

Finningham Newsletter

January to February 2020

Also find us online

 Friends of Finningham

 www.finningham.com



USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

Social Amenities Committee

| | | |
|-----------|-------------|--------------|
| Chairman | Greg Atkins | 07841 358435 |
| Secretary | Open | |
| Treasurer | Beryl Allen | 01449 781132 |

Other facilities

| | | |
|--------------------|--------------------|--------------|
| Marquee Bookings | Ian Armstrong | 01449 780215 |
| | Mobile: | 07879 670949 |
| '49' Club | Bob Storey | 01449 781651 |
| Newsletter Editors | Richard & Lorraine | 01449 781048 |

| | | |
|---------|----------------------------------|--------------|
| Website | Tony Kilbee | 01449 781075 |
| | Email: newsletter@finningham.com | |

Parish Council

| | | |
|--------------|--|--------------|
| Chairman | Tony Kilbee | 01449 781075 |
| Parish Clerk | Natalie Hill | 07802 492495 |
| | Email: finninghamparishclerk@gmail.com | |

| | | |
|-------------------------|------------|--------------|
| Parish Footpath Wardens | Doug Aiken | 01449 781599 |
|-------------------------|------------|--------------|

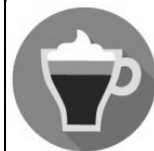
Neighbourhood Watch Coordinator

| | | |
|--------|--------------------------|--------------|
| Police | Safer Neighbourhood Team | 01473 613500 |
| | Crime Reduction Officer | 01473 613500 |
| | Emergency | 999 |
| | Non Emergency | 101 |
| | Crime stoppers | 0800 555111 |

| | | |
|---------|---------------------------|--------------|
| Doctors | Mendlesham | 01449 767722 |
| | Bacton Manor Farm Surgery | 01449 781777 |
| | Botesdale Health Centre | 01379 898295 |
| | NHS Non Emergency | 111 |



EVENTS AND NOTICES



Coffee Caravan



Venues and dates for the Winter months

first Tuesday of the month @ 10am - 12 noon

January - at The Old Chapel Walsham Road Finningham.

February - St Bart's Church, Finningham

Do come along and meet new neighbours and friends.

COFFEE MORNING AND BOOK SALE

LAST SATURDAY OF EVERY MONTH

St Bartholomew's Church

10.30 - 12.30

Come along and have a coffee and try some of the cakes the ladies of Finningham bake.

We have been rather successful with the attendance at these events but as winter draws close it is a good place for village get together as we start to hibernate for the winter.

WE DO NEED TO ANNOUNCE THAT WE HAVE BEEN RATHER OVERSUBSCRIBED WITH BOOK DONATIONS AND FOR THE FORESEEABLE FUTURE WE WOULD REQUEST THAT NO MORE BOOKS ARE DONATED. THANK YOU TO EVERYONE WHO HAVE BEEN SO GENEROUS IN THEIR DONATIONS. WE WILL LET YOU KNOW WHEN WE CAN START ACCEPTING THEM AGAIN

EVERYBODY WELCOME

TEA @ BART'S

2.30 - 4.30pm

Held in St Bartholomew's Church on the 3rd Tuesday of every month.

We are always looking for new faces.

Let's make Finningham

a welcoming and social place to live.

EVENTS AND NOTICES

Finningham White Horse *Opening times*

Monday to Saturday 12.00 mid-day - 11.00 pm

Sunday 12.00 mid-day - 10.00 pm

*Walkers, cyclists and motorbikes, 'get together'
or 'stop-off spot'*

Informal camping and caravan pitches

Functions and events can be accommodated

*My answer to a request is 'yes'...if I can do it,
I will*

Pub Quiz Last Sunday of the month

Facebook page "finninghamwhitehorse"

STOP PRESS

We need your contributions

We are looking for contributions for the next issues, so if you have anything you would like including e.g. upcoming events, pictures, art, observations, points of view etc. we would love to receive them.

Please email them to newsletter@finningham.com

The deadline for inclusion in the next issue is the

21st February 2020

FROM THE CHAIR

I hope everyone had a great Christmas and I wish you all a Happy New Year. Reflecting back on the year there has, I hope, been the right amount and the right type of events and activities to suit all in the Village.

The Village Christmas Luncheon was held in the Trowel & Hammer and all who attended were hosted excellently by the team in the pub – the food was excellent. I apologise for the short notice this year but we managed a really good turnout considering. Thank you to all who supported.

Next year we hope to provide similar, but if there is anything extra anyone wants to suggest please do so to one of the Friends of Finningham committee members. We are still a couple of committee members down and if you could spare the time to support please give me a call.

Wishing you an excellent 2020,

Greg

FROM THE EDITORS

Happy New year to all

and the first complaint I have for the 20's is "Where are the flying cars?". I'm sure that's what all of those movies were telling us for years, although I bet we see them at the 2020 Tokyo Olympics

Finningham has had a colourful 2019 and as I scan back through the 2019 newsletters there are quite a few highlights, we have got a new slide (with an interesting positioning thanks to health and safety!), Father Christmas's helpers have been busy again at the post office, AED training, St Georges Dinner, Finningham's Fete, many events in the Church, the usual staple coffee morning and much more ... oh and yes another year protracting leaving the EU I wonder if this year will be the year something will happen?

Well whatever 2020 brings we hope it offers you a sense of hope, optimism and new beginnings as we roll into the next decade.

Richard & Lorraine

NEWS FROM THE PARISH COUNCIL

Parish Council Report

With the New Year upon us, it is time to wish you all a Happy, Healthy and Prosperous 2020.

I should like to start the year off with a tale of public spiritedness and downright hooliganism. Just before Christmas our Clerk, Natalie received an e-mail from a resident who said that he had found a road sign alongside the footpath at Eastlands. On investigation, it proved to be the new sign that the Council had purchased and installed a few months ago. Luckily, it was relatively undamaged and has been re-erected on its original poles a few hundred yards from the Wickham Skeith side of the railway bridge. I cannot really believe that the sign was removed just for devilment, as it was securely fastened and would require a 13mm spanner to remove it. I can only assume that it had been stolen by someone who thought that it had some scrap value. Well, he came up short there because road signs are no longer made of aluminium but a laminate, which is worthless. There is a notice on the back of the sign saying just that but presumably, our thief is a bit lacking in the literacy department!

The General Election put a hold on the issues we have been having with the Suffolk County Council but now that is all over and the Christmas holidays are a distant memory, we may be able to move forward, particularly with the traffic issue. You will

remember that the Council are looking into obtaining a Vehicle Activated Sign (VAS), as many other villages have in our area. You have probably got your own ideas regarding the efficacy of such devices but our research shows that they do have a beneficial effect on reducing traffic speeds. So far, we have received £1 000 towards the purchase from our District Councillor, Andy Mellen and the promise of another £2 000 from our County Councillor, Jane Storey. We thank them both for their support.

As I mentioned in the last issue of the Newsletter, the latest addition to the play equipment on the Green will be the last investment the Parish Council will make in this area for quite some time to come. Now is the time to consider other projects for the benefit of the village. We are already looking at replacing the village noticeboard (it is certainly looking a bit decrepit!) and we would welcome any suggestions for projects you feel would enhance the village.

Finally, another plea for new Councillors! We are soon to be just about able to field a quorum so, if you would like to know more about how you can help your community, please get in touch.

Tony Kilbee, January 2020



EVENTS AND NOTICES

Mid Suffolk District Council

Waste and Recycling Collection Calendar 2020




Collection Calendar 2020

| December 2019 | January 2020 | February 2020 | March 2020 |
|--|---|---|--|
| Mo Tu We Th Fr Sa Su 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31 | Mo Tu We Th Fr Sa Su 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31 | Mo Tu We Th Fr Sa Su 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 | Mo Tu We Th Fr Sa Su 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31 |
| April 2020 | May 2020 | June 2020 | July 2020 |
| Mo Tu We Th Fr Sa Su 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 | Mo Tu We Th Fr Sa Su 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31 | Mo Tu We Th Fr Sa Su 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 | Mo Tu We Th Fr Sa Su 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31 |
| August 2020 | September 2020 | October 2020 | November 2020 |
| Mo Tu We Th Fr Sa Su 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31 | Mo Tu We Th Fr Sa Su 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 | Mo Tu We Th Fr Sa Su 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31 | Mo Tu We Th Fr Sa Su 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 |

 Recycling collected this week

 Rubbish collected this week

 For Christmas and New Year weeks (27th Dec-11th Jan)
Please refer to the Christmas & New Year schedule

 Bank Holiday Week - After a Bank Holiday, everyone's collection will be a day later all week. For Christmas and New Year weeks, please refer to the Christmas Schedule.



Waste Services: 0300 1234 000 (option 4)
email: recycling@baberghmidsuffolk.gov.uk

EVENTS AND NOTICES



WICKHAM SKEITH GARDENING CLUB

ALL MEETINGS HELD
IN WICKHAM SKEITH VILLAGE HALL
UNLESS INDICATED OTHERWISE

THERE WILL BE NO MEETING IN JANUARY, 2020

4 SEASONS

A very Merry Christmas to you all! As I tap the keys it is the “first day of Christmas”, it’s also the closing day of the Madrid climate conference and the day after the election. I will spare you my opinions on the latter subject, suffice it to say that I’m finding it hard to muster the feelings of peace and goodwill that are appropriate to the season.

I enjoyed following Greta Thunberg's fast crossing of the Atlantic with Riley and Elayna - who got a mention in this column years ago. She could not have chosen a better boat or crew, look them up on You Tube if you too need an occasional reminder that life can be more than the daily grind. I regret that neither Greta nor anyone else in Madrid has asked the hard question that could lead to a reduction in CO2 levels, so I will ask it: How can the population be reduced? The idea is so unacceptable that you may not hear it mentioned again until fairly soon after London is submerged. Sooner would be better.

Ian Armstrong

PARISH COUNCIL

Your Finningham Parish Councillors are:

Chairman: Tony Kilbee, 01449 781075

The Old Chapel, Walsham Road, Finningham, IP14 4JG

Vice-Chair: Mary Webb, 01449 781628

Kimberley, Gislingham Road, Finningham, IP14 4HY

James Miller, 01449 781265/07860 382816

Rob Hall, Walsham Road, Finningham, IP14 4JL

James Black, 01449 782965

Black Horse Barn, Walsham, Road, Finningham, IP14 4JN

Catherine Winter, 01449 781372

Holly Howe, Westhorpe Road, Finningham, IP14 4TW

Clerk : Natalie Hill, 07802 492495

Elmer Farm, Walsham Road, Finningham, IP14 4JN

Parish Council Meetings are held at

St Bartholomew's Church, Finningham, starting at 7.30pm.

Dates of future meetings:

Tuesday 14th January 2020

No meeting in February

Tuesday 10th March 2020

Tuesday 14th April 2020

Parish Meeting 7pm start

Annual Parish COUNCIL Meeting
Tuesday 12th May 2020



ST BARTHOLOMEW'S CHURCH

As we begin a New Year, may I take this opportunity to also look back upon the one which has just passed. I am extremely grateful for all those who have contributed in any way at all towards the life of St Bartholomew's Church. This may have been by attending a service, continued financial aid or through some other practical way such as maintaining the churchyard or the cleanliness of the church for those who attend.

I am also grateful to those who give their time to the church as Church Wardens, Elder, Treasurer, Secretary, refreshments and members of the Parochial Church Council.

As we all know, within any walk of life finances do play an important part, and the Church is not immune from monetary requirements. With that in mind I am also grateful to those who raise funds month after month through the 'Book Sales' on every last Saturday morning of the month, and via the 'T @ Barts' on the third Tuesday of every month. More importantly these are also great opportunities to bring members of the community together in fellowship one with another.

This last year has seen the completion inside the church of new pulleys and chains which hold both the Font cover and the Crucifix in place; a cost of several thousand

pounds. In February the church is having the organ stripped down and extensively cleaned. Above the organ in the roof of the church is a place where bats enter and leave the main body of the church, and over many, many years their excrement has entered the organ pipes to the extent that we now have to have the organ cleaned and serviced. Once the work is completed a 'protective cover' can be placed over the organ to prevent the same problem occurring in the future. Bats are of course a protected species and so the removal or disturbance to their habitat would obviously be illegal.

We leave the Christmas Season behind, but let us allow the joy of Christmas to stay with us throughout 2020. As we enter another year it can so often be a time when we look back on the last one with happy memories or regret, dismay or thanksgiving. But whatever the past we look to the future with hope and faith. As a Christian Priest it is my firm belief that whatever the coming year may hold, God is also there beside us, and that we can enter the year trusting completely that Jesus will be with us every step of the way if we let Him.

I wish you all a Happy New Year and Every Blessing in the months ahead.

Philip (Parish Rector)

WESTHORPE VILLAGE ACTIVITIES

www.westhorpe.onesuffolk.net

YOGA



Juliet Wright
jujuyoga39@gmail.com
Tel. 07503 212670

MONDAY (Weekly)
11:00 - 12:30 pm

ART CLUB



Paul Weston
paulwestonarchitect@gmail.com
Tel. 07860 376592

MONDAY (Fortnightly)
2:00 - 4:00 pm

LINE DANCING



Rosie Macro
rosemary.macro@yahoo.co.uk
Tel. 07748 563926

MONDAY (Weekly)
6:00 - 7:00 pm

CARPET BOWLS



Diane Gladders
dianegladders@outlook.com
John Offord
Tel. 01449 258501

MONDAY (Weekly)
7:30 - 9:00 pm

IT CLINIC



Allison Weston
allisonweston25@hotmail.com
Tel: 01449 781490

TUESDAY (Bi Monthly)
2:00 - 4:00 pm

CRAFT CLUB



Lynda Cotgrove
Tel 01449 789142
Rosemary Mees
Tel 01449 780394

TUESDAY (Fortnightly)
10:00 - 12:00 PM

STOTT PILATES



Miranda Tuddenham
mtwannadance@gmail.com
Tel. 07540 696167 or 01379 742845

THURSDAY (Weekly)
11:00 - 12:00 pm

WINTERS ACADEMY



charley@wintersacademy.co.uk
www.wintersacademy.co.uk

THURSDAY (Weekly)
4:00 - 6:45 pm
During Term Time

BOOK CLUB



Judith Kennedy
[jkstreetfarm@gmail.com](mailto:jkstreefarm@gmail.com)
Tel. 01449 781249

THURSDAY (Every six weeks)
7:00 - 9:00 pm

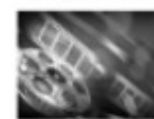
GARDENING CLUB



Martin Little
martindavidlittle@gmail.com
Tel. 01449 78031

FRIDAY (3rd of every Month)
7:00 - 9:00 pm

WESTHORPE FILM NIGHT



Philip Aldous
philip.aldous@live.co.uk

FRIDAY (4th of every month)
7:30 - 10:30 pm

FREESTYLE FITNESS YOGA



Jo Beales
jo@johnnybeales.co.uk
Tel 07912 649328

WEDNESDAY (Weekly)
6:15 - 7:15 pm

GAMES NIGHT



Alan Coles
alancoles@aol.com
Tel. 01449 781618

THURSDAY (FORTNIGHTLY)
7:30 - 9:30 pm

Westhorpe Village Hall Hire

Finningham and Westhorpe residents

£8.00 per hour

Non-residents

£9.00 per hour

HEATHERS

Soft Furnishings Limited

Quality without compromise

Curtains, upholstery, loose covers and materials. Providing quality furnishing for more than 25 years, Heathers soft Furnishing Ltd hand craft unique items for home décor and for commercial and domestic clients in East Anglia.



We are a family run business located in Stowmarket
We are open Monday - Saturday (9am to 5pm)

Www.heatherssoftfurnishings.co.uk

To arrange a consultation call 01449 612 502

David Foster



Local Heating & Plumbing Engineer

Boiler Servicing & Repairs
Boiler & Central Heating Installations
Water Softeners, Pumps, Valves & Programmers fitted
Gas Appliance Installations
General Plumbing & Bathrooms

Tel: 01449 781477

Mobile: 07979 505618

e-mail: davidfosterheating@gmail.com

Suffolk Computers

Our locally based computer engineers offer friendly and technical assistance for all your computing needs



Free Diagnosis

Site visits

Upgrades

NO fix NO fee

Tel: 01449 782195 / 07834 709970

Email: sales@suffolkcomputers.co.uk

Website: www.suffolkcomputers.co.uk

ST BARTHOLOMEW'S CHURCH

Light of the World.

It was candles at twilight again this year at our Christingle service.

A thoughtful and meaningful service reminding us of the true meaning of Christmas in the season of Advent.

Advent, a time of waiting and anticipation for the birth of Jesus, the Light of the World.

Love comes to us all at Christmas with the birth of the Son of God and we remembered this with the lighting of our Christingle candles in an orange representing our world, with a red ribbon telling us of Jesus's love for us. Four cocktail sticks with sweets and fruit reminding us of the four seasons and all we have to be thankful for.

The Christingles were carefully carried home to be lit each evening so that light and love was all around.

Marion



THANK YOU

Penny would like to take this opportunity to thank all those good people who donated whilst at Jimmy's funeral.

The fantastic amount raised was:

Alzheimer's Society £758.50

Suffolk Punch Trust £528.50

Totalling £1287.00

Thank you all so much. Penny

CHARITY FLOWERS

Pauline Goddard would like to thank all those who purchased flowers beans etc. from the roadside table by the Wickham Skeith road during the summer.

A total of **£250** was raised and this money has been donated to:

Friends of Mendlesham Health Centre

Brest Cancer Support

Finningham Church

**This makes a total of over
£2000 raised in the last few years.**

Many thanks once again and hopefully with good weather flowers will be available during 2020 and as usual all money raised will be donated to charity.

FESTIVE FINNINGHAM

To echo many of the
comments around the village
"A great big thank you again
to Finningham's Father Christmas
and Mrs Christmas"
You have brought a little
magic and wonder to many



MARQUEE & TABLE HIRE

Friends of Finningham have the following for loan.

| | |
|----------------|----------------------------|
| Marquee | - 40ft x 13ft (12m x 4m) |
| Festival Tent | - 22ft x 16ft (6.8m x 5m) |
| Party Marquee | - 20ft x 10ft (6m x 3m) |
| Folding tables | - 6ft x 2½ft (1.8m x 0.8m) |

Below are suggested donations - Held at last years level again.

| | | | | |
|----------------|-----|-------------------|-----|---------------|
| Marquee | £60 | Village residents | £70 | non residents |
| Festival Tent | £60 | Village residents | £70 | non residents |
| Party Marquee | £30 | Village residents | £40 | non residents |
| Folding tables | £5 | Village residents | £6 | non residents |

A refundable deposit of £100 is required.

Loan period is normally up to four days
and delivery and collection by arrangement

Further information available at the point of hire,
for enquires and bookings please contact

Ian Armstrong - 01449 780215 or 07879 670949

We will deliver and collect the marquee and assist with erection and dismantling, but we need you to provide at least two helpers .

Terms and conditions apply.



GREY MATTER MOVERS

| | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 4 | | | 1 | 5 | | | | |
| 3 | 7 | | | | | | | 4 |
| | | | | | | | | 9 |
| 8 | | 7 | 9 | | 2 | 1 | | |
| | 4 | | | | | 2 | | |
| | | 2 | | | 3 | | | 6 |
| | 8 | | | 2 | 9 | | | |
| | 6 | 4 | 7 | | | | 5 | 8 |
| | 5 | | | | 8 | | | 7 |

GISLINGHAM WI

The WI is held in Gislingham Village Hall at 7.30 pm. on the third Wednesday of every month.

Our January meeting is our subs night when we pay our subscriptions for the year which is £43.

Our meeting in February will be a talk from Ken Stone 'A Royal Year'.

If you wish more details please contact us on 01449 781075 Aileen Kilbee, President.

HISTORY IN FINNINGHAM

History of Sport in Finningham

The Sport in Finningham history project is about 70 pages long now and has come to a halt. I need more help. There are several places where I don't know a name, place, event or date. There are places where I have probably made mistakes. I have no photos and not much information for the cricket team. Should tennis, bowls, skittles, darts and other pub games be included? I have nothing for any of these. The project doesn't have nearly enough stories and memories about sporting events in the village.

Please can you help?



If you would like to contribute, please contact me on 01449 781412 or pete@pjeverall.plus.com or write to Pete Everall, Mellow Yellow, Walsham Road, Finningham, Stowmarket, IP14 4JN

HISTORY IN FINNINGHAM



1926-27

Back Row: Bobby Oakes, Jack Pryke, Teddy Cook. Middle Row: Harry Filby, Harry Witcher, Not.known. Front Row: Walter Head (Buggins), Bob Stringer, Not.known. , Sashy Burrows, George Linstead



What year? 1966? Place? Event?

4th Row, L to R: David (Skinny) Muttitt ?, John (Dimples) Hayward, Peter Crichley, Tony (Whip) Wilson, David Foreman 3rd Row: Evan Boggis, Tommy Cook, George Rice, Eddie Palfrey, Geoff Pollard, Ivor Parkinton 2nd Row: Ray Farrow, Dennis Rice, Terry Collins, Ronnie Ruffles? , Brian Gardiner 1st Row: Geoff Whatley, Nicky Collins, Maurice Seeley

49+10 BONUS BALL CLUB RESULTS

Congratulations to the following winners:

| <u>Date drawn</u> | <u>Ball number</u> | <u>Winner</u> |
|-------------------|--------------------|---------------|
| October 5th | 58 | Sharon Hart |
| October 12th | 58 | Sharon Hart |
| October 19th | 13 | Penny Downie |
| October 26th | 32 | Pat Allen |
| November 2nd | 40 | Aileen Kilbee |
| November 9th | 31 | Mary Webb |
| November 16th | 17 | Lily Elsey |
| November 23rd | 31 | Mary Webb |
| November 30th | 51 | Julian Shawki |

Vacant balls : 49
to take up one, call or email Bob Storey

Telephone 01449 781651 or Email robert.b.storey@gmail.com

The Bonus Ball Club provides the only regular income for Friends of Finningham to provide amenities, including the cost of printing this newsletter and support to projects for young and old within the village.

FINNINGHAM WEBSITE

If you want to see older copies of the newsletter we have the electronic versions on our website, these can be found at www.finningham.com/newsletter

If you have any information, article or photos that you think would be of interest for the site, please send your copy to webmaster@finningham.com

DISCLAIMER

The information contained in this newsletter is provided for Finningham village as a service to its residents and possible others. It does not constitute/contain (legal) advice. Although we try to provide quality information, all information in this newsletter is provided "as is", with no guarantee of completeness, accuracy, timeliness or of the results obtained from the use of this information, and without warranty of any kind, express or implied, including fitness for a particular purpose.

COMPETITION

Usborne Books at Home Colouring Competition

Colour in this unicorn and ask your parents to send pictures to arianasreadingcorner@gmail.com to win this Unicorns colouring book.

One lucky winner will be contacted by email to arrange drop off, of the book. For all things Usborne, you can contact Tracey on the above email or order direct from https://org.usbornebooksathome.co.uk/tracey_harris/



INSIGHTS

Fostering – A Foster Parents View

10 years ago I was made redundant from a relatively good job, and at 49 years old, it provided me with an opportunity to review my priorities, options, values and my future. Having never had children but wanting a family, my husband and I discussed the idea of fostering. My sister-in-law was a foster carer, so we were aware of what it entailed and the process involved.

No matter how ready you feel, nothing can prepare you for what can be the most wonderful, rewarding and exciting career, as well as being the most heart wrenching, challenging and demanding journey. The truth is that at times, I have been in tears more times than the children we care for, whether this has been through sheer pride in their achievements and progress, or out of frustration with bureaucracy.

Why become a foster carer? My starting point has always been that it is not the fault of the child that they are in this position. Like us, all these children need love, security, and their self-esteem and self-belief nurturing. It can be quite a journey for all concerned and everyone's situation and circumstances are different. For me, the core to being a foster carer with FCA is to know that you can turn a child's life around by providing them with opportunities they wouldn't have had otherwise. To see them thrive in your care is reward enough.

What you learn on your journey as a carer is however much people say you mustn't get too attached to the children, the simple fact is that however hard you try you cannot help forming an emotional bond. When it's time to say goodbye as they move on to pastures new, it's hard. It doesn't matter what age they

are or how many times you do it. The most you can expect is the occasional call to tell you they are OK.

One thing about working with FCA is that you feel supported by the organisation and other foster carers, whether that's in support groups, through the buddy system or through the relationships you form with other carers. It's a special club and I'm proud to be part of it. We have all experienced the highs and the lows, and because your job can be so isolating you think you are the only one in the world these things happen to. You very quickly find out that isn't the case, and often you learn new approaches or lessons. What once had you tearing your hair out, you can now laugh about.

In the nine years that we have been fostering for FCA, we have looked after about 12 children of all ages for long and short stays, respite and emergency care. We currently have a 18-year-old young man who has lived with us for nine years. He is autistic and has complex needs and now stays with us on Staying Put Arrangements with the Local Authority. We also recently adopted our last foster child. He is eight years old and we are very proud to call him our son. It amazes me how resilient these children are and how far they have come from the first day they walked through our door. I feel lucky and blessed. In truth, I have probably learnt more from them than they have from us!

My advice is to go in to fostering with an open mind, a loving heart, plenty of energy and a streak of resilience. You are in good hands with FCA and they will support you all the way.

To find out more about Fostering and The FCA follow this link <https://www.thefca.co.uk/regions/eastern/>

WHAT'S ON - JANUARY 2020

| Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday | Sunday |
|--------|-----------------------------|--|----------|--------|---|---------------------|
| | | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 6 | 7 Coffee Caravan | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 |
| 13 | 14 Parish Council mtg | 15 Gislingham WI Wickham Skeith History Group | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 |
| 20 | 21 Tea @ Bart's | 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 Coffee Morning & Book sale @ St. Bart's | 26 Pub Quiz @ WH |
| 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 | 31 | | |
| 12 | | | | | | |

WHAT'S ON - FEBRUARY 2020

| Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday | Sunday |
|--------|---------------------|---------------------|----------|--------------------------------------|--|---------------------|
| | | | | | 1 | 2 |
| 3 | 4 Coffee Caravan | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 |
| 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 |
| 17 | 18 Tea @ Bart's | 19 Gislingham WI | 20 | 21 Newsletter Copy Deadline | 22 Coffee Morning & Book sale @ St. Bart's' | 23 Pub Quiz @ WH |
| 24 | 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 | |
| 13 | | | | | | |