularly appropriate to the whole Christmas story. The elements in that story are certainly *strange*. We have angels, we have virgin conception, we have shepherds leaving their sheep to look for a baby, and we have wandering magicians following a star. And there is *journey*: Joseph's journey of acceptance of what has happened to him and his intended bride; the long hike to Bethlehem for them and the Magi; the desperate escape to Egypt. And underlying it all, the sense of the long and difficult road that lies ahead for this child.

It is because the Christmas story has all these elements that it speaks so powerfully to us. We certainly live in strange times: we have wars that we never thought would happen again; we are more than ever aware of our vulnerability to pandemics; we see only too clearly the fragility of our beautiful world. And what a journey we are on, technologically and in so many other ways: assumptions, certainties, expectations, all changing inexorably. The Holy Family were on a journey into the unknown, and so are we.

How can we be sure that, at the same time, all will be well? We cannot know how it will work out, but we can trust that we are in safe hands - that the pain and the cruelty in the world will not have the last word. Kindness, compassion, and love are somehow truer: they feel more how things are meant to be. In the child whose birth we celebrate at Christmas, we catch a glimpse of reality, a sight of the God who made us, and will love us to the end. In his company we can say, in the words of the old hymn: "It is well, it is well with my soul".

*All is strange, all is journey ... and all is well*

Alan

## **News from the Parishes:**

Welcome to: Swanley Crisp baptised at Thorndon

## **In Loving memory:**

Keith Pawsey (Yaxley); Eileen Philips (Gislingham)

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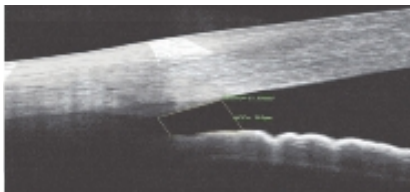
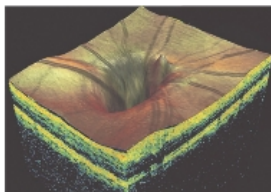




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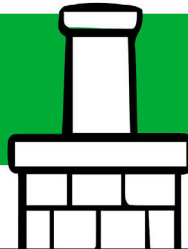
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## WORSHIP

- Sunday 10 December at 3.00pm – Carols
- Sunday 14 January at 10.30am – Holy Communion

For all other services around the Benefice, please refer to the village and church notice- boards. All details are also on-line and on Facebook:  
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/southhartismerechurches>

## CHRISTMAS TREE FESTIVAL

This is to be held in the church on:

- Saturday 2 December – 11am-4pm
- Sunday 3 December – 1pm-4pm
- Wednesday 6 December – 1pm-3pm

Grand Draw takes place at 3pm on Wednesday 6th



## BOOKS AND JIGSAWS

Books and jigsaws are always on sale in the church porch.  
(The outer door is always unlocked, but is stiff to open)

## JUMBLE SALE

We will be holding our next Jumble Sale in the spring of next year – date and times in next Newsletter.

## FUNERALS, BAPTISMS and WEDDINGS

For all enquiries, please phone or email -

Reverend Canon Susan Loxton, Rural Dean of Hartismere & Hoxne Deanery on:  
Telephone: 01379 388493; email: [revloxtongmail.com](mailto:revloxtongmail.com)

## THANK YOU

I wish to take this opportunity to thank everyone who has helped in so many different ways in keeping the church running and keeping the churchyard and car park tidy during this last year.

A very big thank you to everyone. Without your help and support the church will CLOSE.

I wish everyone of you a Happy Christmas and a Peaceful New Year.

Love and God Bless

*June*

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Please visit our website [www.gislinghamplaygroup.com](http://www.gislinghamplaygroup.com) or phone us on 01379 788934

\*\*\*\*\*



Our clerk Lynne Cockerton has received a letter from our local MP Dr Daniel Poulter which contains thanks and advice after the recent flooding caused by Storm Babet. I have asked Cllr Tancred if he could post this on our website as the letter is addressed to 'Dear Fellow Local Resident'.

Please see below an extract from that letter if you have had your home impacted by these recent floods:

**RE: Support with Flooding**

I am very sorry that your home has been affected by the recent flooding, caused by Storm Babet. The flooding has caused widespread damage throughout Suffolk, and this was probably the worst flooding in our area for over 100 years. I believe the meteorological term for what has occurred is a weather bomb, and I suspect there is very little that could have been done to have prevented the floods. As you are probably aware, I was also personally impacted and had to abandon my car and carry my young family to safety, and my constituency office was flooded and remains unusable.

I am grateful to the many community volunteers who have rallied to support the residents and businesses that have been affected. I have spent the last few days visiting homes in the area to offer my help and support to those in need and I have raised the urgent need for support for Suffolk's flood-impacted homes directly with the Prime Minister, Rishi Sunak. Thanks to my intervention on behalf of flood affected residents and businesses in our area, the Government will now be providing extra support from the Flood Recovery Framework.

The Flood Recovery Framework provides support for immediate flood recovery costs. The Government passes this funding through local councils directly to householders. This Government funding includes:

- A Community Recovery Grant – up to £500 per flood affected household to help with immediate recovery costs;
- Council Tax Discounts of up to 100% – passed on to householders for the duration that they remain out of their homes;
- Up to £5000 of funding to help rebuild and future-proof the house against future flooding.

Full details on the Flood Recovery Fund can be found at: [Government announces support for flood-hit areas - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/news/government-announces-support-for-flood-hit-areas)

I would urge you to apply for this Government funding through your local council. If you would like help to do this, please contact me or my office and I shall be happy to help.

I have also included some further links below, which may also provide further guidance to support with the flood recovery process:

<https://www.gov.uk/after-flood>

**Working for the people of Central Suffolk and North Ipswich**

*All correspondence should be addressed to the House of Commons*

Tel: 020 7219 7038 Email: [daniel.poulter.mp@parliament.uk](mailto:daniel.poulter.mp@parliament.uk) Web: [www.drdanielpoulter.com](http://www.drdanielpoulter.com)



Height of the river where the tree landed  
Deadmans Lane, Stoke Ash



Stoke Ash village hall



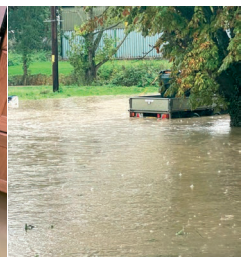
No go van at Earl Soham



Mendlesham Glebe corner



Tony Pulhams yard, garden and  
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# Stoke Ash WI



The speaker's subject for the September meeting was **The Tithe War in Suffolk**. The speaker was **Robert Halliday** and he had a very rich knowledge of the subject. The subject was a very interesting issue, made all the more fascinating because it was such a local story.

The tithe dates back to the Middle Ages, when the Roman Catholic church made everyone pay them 10% of their earnings. Gradually, over the centuries, the practice mostly died out, leaving only farmers being obliged by law to pay the tithe. Sometimes when they hadn't the cash to pay the annual tithe, they would give goods or land to the value of the 10%. This helped the church become very large landowners.

The farmers did what they could by sticking together to try to foil the attempts to get the money from them. Mr AG Mobbs, was the head of the Suffolk Tithe Payers' Association in 1931. He made it plain that anyone co-operating with authorities to seize farmers' goods would be ostracised.

In the 1930's a farmer in Stoke by Clare refused to pay his tithe, so bailiffs were called in to seize his property and take it to auction. Many local people, who disagreed with this law, went to the auction and agreed between themselves that they wouldn't outbid one another on the lots, so they bought much of the property for very small sums of money and gave it back to the farmer. The tithe due was £100, the auction raised around £5. This happened on several occasions, with the bailiffs hardly getting any money for all their efforts.

Doreen Wallace, who was the wife of Rowland Rash, a farmer from Wortham, was a well-known writer during the 1930's and made quite a noise about the unfairness of the tithes. She and her husband wouldn't pay the money to the church so, again, the bailiffs were sent in. However, not wanting to make the job too easy for them, the farmer had dug a very large ditch around the farmyard just before they were due to arrive and had felled a tree which happened to fall across the drive to the farm! This led to a 19 day standoff. During this time, Oswald Mosley's black shirts (fascists) tried to muscle in on the action, as they often did, but were mostly arrested for inciting a breach of the peace.

Unfortunately, the goods were eventually seized and taken to an auction in the north of England so local farmers couldn't buy them back at low prices. Doreen Wallace eventually wrote a book entitled 'The Tithe War', and there is a memorial stone still in place on the land owned by the Rash family at Wortham.

There were many instances of this kind of treatment of farmers around the county, including at Elmsett Hall, where 3 haystacks owned by Charles Westren were to be seized. Apparently, no local hauliers would transport the hay, so a company from Cambridge was called in. They turned up without pitchforks, so they had to go to Ipswich to buy some! Meanwhile, many local workers were given the day off and many went to Elmsett to make a nuisance of themselves at the Hall. Eventually the haulier gave up trying to get the load away. There is another memorial in Elmsett to commemorate the occasion.

Eventually, after many instances of local protest, the tithe was abolished in the 1970's, so farmers no longer had to pay money to the church. It was a surprise to me how recently this practice came to an end as I'd heard of it, but had wrongly assumed it was stopped a long time before then.

**In October, we had a hands-on crafting evening.** Each member took an empty wine bottle and a paper Christmas serviette to the meeting. We were shown by a couple of members from another local WI how to split the layers of the serviette and shred them, keeping the plain and decorated layers separated. Once they were in small pieces, we had to spread PVA glue on the bottle and stick the plain paper, followed by a layer of decorated paper onto the bottle. Once they were fully covered, we wrapped some sisal twine around the neck to give it a neat finish, then a string of delicate fairy lights, powered by little batteries in a fake bottle cork were inserted. When the lights were switched on, they glowed through the designs on the bottles and gave them a pretty festive look. A very pleasant and interesting new craft learned, that can easily be repeated using bottles and jars of all kinds – just ready for Christmas.

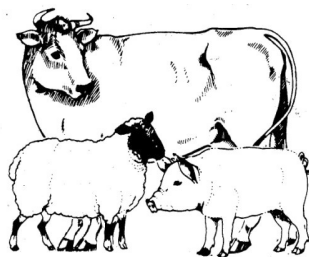
**Our programme for meetings is published on the village website and on our dedicated WI page (<http://sefwi.org.uk/institutes/stoke-ash>). Please check it out and do get in touch, or just come along on the night. Meetings are held on the second Wednesday of each month at the village hall, starting at 7.30pm.**

**You'll get a warm welcome.**





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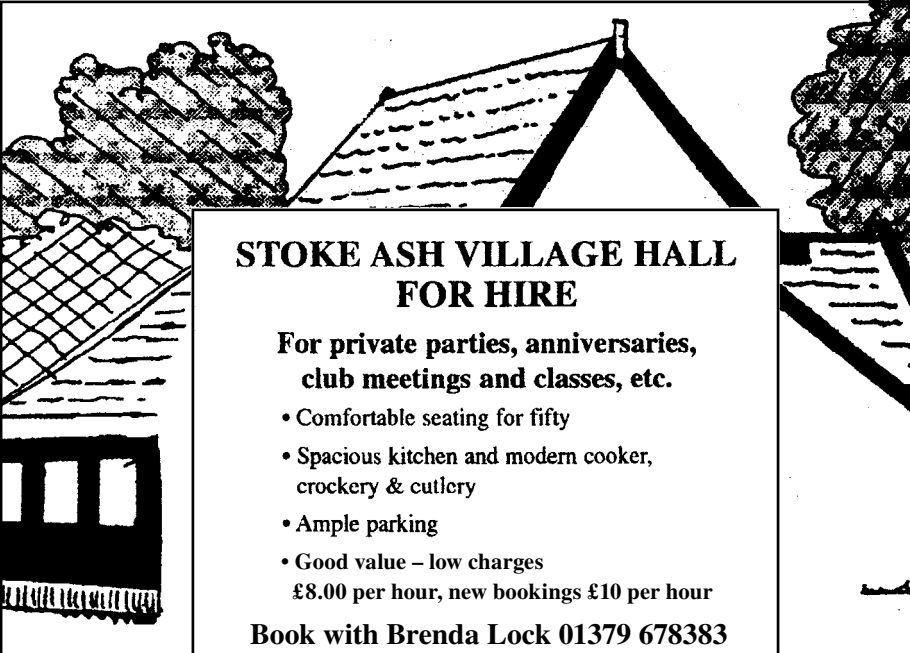
## Macmillan Coffee Morning - Friday 29th Sept.

We would like to give a huge thank you to everyone who came to our Macmillan Coffee Morning, you all helped to raise a whopping £500, so a big thank you. Those of you that contributed by bringing some yummy cakes, another massive thank you.

It was great to see some familiar faces as well as some new ones that came with friends, I think you would agree everyone had a good time.

We would also like to thank The Walnut Tree at Thwaite, Stoke Ash White Horse, Thornham Four Horseshoes, Dunnett's Family Butchers in Eye and also Crackers & Chaps Hair & Beauty Salon in Diss for their very kind and very generous gift vouchers which we used for the tombola and also as draw prizes.

Thank you  
*Kim & Greg @ Huggins Farm*



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11.30am – 1.30 pm

11.45am – 1.00 pm

Closed

### *Evening*

Closed

4.30pm – 7.30pm

4.30pm – 7.30pm

4.30pm – 7.30pm

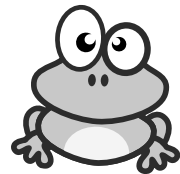
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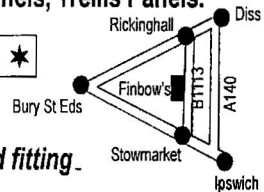
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<b>Suffolk County Council</b> – switchboard			01473 583000
Emergency contact outside office hours			0845 6066067
Trading Standards			0845 6032814
County Councillor Andrew Stringer	07774 199061 & 01449 780339		
	Email	<a href="mailto:andrew.stringer@suffolk.gov.uk">andrew.stringer@suffolk.gov.uk</a>	

### Mid Suffolk District Council

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