

Strumpshaw Coffee Break Annual Report January 2025



3rd Annual Report of Strumpshaw Coffee Break 21st January 2025

Introduction

We thought the annual report would be a good time to reflect, briefly, on the 'health' of SCB. In so doing, we reflected on the fact that more than 50 people are signed up as SCB friends and receive monthly email updates, as well as some event reminder emails, whilst those not comfortable with email receive a printed copy. We've had a social media presence on Facebook for some time now and are often surprised by the number of 'hits' the page receives when our posts are shared by others. Our 2023 report noted that SCB had developed as a hub where information is shared as we pass the time of day or catch up with relevant people. This practise certainly seems to have continued, with our 'Village Matters' white board used by many to advertise various events, meetings, and activities in and around the surrounding area. Meanwhile, in our attempt to ensure that more people know about SCB, our subscription to the new style Parish News means that each quarter we provide a roundup of SCB's activities which is then sent to over 1,500 households and businesses in Lingwood, Strumpshaw, Buckenham, Hassingham and South Burlingham. We estimate that, on average, 20-35 people attend on Tuesday mornings. The nature of attendance is completely random so that those on the coffee rota never quite know how many to expect – which all adds to what we see as the organic nature of Coffee Break. We are simply delighted that Tuesday morning at The Shoulder is in people's diaries and we continue to be excited by the friendliness and energy of Tuesday mornings – irrespective of the weather!

Following the format used in previous annual reports, the annual report for 2024 is divided into the four seasons and includes donations made during these seasons.

1. Winter: December 21st 2023 - March 19th 2024

The New Year started with all eyes looking ahead to the annual pancake race which took place in February '24. Although keenly contested, Stuart Blyth lost his title to Michael Green who won (for the second time), but it was simply lovely to gather and have a little bit of fun in the 5th year of Pancake Pandemonium. In the run up to our Easter break, we managed a lovely collection of Easter Eggs for The Food Bank – adding a little bit of early Spring cheer for those less fortunate.

Donations made in Winter 23/2024

The following organisations received **£100** donations

Norwich Homeless Support tries to : “house up to ten people from the streets at any one time giving them warmth, food and a place of safety while working with them on sorting a number of issues” <https://communitydirectory.norfolk.gov.uk/Services/20547/Norwich-Homeless-Sup>

Hodmedods: A Norfolk hedgehog rescue centre: Their mission is to make a positive difference in helping to stop the decline of hedgehogs in Norfolk: <https://hodmedods.org.uk>

The Shoe Box Enterprise. This Norfolk-based social enterprise has ... “a mission to create supportive environments for people to connect with each other and opportunities to find fulfilment.” Because they were crowd funding, our donation of £100 was matched by Aviva, so that the actual donation totalled £200. See: <https://www.theshoebox.org.uk/>

Norfolk Baby Bank. This Norfolk-based charity is a volunteer-run group which passes on ... “baby items to people in Norfolk to help alleviate child poverty and support families during times of financial and emotional stress”... See: <https://babybanknorfolk.org.uk/>

2.Spring: March 20th - June 20th 2024

Following our request for an additional committee member made at the AGM in January 2024, we were delighted to welcome Lorna Clark as a SCB committee member.

Our first Spring event was our weekly seed swap. Any seeds donated – vegetables or flowers – were exchanged for other seeds and/or for a small donation, which is earmarked for the specific purpose of donating to Norwich Food Bank. As the season developed, our seed swap was replaced by surplus produce for others to have in return for a foodbank donation. Just like previous years, this proved to be a very popular initiative in 2024.

Spring saw us welcome two speakers to our Tuesday coffee mornings. Firstly, in May, we were joined by a representative from **Chatterbox**, a charity that provides audio publications for people who are vision impaired or blind and the speaker outlined the amazing work they undertake See: <https://www.cbtn.org.uk/>

Secondly, in early June, we were joined by a representative from **Norwich Food Bank's** distribution centre who told us about the wonderful work they do to help those less fortunate. It's appropriate to note here that our foodbank collaboration is with St. Peter's church, Strumpshaw, enabling SCB to act as a collection point for the foodbank. Items collected at SCB are taken to the church for onward delivery to the Norwich Foodbank distribution centre. As well as this, we have a Foodbank donations box where monetary donations are made for the seed swap and produce swap, described above. All monetary donations for the Foodbank are noted as restricted funds in the accounts. For information, between January '24 and December '24 a total of **£233.41** was donated to Norwich Food bank.

Donations made in Spring 2024

We were able to follow up suggestions made at our AGM in January and identified a theme connecting donations. Following a brief discussion about the decline of music provision in Norfolk and an acknowledgement of the considerable health benefits associated with music in its broadest sense, **£100** was donated to the following Norfolk-based community projects/charities:

Musical Keys is a Norfolk-based charity. They reach people of all ages and abilities, primarily through community music and music therapy, in groups and in one-to-one. Their users include babies undergoing diagnosis and their families, children with complex disabilities, young adults with autism, older people living with dementia. See: www.musicalkeys.co.uk

Norfolk Community Arts: Sistema Norwich. Their mission is to ... “engage young people in a positive and enriching culture of music, learning and participation. We provide instruments and deliver all our activities for free, making music education accessible for any family, in keeping with our goal of knocking down barriers.” See: <https://www.norfolkcommunityarts.org.uk/what-we-do/sistema-norwich/>

The Black Dog Music Project: is a Norwich Based Charity that provides help and support for people with mental health problems. Music sessions are for people with disabilities who cannot access main stream music organisations due to mental health, health or social barriers. See : <http://www.theblackdogmusicproject.co.uk>

Spring also saw £100 donations to the following community groups/ causes:

The Hallswood Animal Sanctuary. Offering sanctuary to domestic and wild animals, their main site is based just outside Horsford in approx. 2.5 acres of woodland with several purpose-built buildings. See: <https://hallswood.co.uk/the-sanctuary/>

The United Norwich Kidney Patients' Association. Raising funds to support Renal Patients in Norfolk, Waveney and parts of Suffolk. See: <https://donate.giveasyoulive.com/charity/unkpa>

Chatterbox See: <https://www.cbtn.org.uk/>)

3. Summer: June 21st - September 22nd 2024

We had a wonderful day celebrating Midsummer Day on **Saturday 22nd June** at The Shoulder of Mutton. Following on from our first mid-summer event in 2023 held on a Tuesday, our aim for 2024 was to celebrate nature's abundance of fruits and flora whilst creating and then sharing posies made. We thought that a Saturday event would extend participation to all and act, in part, as a replacement for Norfolk Day that had made up our summer event in previous years. We certainly had a lovely morning having coffee and (amazing) cake; making up posies from the flowers shared and marvelling at the knitted and crocheted creations provided by our local Weavers' group. To top it all, we raised £148 for our SCB charity pot from donations for cakes and the sale of home-made preserves and knitted/crocheted creations.

Donations made in Summer 2024

£ 100 to each of the following charities/community causes

Little Lifts: Dani Cameron's swim for charity: As always, Dani raises money for causes close to her heart and this time it's the Norfolk-based charity 'Little Lifts' a charity that works to support the emotional well-being of people with breast cancer.

The SOS Bus, Norwich, established and launched in April 2001 to provide a safe space for anyone visiting Norwich city centre on Friday and Saturday nights. Run by volunteers the SOS bus works closely with the Police, Ambulance service and local pubs and clubs. It's a unique and vital City Centre service. See: <https://sosbus.co.uk/what-we-do/>

Vision Norfolk in support of their sponsored Snowdon Challenge on 14th September. Vision Norfolk have supported our various event days with their craft stalls. See : <https://www.visionnorfolk.org.uk/intrepid-quintet-to-tackle-britains-third-highest-mountain-to-support-norfolks-sight-loss-charity/>

The Great Yarmouth Schools Music Association: Following our musical themed donations in Spring, SCB friends highlighted the work of this wonderful charity working with schools in Great Yarmouth. It's a lovely charity in its 76th year aiming to ensure all children have the opportunity to experience live music making. See more at: <http://www.gysma.co.uk/>

£120 for the RSPB: At our last meeting on 30th July, all the donations made for coffee went towards a tribute fund (for the RSPB) that had been set up for Steve Hill – a kind, caring, supportive friend of SCB who passed away. Among other things, Steve made our Strumpshaw Coffee Break sign that we hang out on the fence each Tuesday as well as the Food Bank donation box and, of course, he kept us wonderfully entertained at our annual pancake race. We miss him dearly.

Additionally, at our last meeting before our summer break, Mary Green confirmed to all SCB friends that she would be stepping down from the committee in anticipation of her move away from Strumpshaw. Mary had forewarned us all of her intentions but, nevertheless, hearing this announcement led many of us to feel rather sad: For many of us, Mary personified SCB.

We took the opportunity to have an open discussion and Q&A with all SCB friends with the aim of finding people who would join the committee in the Autumn and help steer SCB onto its next chapter. We were able to give our collective thanks to Mary early on in Autumn. We've included here an edited version of Mary's

response, as it sums up for us the essence of SCB and reminds us all that SCB is now firmly established as a community group in Strumpshaw.

Thank you all very, very much for the unexpected moment that I had at Strumpshaw Coffee Break this morning. Ann's words, and all of your words that are in the gorgeous autumnal card, will stay with me for a very long time. The flowers are beautifulAnd the lavender mug: the lavender that we have planted at Oaklands, the lavender that defines Norfolk and the mug which defines the coffee break, was surely a beautifully inspired gift. I will use it for coffee on Tuesday mornings, once we have moved on - together in spirit if not in person.

Perhaps the most gratifying thing of all though is that, having nurtured the seed of SCB and then watched it grow and expand with a dynamic exciting committee at its helm, there is a kind of knowing that it will continue to grow and develop and go places that I might never have imagined because its roots are firmly embedded in the people in this community.

4. Autumn: September 23rd to December 21st 2024

Following our summer break, we were delighted to be able to welcome Stuart Blyth and Caroline Williams onto SCB committee in September – both of whom have settled into their respective roles.

In September we were pleased to hold a Macmillan Coffee Morning during our regular coffee morning on Tuesday 24th September. We had a delightful morning where we enjoyed the company of SCB regulars alongside some new faces; indulged in fabulous bakes and cakes and raised a final total of **£392** for Macmillan Cancer Support.

In conjunction with Bob and Dani at The Shoulder we held an Apple Day on a Saturday at the end of October. Given the weather possibilities in October, Apple Day always proves to be perhaps one of our most unpredictable events. But once again, we were able to enjoy watching friends from Blofield Community Orchard undertake 18 or so pressings of apples brought along by local families. Other contributors sold local ciders, juice and local honey, while St. Peter's church Strumpshaw and Vision Norfolk were able to share crafts, cards and other produce. And, of course, our wonderful cake bakers rounded the day off by enabling us to enjoy their delicious items alongside a coffee.

At our last meeting in 2024 on 17th December we were able to indulge in some small festive treats at perhaps our most joyful event: making wreaths and table decorations. Skillfully guided by Lorna Clark and family members, this popular event continues to have a real collaborate and creative feel, as we share festive cuttings from our gardens and admire each other's unique creations. Lorna and family do not charge for this event and, this year, they requested a donation go to the Foodbank in advance of the event - in time for Christmas distributions.

Donations made in Autumn 2024

£ 100 to each of the following charities/community causes

Addenbrooke's Charitable Trust for their fund-raising campaign for a new Children's hospital to serve the region. The Cambridge Children's Hospital will be the first specialist children's hospital in the East of England. For more information, see: <https://www.cambridgechildrens.org.uk/>

The Community Pantry, operated by Yare Church, in Brundall. All are welcome to access the community pantry which is open on Monday mornings from 10am to 1pm in St Laurence church, Brundall. See: <http://www.yarevalleychurches.org.uk/whatwedo/47>

Norwich Door to Door: Norwich Door to Door offers a Dial-a-Ride community transport service which is available to residents of Norwich and its districts. The service provides those with limited mobility the opportunity to remain independent and involved within the community. For more information, see: <https://norwichdoortodoor.org.uk/>

Hopestead: A Norfolk-based charity which helps to prevent homelessness by working with families and individuals during difficult times and by helping those recently housed through, e.g, the provision of household goods. See: <https://www.hopestead.org/who-we-are/>

Sue Lambert Trust: A Norfolk charity providing a kind, safe, non-judgmental, and supportive range of services for people who have experienced sexual abuse, sexual assault or sexual violence. See: <https://www.suelamberttrust.org/>

Norwich Foodbank: Nominated by Lorna Clark and family in lieu of a charge for the SCB wreath and Christmas decoration event.

A donation of **£59.06** to St. Peter's Church, Strumpshaw, to help their move towards more sustainable practice and, specifically, the purchase of eco-friendly and biodegradable floristry supplies for the church flowers.

5. Looking Forward. Events for our 2025 calendar will include:

- **Pancake Day March 4th 2025.**
- **Seed swapping** at every Coffee Break Tuesday in April.
- **Surplus home-grown produce** exchange
- **Mid-Summer Day celebration** in June
- **Macmillan Coffee morning** in September.
- **Apple Day** in October
- **Occasional invited speakers**
- Additionally, we plan to continue to act as a collection point for items for the **Norwich Food Bank** on a weekly basis.

Finally, SCB is indebted to a few people who play a significant part in helping to keep the show on the road.

- To the **Central England Cooperative** supermarket in Brundall. The Co-op has been supporting us as a community group by providing us with coffee for over 6 years. In return, we happily share information they provide regarding the benefits of membership of the Central England Co-op. Their support means that we are not only able to make as many cups of coffee as our attendees need each week, but are also able to continue our practise of asking for donations for coffee (and cakes at all our events) rather than making a charge. We are then able to support local or national causes that touch the lives of our community.
- To the growing number of volunteers (17 in total) who have joined the coffee rota for Tuesday mornings and to friends on the ad hoc coffee makers' group.
- To all those who regularly provide delicious cakes and/or biscuits for the events that we have. We are really grateful for your collective response. What a wonderful set of bakers you are!
- To the multi-talented Lorna Clark who ran the Christmas wreath-making event again in 2024 and who currently audits our accounts.
- And, of course, to **Bob and Dani and staff** at The Shoulder for letting us use this space; for always being so welcoming; and for their community focus and inclusivity: we simply couldn't do it without them.

Note: Full financial accounts, full details of Trustees and other statutory information can be obtained by contacting the Trustees of Strumpshaw Coffee Group.

