

# LOOKS EAST

The Newsletter of the Rotary Club of Ipswich East - D1080 | 2025-26, Edition 8: 22nd December 2025

## UPCOMING MEETINGS

Tuesday 6th January at 12:55pm  
**Speaker meeting: Craig Sennet - My Adoption and DNA**

*Menu: Bangers and mash*  
*D.R.: Eva Alcerreca & John Barbour*

Tuesday 13th January at 12:55pm  
**Speaker meeting: Rob Hart - CEO Genesis**

*Menu: Steak & ale pie*  
*D.R.: Michelle Bevan-Margetts & Norman Haines*

Ipswich Bowls Club

## CLUB OFFICERS 2024-25

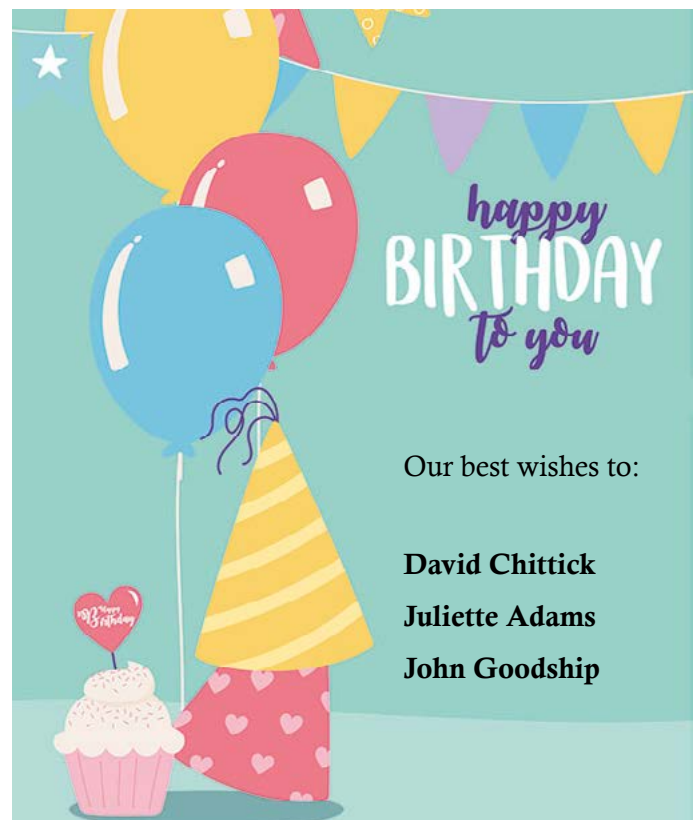
*President* Steve Flory  
*Senior vice-president* Steph Mackentyre  
*Junior vice-president* Eva Alcerreca  
*Immediate past-president* George Woodward  
*Secretary* Robin Needham  
*Treasurer* Neill Keveren

*Club service* Steve Flory  
*Community service* Andy Lewis  
*Foundation* Bob Parker  
*International* Mark Murphy  
*Vocational* Ed Nicholls  
*Almoner* Alan Forsdike  
*Environmental* Lucy Trenchard

## IN THIS ISSUE...

Recent meetings and events	2
Around Ipswich	10
Miscellaneous	11
Announcements	13
Rolling calendar	15
Duty Rotarians and Lunch menu	15
In Profile	16
Ongoing collections	18
Upcoming projects updates	18

Newsletter editor: *Eva Alcerreca*  
[iercnewsletter@gmail.com](mailto:iercnewsletter@gmail.com)



# RECENT MEETINGS AND EVENTS

## Wine Tasting Evening

By Des Cunningham

We had 38 attendees at the Adnams Wine tasting on 9th December, trying a good number of red and white wines, plus those little Christmas extras of port, eggnog and a very nice chocolate wine which seemed to go down very well.

Perhaps we had a few too many wines to taste, as after the first 12 tastings it became a little loud, and the tasting turned into just drinking! Food was provided by Steph, Lesley and Mandy — and many thanks for this, as it did help absorb some of the alcohol! We also sampled some cheeses provided by Adnams, and we raised over £400 with a number of Rotarians purchasing wines on the night, which will go to the President's charity Brave Futures. Adnams sold over £1000 of goods, and were very pleased with the evening.

Many thanks to Billy Izzard as well for his help and to all those who attended.





## Christmas Presents for Ukraine Wrap-a-thon

By Steph Mackentyre

As Andy Lewis explained: "Julie and I took part in this event where, in all, over 4000 toys, games, puzzles and books were wrapped by 250 volunteers at Claydon High School. We hope the presents will help give the children a better Christmas than they would otherwise have had.

A fantastic effort made by all, a real Rotary cross-District event. In the photo are some of the Rotarian volunteers including the Assistant District Governor Steve Clarke from 1070.



# Donation of Gazebo to Lighthouse

By Steph Mackentyre

George Woodward, as Club's Administrator of our Community Support Fund, said: "The Charity approached us for help to source and fund a gazebo. It was manufactured by local company Hudson Signs and the full cost of £1,500 was met by a grant from our Community Support Fund, which regularly distributes monies to local charities and good causes.

The gazebo will be used at a range of events, like the Suffolk Show, to raise awareness of what Lighthouse does and to assist with their fundraising efforts as, like so many similar charities, they're totally reliant on charitable donations to keep going.



*President Steve Flory, Deb Johnson (Lighthouse's Business and Fundraising Manager) and George Woodward*

# Generators Sent to Ukraine

By Steph Mackentyre

Bob Parker, as head of Foundation, explains: "We researched generators available that could be operated in a "Theatres of War" scenario. It was narrowed down to a UK manufacture with ease of maintenance and repair. We needed professional equipment that would meet as near to military standards as possible. JCB had a product that matched our criteria. This product together with JCB's world presence met our needs, which included:

- Fully portable i.e. could be moved if their position was attacked
- Lowest delivery costs
- Local service centre to maximise the life of each unit.

"The final distribution is being facilitated by Rotary groups already operating in Ukraine. None of this would have been possible without the generous help of Ardent Plant Hire, JCB's largest EU distributor, on Felixstowe Road in Ipswich. MD Jeremy Fish handled things for us personally. For that we are hugely grateful to him and his team."

So far Ipswich East Rotary have funded and delivered nine generators to the Ukrainian people at a cost of £4,000.

Bob concludes, "Many of us would not have considered that this amount of destruction could

be happening so close to home (only 1,118 miles by air; 1,243 by road). When you switch on your Christmas lights, think about our total reliance on electricity as a source to live by, along with fresh water, warm shelter and easily accessible food, which we often take for granted."



# Christmas Lunch 2025

By Eva Alcerreca

On 16th December, we had our annual Christmas lunch, which was a very well-attended event. We enjoyed a delicious meal, as usual, followed by dessert and a mince pie. We also sang some carols, did a quiz courtesy of Karen, and enjoyed the fellowship that defines our Club.

Your dear Editor brought along her little bundle of joy to meet everyone, though he actually spent most of his time asleep despite the ruckus of our somewhat dodgy singing!

President Steve ended the gathering by thanking everyone for their support this year, and we all look forward to a 2026 filled with more projects and fellowship.







'Pass the Parcel' featuring baby James



# Young Carers Day Out

By Dave Atkins

We held our Suffolk Young Carers Event on 17th December at Ipswich Clip 'n Climb (this venue was chosen by them for the third year in succession).

In spite of grim traffic conditions, we had about 70 participants split into two groups of 35 by age. These young people broadly come from families where they are either actively providing care for an adult, or are in a family where a sibling requires care and which significantly impacts the family's operation.

They all appeared to have an absolute whale of a time, and many thanks for the Rotary commitment was expressed by Sue Henry of Suffolk Family Carers.



# Phil Martin - Community Action Suffolk

By Eric Barnett

At our meeting on 9th December we enjoyed a very authoritative talk about the work and role of Community Action Suffolk (CAS) delivered by Phil Martin, who is currently Organisational Development Officer (Start Ups) with CAS. By way of introduction, Phil told us that he had worked in the voluntary, community, faith and social enterprise sector for over 30 years – holding senior leadership management roles either as CEO or Chairman, as well as many voluntary and trustee positions over a wide range of charities.

We were told that CAS was set up in 2013 to offer expert advice, support and guidance to the large number of groups, charities and local organisations in the Voluntary, Community, Faith & Social Enterprise (VCFSE) sector in the county. Prior to that date, there had been numerous support groups in Suffolk, and it was decided principally by the local authorities that it would be more efficient if these groups merged into one so that they could benefit from economies of scale and a concentration of advisory services under the umbrella of a single support body.

Phil outlined an astonishing range of statistics relating to the VCFSE sector in Suffolk: 2821 charities, 12,000 unregistered community groups

– a concerning issue; numerous amateur groups, village hall committees, etc. All in all it was estimated that there were some 200,000 volunteers involved in this sector, which Phil calculated was worth c.£1/2billion in the county. He also commented that many charities were witnessing a decline in volunteer numbers, while some 44% had less than 3 months financial reserves; furthermore, a large number of charities were having to cope with an increasingly complex range of financial, legislative and management factors.

Fortunately CAS's role is to support organisations in the voluntary sector to enable them to operate more effectively, and offers a wide range of advisory and training services in such topics as IT, insurance, governance, safeguarding, leadership and advocacy. CAS is also heavily involved with three groups consisting of the NHS, local councils and numerous service providers which have been set up to commission and deliver health and care services in Suffolk and North East Essex.

In the concluding Q&A session, the most notable feature was the emphatic endorsement by Mark Murphy and Lewis Tyler of the valuable help and support given to their respective charities by CAS.

# The FIND "Dodgy" Santas and "Cheeky" Elves

By John Button

WOW! That was some Christmas effort! I can honestly say that the support from our Club for the FIND food bank Christmas parcel delivery was truly amazing, and absolutely showed our great Club at its very, very best.

I am a stats man – so a few for you to mull over!

- Between us we covered some 40 delivery slots
- 26 Rotarians, partners and helpers were involved
- We delivered well over 200 parcels
- We have been to Ipswich, Felixstowe, Woodbridge, Hadleigh, Leiston and Saxmundham

FIND will let me have a full stats breakdown in the New Year, and I will pass it on.

We have truly made many people's Christmases so much better than they would otherwise have been. The pleasure and excitement that most recipients show when we give them their parcels makes it all worthwhile.

You will all have your own memories and stories from your deliveries, but just a quick story of one gentleman who was really in need of some help and Christmas cheer that Steph had referred to FIND: Richard is a single parent who was struggling with two boys aged 8 and 6. He had been housed in the Kingsley Hotel in Ipswich, even though both boys



*Jane, the new FIND manager welcoming Billy and new member Keith to the food bank before they started their delivery run.*

*Well done guys – really nice beards!*

attended primary school in Felixstowe. Richard doesn't drive, so he was walking the boys to and from Ipswich train station each day, to get them to school.

Just before Christmas, he was found a two-bedroom flat in Walton near Felixstowe and so they jumped at this. However, he only had an electric saucepan and three plates, bowls, mugs and cutlery to move in with. With the help of Jane, Annie and John, the team at FIND pulled together a week's worth of groceries for the family a couple of days before they moved into their new home.

Richard said, "This is incredible, all this fresh food, vegetables, bread and dairy, meat and tins! Most of my tins went missing (they were "acquired" by other inhabitants of Kingsley Hotel) so I was thinking 'How am I going to find the money to stock our cupboards up again?' I really can't thank FIND enough, this will really give us a head start.

Last week Tony Baker and Chris Banham delivered some parcels to Rushmere Hall Primary School, and a teacher was so delighted that she wrote the



*Some of the Rotarians doing a FIND Christmas parcels delivery*

following thank you note: “It’s Louise Schultz here from Rushmere Hall Primary School. Just want to say a great big thank you for the parcel that you’ve donated today. It brought tears to the lady’s eyes in what is a dire situation for her. So, thank you very much and for it being delivered so kindly by the gentleman.”

So, as a Trustee of FIND, can I thank you one and all for the time and commitment you have given, it is much appreciated by all, and I hope you all found it rewarding and perhaps a little easier than previous years! Jane at FIND said: “We could not have done it without the help from Rotary”.

**Be Proud – Be Very Proud!**



*Shep and Neill doing a delivery to CYP Services at The Waterloo Centre in Leiston*

## AROUND IPSWICH

### Upcoming Inner Wheel Events

By Rosey Watson

Inner Wheel are organising a couple of events in the New Year, and we would love to have you take part.

The first is a Walk & Brunch. This event will take place on Sunday 11 January at Monica & Bill’s (Hill Farm, Fynn Lane, Tuddenham). There will be a long walk starting at 9:30, and other walks can leave after that. There will be a brunch served at 11:00am. The cost is £10 per head and the proceeds will go to the Lighthouse Charity.

If anyone wishes to join us could they please email [rosey.watson@sky.com](mailto:rosey.watson@sky.com) by 8 Jan 2026.



The second event is the Trivia Quiz, which will be held at Tuddenham Village Hall on Friday 6 February, 7:00pm start. Food will be provided, but please bring your own drinks & nibbles. The cost is £15 per head, with all proceeds going to St Elizabeth Hospice. Tables of 6 preferably. To book your table, please email [rosey.watson@sky.com](mailto:rosey.watson@sky.com) by 31 January 2026.

# Merry Christmas Wishes from

Eva Alcerreca

Eric Barnett

Tony Dodds

Jem Doncaster

Neill Keveren

Andy Lewis

Mark & Lesley Murphy

Bill Pipe

Bill Robinson

Peter Shepherd

George Woodward



## Dora Brown



### thank you for supporting us in 2025

sending a huge thank you to all our fantastic volunteers, donors and supporters for all you have done to help Dora this year

every hour of time, every penny donated, every event, every like or share on social media and every conversation telling someone new about Dora - all of this means that we can continue helping local families in crisis

we wish you all a Merry Christmas, a peaceful holiday and a Happy New Year

love, all the Dora team x



On behalf of **Blood  
cancer  
UK**

3a Lewes Close  
IPSWICH  
Suffolk  
1P3 8RX

30<sup>th</sup> November 2025

Mr N. Keveren  
Ipswich East Rotary Club  
21 Princethorpe Road  
Ipswich  
IP3 8NY

Dear Neill,

Please thank the Ipswich East Rotary Club so very much for the wonderful donation to Blood Cancer UK of £1,000.00 a truly magnificent amount.

It is by such donations that we are able to continue our research to find a complete cure for blood cancer.

*Allan.*

Yours sincerely  
Allan Gosling  
Honorary Chairman

A note from Neill Keveren:

"In the last Newsletter, you reported that Peter Shepherd and I made the final of the District Golf Pairs Knock Out at Thetford Golf Club and lost narrowly on the 18th hole. For coming 2nd, we received prize money of £100, which has been donated to the Community Support Fund."

Well done!



**The Mindful Life Group**  
Dedicated to older adult mental health

## **Mindfulness for Older Adults who Care** *Join our Free Online Course* **for Suffolk Residents aged 65 and over**

Next course starts: **Thursday 29<sup>th</sup> January 2026**

Time: **10am-11am**

Location: **Online (accessible from home)**

### **Why Choose Us?**

- ✓ Clinical Psychology-Led
- ✓ Registered Mindfulness Teachers
- ✓ Evidence-Based Interventions
- ✓ Tailored for Carers over 65

### **Potential Benefits**

- ✓ Enhance sleep quality
- ✓ Ease stress
- ✓ Improve resilience
- ✓ Combat loneliness
- ✓ Improve memory/attention
- ✓ Alleviate low mood/anxiety
- ✓ Help relieve chronic pain
- ✓ Promote relaxation

### **Feedback from one of our previous participants:**

*'I'm an absolutely great believer in the course, it really got me through...the relaxation techniques, which I still do, really helped me in quite a profound way'. JB*

To apply, visit  
[the-mindful-life.com](https://the-mindful-life.com)



**SUFFOLK**  
Community  
Foundation

## It's RYLA time!

The date for RYLA is set so Ipswich East needs to find, register and support candidates ASAP.  
There are 25 places to fill as the course is again being run jointly with District 1070.

Dates: **22nd to 29th August 2026**

Place: **Grafham Water Centre**

Cost: **£860.00 per delegate**

Age: **18-26 years** (applicants must be at least 18 years old before the course commences)

Please let Ed Nicholls or Secretary Robin know of anyone who would like to attend this fantastic course.



## ROLLING CALENDAR

Date	Event
23rd December	<b>No meeting.</b>
30th December	<b>No meeting.</b>
6th January	<b>Speaker meeting: Craig Sennett - My Adoption and DNA.</b> Details and registration via Wild Apricot.
13th January	<b>Speaker meeting: Rob Hart - CEO Genesis.</b> Details and registration via Wild Apricot.
15th January	<b>Fire Station Tour.</b> 6:30pm, limited to 12 people. If interested, please email Bill Robinson.
20th January	<b>Speaker meeting: TBC.</b> Partners welcome. Details and registration via Wild Apricot.

Date	Event
27th January	<b>Business meeting.</b> Details and registration via Wild Apricot.
3rd February	<b>Speaker meeting: Douglas Rintoul - New Wolsey Theatre.</b> Details and registration via Wild Apricot.
10th February	<b>Speaker meeting: Nick Hulme - CEO Ipswich &amp; Colchester NHS Trust.</b> Details and registration via Wild Apricot.
17th February	<b>Speaker meeting: Keith Miller - About Me (New Member Talk).</b> Details and registration via Wild Apricot.
24th February	<b>Business meeting.</b> Details and registration via Wild Apricot.

**At a glance:** If you want to get an idea of what we have going on when, make sure to check out the calendar page on our website: <https://www.ipswicheastrotaryclub.co.uk/calendar/>

You will be able to see what kind of events we have coming up, and you can also check against that when organising activities to avoid any clashes.

## DUTY ROTARIANS AND LUNCH MENU

Date	Duty Rotarians	Menu*
6th January	Eva Alcerreca John Barbour	Bangers and mash
13th January	Michelle Bevan-Margetts Norman Haines	Steak & ale pie
20th January	Jack Earwaker Bill Robinson	Scampi, chips and salad
27th January	David Knights Nigel Farthing	Chicken tikka masala

If you're unable to be a duty Rotarian, remember it is your responsibility to look for a replacement, and please notify our Secretary Robin as well as Steph Mackentyre of any changes.

\*Dietary requirements/Vegetarian option available upon request, please contact Steph Mackentyre at [info@inviewpublicity.co.uk](mailto:info@inviewpublicity.co.uk)

Hello! This time we have Karen Finch and David Chittick telling us all about them, so enjoy!

- Editor Eva

## Karen Finch: In Profile

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*Name:* Karen Finch.

*Where are you from?* Ipswich.

*Occupation (current or previous if retired):* Audiologist / Director.

*Member of Rotary since:* Not sure – 15 years, 2009 or 2010? I was the first female Rotarian for my sins!

*Do you currently hold a position within the Club? If so, what is it?* Not really, though I do have the title of Assistant Secretary.

*Tell us a bit about your personal life:*

Married to Melvyn, have two boys and two grandchildren and a fur baby called Obie. I am from a medical family - grandfather was a chemist (he used to own the chemist opposite the Gaumont, now the Regent), grandmother district nurse, uncle a GP and my father qualified as a vet and worked in Berners St vets. Sadly, he died at the young age of 26 when my Mum had my brother 12 months old and was pregnant with me. It was a tough upbringing based on survival and Mum didn't remarry until I was 14. But it didn't do me any harm, I understood from an early age to value those around you and what you had. My darling Mum is sadly in the very final stages of a 17-year-long dementia journey.

*What was your dream job when you were a kid?*

I fantasised about being an air hostess but as I went through my teens my 5'0" height didn't change and in those days you had to be 5'6" minimum!

*What was your first job?*

At age 14, I took my first Saturday job at a Tooks Bakery shop on Carr St. I used to take my wages and go to the fabric shop in town and buy myself pretty material offcuts and make all sorts of lovely clothes. Not that I have taken that through my life, I barely remember how to shorten a pair of trousers these days!

*A bit about your career or occupation:*

Left school for Suffolk College and an OND in hotel catering management as I vowed I wasn't going to join the family medical route BUT life seemed to have a map for me based on caring for others and soon I was drawn into an area that ticked all my boxes: Audiology. It wasn't on the careers board at school, you simply fell into it, it would seem!

In 1998, as a single mother of two small boys, I founded my first audiology business which became the largest provider of independent, holistic and ethical hearing care in Suffolk/Norfolk with 26 centres across the two counties. I employed 30 people including 10 personally trained audiology professionals. Just days before Boris Johnson shut the country down in 2020 due to Covid 19, I sold the business, not knowing what was about to face us all as we coped with the ever moving landscape of Covid. I spent the next 3 years in a consulting/locum capacity before deciding that I missed my own patients too much and needed to get back to the coal face, so to speak. Our new business All About Hearing is 3 years old this month. I have the best job in the world: I have helped thousands of people remain connected with the outside world by prescribing the very latest hearing technology and providing rehabilitative support and adaptive technology. In a nutshell, I help to change peoples lives.

*Favourite tippie?* Gin, bubbles or wine, but I'm way too fussy on the wine front!

*Radio or TV?* Neither, I rarely sit down to watch anything on TV and only listen to the radio when our friends Mark Lesley and Steph are on air. I catch more about what's going on in the world online.

*What kind of music do you like?*

I like many different music styles, but not really into country & western. If I had to pick one type, then it would be 80's soul pop.

*What are your hobbies?* Love cooking and entertaining friends, city breaks, walking with Obie and stopping off at the pub along the way, creating children's birthday cakes. Listening to audio books and podcasts has taken over in the last couple of years.

*What is the thing you are most proud of?*

Tricky question when I'm a strong family person as

my family make me proud. On a wider level, I've been fortunate to receive many awards in my career which has been amazing to be recognised by others. I served 18 years on the national council of my professional body, the BSHAA (British Society of Hearing Aid Audiologists) including being President for two years. I represented BSHAA at events around the Country, speaking in the House of Commons, and meeting with Government at 10 Downing Street. Most recently in September, I was given a lifetime achievement award for services to the profession.

*If you could travel back in time, what piece of advice would you give to 20-year-old you?*

**Spend time with people who drive you to be better, who you admire and who lead lives that you aspire to live. Do something that pushes you each day, put your big girl pants on and face your fears. Put simply: Persevere, Live intentionally, Trust your gut instinct.**



## David Chittick: In Profile

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*Name:* David Chittick.

*Where are you from?* Born in Dar Es Salaam, Tanzania. Family moved to Nairobi, Kenya, where we lived until I was the age of 12.

*Occupation (current or previous if retired):*  
General practitioner.

*Member of Rotary since:* 2011.

*Do you currently hold a position within the Club? If so, what is it?* Member of Club Service Committee.

*Tell us a bit about your personal life:*

Married with three grown up children. Joined Orchard Medical Practice as a partner in 1994. Currently work as a locum GP.

*What was your dream job when you were a kid?* Farmer.

*What was your first job?*

I worked in a bookshop that specialised in books on Chinese art and porcelain.

*A bit about your career or occupation:*

I trained as a GP in Sussex. After completing the training scheme, my wife and I took a job in New Zealand and travelled for 9 months.

During my time as a full-time partner, the practice moved into the new purpose-built premises at Orchard Street. We had trainee GPs working with us. My training role in the practice was the most rewarding part of being a GP.

*Favourite tippie?* Pint of Adnams Broadside.

*Radio or TV?* Radio.

*What kind of music do you like?*

Classical music, Mozart, Beethoven.

*What are your hobbies?* Golf, walking and swimming.

*What is the thing you are most proud of?*

Marrying Patricia.

*If you could travel back in time, what piece of advice would you give to 20-year-old you?*

**Be kind and caring towards others.**



## ONGOING COLLECTIONS

Remember we have an ongoing collection of ring pulls, as well as ink cartridges, which you can give to **Andy Lewis**.

The ring pulls are sent to the Philippines so that people there can make crafts to be sold, which helps them support their families.



**John Button** is still collecting postage stamps (they can be used ones), so if you're lucky enough to still receive any post with those, keep them and make sure to give them to him.

**The Ipswich Rotary Club** is collecting spectacles, which get forwarded to SpecSort York. After sorting and grading them, they're taken to Africa. Please contact Peter Rogers at: [peterrogers327515@gmail.com](mailto:peterrogers327515@gmail.com).



## UPCOMING PROJECTS UPDATES

We have a few projects and activities coming up, and volunteers are (usually) welcome. Please contact the relevant club member and join in!

- **Greener Ipswich** has created a series of planters in Ipswich TC which need watering. The plan is to get rehabilitated prisoners to do this work in the longer term. Help is needed to drive a van with a tank of water in the back around the town to do the watering. Please contact Andy Lewis if you can help.

- **FareShare** - are in need of van drivers and stores people 2 hours per week or per month. Please contact Andy Lewis if you can help.

- **Community Action Suffolk** are looking for volunteers and to come to our Club to talk about the work they do. Please contact Andy Lewis if you can help.

And that's it for today!

Just the usual reminder: to send photos, news, articles, stories, announcements, or any material (yes, even jokes) for publication in the newsletter, please address them to:

**[iercnewsletter@gmail.com](mailto:iercnewsletter@gmail.com)**

*The deadline to receive items for publication will be the Friday prior to the next issue (so for the next issue, that will be 16th of January. Needless to say, I would be very grateful if members kept the deadline in mind for a timely publication of materials.*

— Editor

STAY PAWsiTIVE!



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