



**West Stow Anglo Saxon Village Trust**

**Annual Report and Financial Statement  
for the Financial year ending 31<sup>st</sup> March 2023**

**Charity Number: 272897**

## **West Stow Anglo-Saxon Trust Annual Report April 2022 - March 2023**

### **Trustees' report 31 March 2023**

The Trustees present their report together with the financial statements of West Stow Anglo-Saxon Trust for the year to 31 March 2023.

As of the 31 March 2023 the Board of Trustees comprised eleven members of whom five were appointed by West Suffolk Council, one by the Council for British Archaeology, there were two Ex-Officio Trustees one from the Friends of West Stow and one a representative from Suffolk County Council, Archaeological Department. The remaining three trustees are not affiliated to any specific organisation and were elected by the other Trustees.

The Trustees who served up until the date of this report were as follows:

#### **Trustees**

Sarah Broughton\*

Ian Houlder\*

Susan Glossop\*

Stephen Frost\*

Simon Brown\*

Robert Carr

David Addy

Adrian Tindall

Catherine Hills

Faye Minter (Ex-Officio Trustee)

Alan Hamilton (Ex-Officio Trustee)

\* *West Suffolk Council appointees*

Within this twelve-month period the Trustees met formally on three occasions: the first being on the 4<sup>th</sup> July 2022, 21<sup>st</sup> November 2022 and the 20 March 2023. During this period the constitution of the trust has remained the same as has the board of trustees.

The business activities of the Trust are recovering from the impacts associated with the COVID pandemic which had negatively affected the operation over the previous two financial years.

The table below shows the visitor numbers for the financial year 2022-2023 and for comparison the preceding four years.

	2022-23	2021-22	2020-21	2019-20	2018-19
Group visits	14,947	10,000	456	14,369	15,304
General Admissions	22,155	24,774	11,158	21,648	20,986
Total visitors to Village (Pay Zone)	37,102	34,774	11,614	36,017	36,290
Visitor Centres (Non-Pay Zone)	81,521	70,216	26,681	82,145	90,787

Numbers are back to similar levels prior to the pandemic with the total visitors to the village being the highest in 5 years. School numbers are again buoyant.

### **Village update**

During the first quarter of the financial year, the following thatching works were progressed and completed by Andrew Neeve:

- new ridge covers have been installed on both living house and weaving house.
- a new thatched topcoat was installed to the north side of the living house.

Further thatching works have been identified as needing to be progressed next financial year and this includes a new ridges on both the hall and farmers house and repairs to the top coat of the workshop.

Provision for the new wild boar area commenced in April 2022 and involved fencing contractors installing a new zone in the tree belt outside the visitor centre. This new area provided the pigs with shade and a larger area to roam. The two new pigs eventually moved in August 2022 freeing up their old location for further experimental projects including crop growing and the installation of a Romano British kiln (planned for 2024).

In 2022 work continued with the Brecks Fen Edge and Rivers (BFER), National Lottery Heritage Fund project entitled 'clearing the view'. This particular initiative focused on the reconnection of the Anglo-Saxon settlement with the River Lark. The river is now clearly visible from the village and planting of the Hazel and willow has started to create the new coppiced woodland feature. The project has also funded the installation of a camera which will capture the changing landscape over a twelve-month period, encapsulating the seasonal changes.

### **Visitor Experience**

Schools have returned to normal numbers after the lockdown period and the education team have been busy. The general public have also benefitted from seeing both the Friends of West Stow's (FOWS) crops and the new area being maintained and extended to further understand the farming of the Anglo-Saxon period.

Improvements in the visitor centre includes vinyl flooring and lighting changes to the gallery. As this area is an introduction to the multi period element of the visit it is now in keeping with the Anglo-Saxon gallery under the café. The site continues to

improve with the museum experience, especially with the displays linked to the reconstructed face and loans from Cambridge and the Ashmolean Museums.

West Stow celebrated the 50th anniversary of the ending of the official excavation work (1965-1972) the FREE entry weekend included working with the FOWS, BFER, Archaeology department from Suffolk County Council and volunteer. Over 1,500 visitors attended the event.

New signage has been added to the blacksmith hut and bread oven to help with the visitors understanding of the village setting. Further signs include the oldest house project and the subject of 'deterioration versus neglect'- again to show this is part of the experimental project learning outcomes rather than lack of funding.

### **Health and wellbeing**

With help from the BFER project funding the site has also hosted Yoga sessions and dance sessions, both linked to health and wellbeing over the summer of 2022. The includes sessions have been hosted in the early mornings and evenings outside of the core visiting hours.

West Stow has also been working in partnership with the Green Light Trust (GLT) to support mental health, with group members helping to coppice the willow beds and help with repairs in the village.

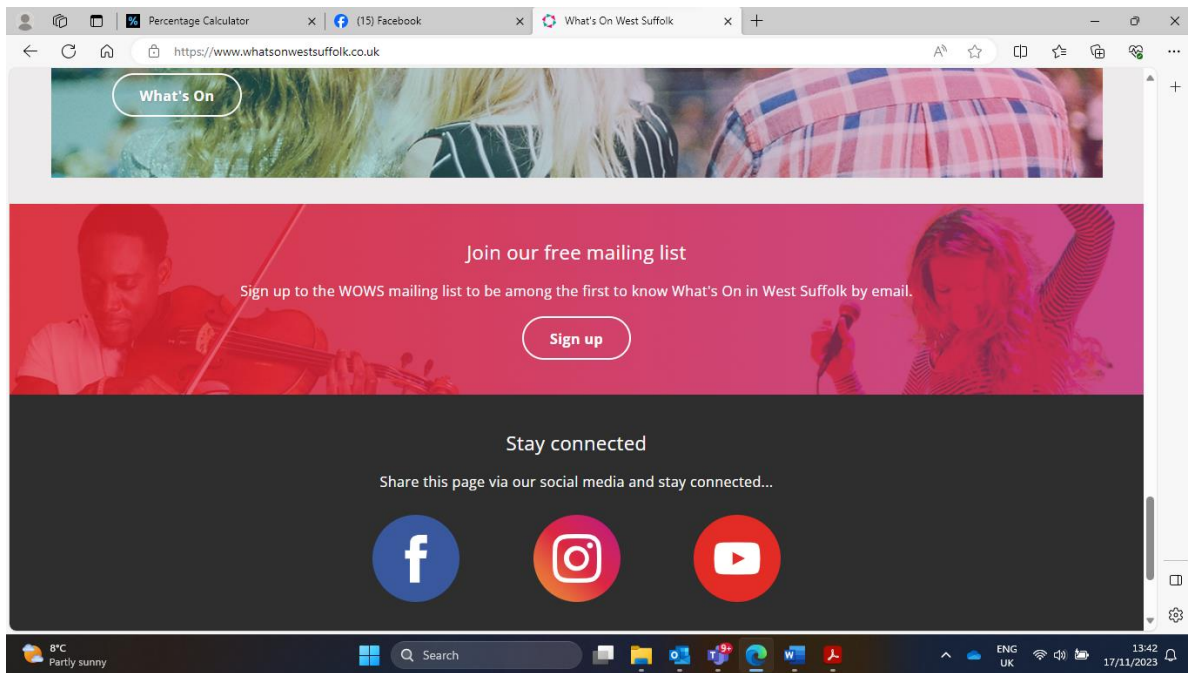
### **Marketing strategy**

In 2015, the team launched the 'What's on West Suffolk' brand, which provides the opportunity for cross-marketing across the full leisure portfolio. This means that at any given point, West Stow Anglo-Saxon Village (WSASV) now has potential exposure to almost 130,000 people via digital marketing (email and social media) or print. Naturally, this increase in reach has benefited the full portfolio.

Email marketing and boosted social media posts provide the best return on investment for West Stow Anglo Saxon Village. What's On West Suffolk email database has now increased to 15,878 customers. It has been our strategic vision for a number of years now to prioritise growing this database, as it provides a detailed insight into who these customers are, where they live and what type of events they purchase tickets for.

The database has also provided the marketing team with the data needed to run audience development campaigns and to target people who have previously booked for arts and cultural events in West Suffolk, but who may have not visited or booked tickets for an event at WSASV. Furthermore, it also allows the marketing team to communicate with existing WSASV customers to encourage them to make a repeat visit, or book for a specific event or festival.

The increased and diverse range of events now taking place at WSASV, such as well-being events including yoga, sound bathing, Pilates and meditation as well Theatre in the Parks and Dragon Fest, have all helped to attract new visitors to the village.



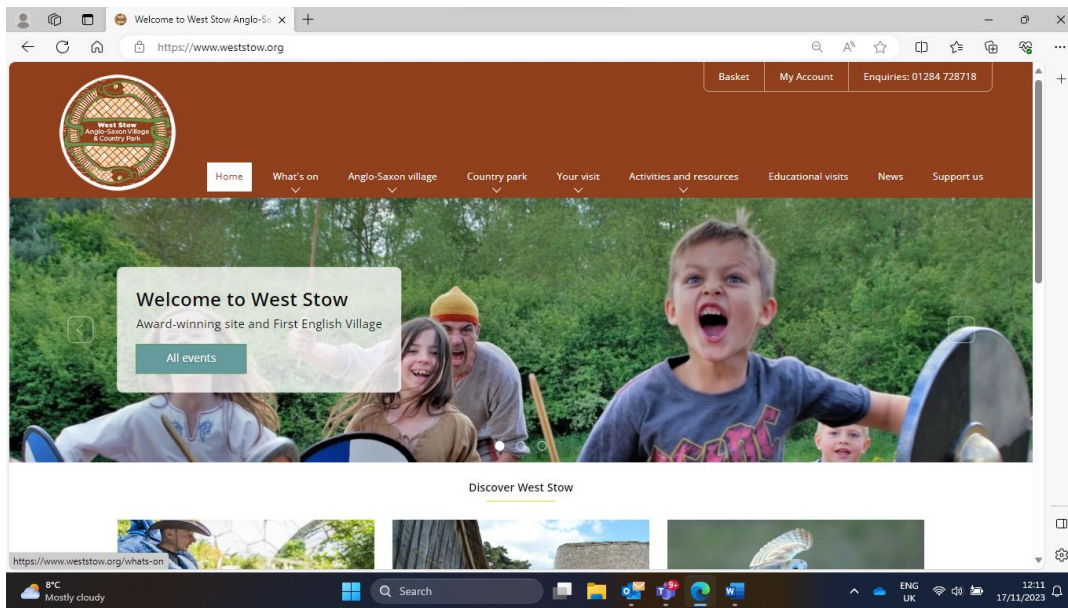
### **West Stow Anglo-Saxon Village & Country Park website**

In 2022/23, the West Stow ASV & CP website continued to see an increase in traffic. In 2022/23, 91,101 visits to the website were logged on Google Analytics. This is up from 81,318 (12%) in 2021/22 and 62,850 (45%) in 2020/21

As with previous years, website traffic increases during spring and summer and peaks in June and July.

The number of visitors landing on the West Stow website via social media generated by the West Suffolk Council Leisure marketing team has increased from 3.3% of total traffic in 2020/21 to 4.62% in 2022/23.

The number of website visitors coming directly to the website, as opposed to via a search engine has increased from 23.4% in 2020/21 to 29%. This means visitors have either directly entered the West Stow url into their browser or come to the website via a West Suffolk Council Leisure/WOWS email campaigns.



## Website visitor demographics

25% of our audience are between 25-34 followed by 20% that are between 35-44 and 16% between 45-54. This demonstrates we are appealing to young families. We also have a high number of over 65s, the grandparent category. The gender split is 59% female to 40% male, this is higher than some of our other websites.

## Locations

Most viewers who access the West Stow Anglo Saxon Village and Country Park website are, in order of quantity, from the following towns/cities: London, Cambridge, Norwich, Bury St Edmunds, Ipswich, Peterborough, Colchester, Birmingham, and Haverhill.

## Content

The most viewed pages in 2023/23 were the 'Homepage', 'What's on', 'Your visit', 'About' and 'Admission prices'.

## Devices

The most popular means of accessing our website is via a mobile phone (74% up 10% from 2021/22) then desktop at (13%) followed by tablet at (13%). We have therefore ensured that our websites remain compatible and optimised to view and navigate on all formats.

## Social Media

The West Stow Anglo-Saxon Village Facebook now page has continued to grow and now has 7,266 followers, which is up from 6,273 (16%) in 2021/22. In addition, the West Stow Country Park Facebook page now has a following of 3,621 followers, which is up from 2,748 (27%) in 2021/22.

West Stow's social media followers are online mostly between 6-9pm. The best time to post to reach the maximum amount of people is 8pm.

The West stow Instagram account has also grown well since being set up in December 2020. It now has a following of 1797, which is up from 1,412 (in 2021). Likewise, the West Stow Country Park Instagram account has increased to 1,405 followers, which is up 29% on 2021/22.

Facebook provided 90% of our social media acquisition this year and Instagram provided 6%. Research and analysis has identified that X (formerly Twitter) provides very poor return on investment and so our marketing resource has been focused into Facebook and Instagram. We will continue to monitor this. We will imminently be setting up a LinkedIn account for the Village and Country Park, which will provide a platform to a business focused audience.

In 2022/23, our top Social Media post formats in terms of ranking were:

1. Video
2. Photo
3. Link
4. Status
5. Shared video

Our social media audience are located in:

- |                    |                |
|--------------------|----------------|
| 1. Bury St Edmunds | 6. London      |
| 2. Ipswich         | 7. Thetford    |
| 3. Cambridge       | 8. Sudbury     |
| 4. Norwich         | 9. Newmarket   |
| 5. Ely             | 10. Stowmarket |

**WEST STOW ANGLO-SAXON VILLAGE TRUST**  
**FINAL ACCOUNTS 2022/23**

Actual Total Funds 2021/22 £	<b><u>RECEIPTS AND PAYMENTS ACCOUNT</u></b>	Note	Actual Unrestricted Funds 2022/23 £	Actual Restricted Funds 2022/23 £	<b>Actual Total Funds 2022/23 £</b>
	<b><u>Receipts</u></b>				
14	Interest	1	18	3	<b>21</b>
6,000	Central Government Business Grant	2	0		<b>0</b>
328	Donations	3	91		<b>91</b>
58,425	Visitor Charges	4	77,016		<b>77,016</b>
52,148	School Parties	5	71,663		<b>71,663</b>
116,915	<b>Total Receipts</b>		<b>148,788</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>148,791</b>
	<b><u>Payments</u></b>				
0	Archaeological Consultant	6	0		<b>0</b>
1,796	Other Expenses (Insurance - Premises)	7	1,935		<b>1,935</b>
110,573	Service Charge	8	148,679		<b>148,679</b>
112,369	<b>Total Payments</b>		<b>150,614</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>150,614</b>
4,546	<b>Net Receipts/(Payments)</b>	9	-1,826	3	<b>-1,823</b>
6,920	<b>Cash funds last year end</b>		<b>9,530</b>	<b>1,936</b>	<b>11,466</b>
11,466	<b>Cash funds this year end</b>		<b>7,704</b>	<b>1,939</b>	<b>9,643</b>



**WEST STOW ANGLO-SAXON VILLAGE TRUST**  
**FINAL ACCOUNTS 2022/2023**

<b>Actual Total Funds 2021/2022 £</b>	<b><u>STATEMENT OF ASSETS AND LIABILITIES AS AT 31ST MARCH 2023</u></b>	<b>Note</b>	<b>Actual Unrestricted Funds 2022/2023 £</b>	<b>Actual Restricted Funds 2022/2023 £</b>	<b>Actual Total Funds 2022/2023 £</b>
	-				
	<b><u>Cash Funds</u></b>				
<b>9,530</b>	Accumulated fund	10	7,704		<b>7,704</b>
<b>1,936</b>	Match funding account	11		1,939	<b>1,939</b>
<b>11,466</b>	<b>Total Cash Funds</b>		7,704	1,939	<b>9,643</b>

**WEST STOW ANGLO-SAXON VILLAGE TRUST**  
**FINAL ACCOUNTS 2022/2023**

**NOTES**

**RECEIPTS AND PAYMENTS ACCOUNT**

1	Interest	Interest on investment was earned at an average rate of 0.166% in 2022/2023.
2	Central Government Business Grant	
3	Donations	
4	Visitor Charges	} See note 8 below.
5	School Parties	
6	Archaeological Consultant	Suffolk County Council Archaeology Service now employs the Archaeological Consultant (w.e.f. 1st April 2005).
7	Other Expenses	This expenditure relates to the cost of the insurance premium payable on the houses.
8	Service Charge	This sum is equal to the income received from visitor charges and school parties (notes 4 and 5). It arises because of the management agreement with the District Council which is in a form acceptable to the Charity Commissioners.
9	Net receipts/(Payments)	After reviewing its financial position, the Trust agreed in June 1998 that future budgets be prepared on a break even basis (excluding any match funding payments).

**STATEMENT OF ASSETS AND LIABILITIES**

10	Accumulated fund	The low level of balances reflects past decisions to draw on reserves to fund deficits.
11	Match funding account	This account is set up to provide the possibility of match funding other outside grants when this is a condition of grant aid. It was set up by a generous grant from Suffolk County Council's locality budget arrangements.

**WEST STOW ANGLO-SAXON VILLAGE TRUST**  
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Section A

Independent Examiner's Report

Report to the trustees

Charity Name  
West Stow Anglo Saxon Village Trust

On accounts for the year  
ended

31 March 2023

Charity no  
(if any)

272897

Set out on pages

2, 3, 4, 5 & 6

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of the above charity ("the Trust") for the year ended **31 / 03 / 2023**.

Responsibilities and  
basis of report

As the charity's trustees, you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 ("the Act").

I report in respect of my examination of the Trust's accounts carried out under section 145 of the 2011 Act and in carrying out my examination, I have followed all the applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the Act.

Independent  
examiner's statement

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no material matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination which gives me cause to believe that in, any material respect:

- the accounting records were not kept in accordance with section 130 of the Charities Act; or
- the accounts did not accord with the accounting records; or
- the accounts did not comply with the applicable requirements concerning the form and content of accounts set out in the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 other than any requirement that the accounts give a 'true and fair' view which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination.

I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in this report in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

\*

Signed:

Date: 13/12/23

Name: Lorna Heather Jenkins

Relevant professional  
qualification(s) or body  
(if any):

MAAT

Address:

West Suffolk House

Western Way
Bury St Edmunds, Suffolk, IP33 3YU

**Section B****Disclosure**

Only complete if the examiner needs to highlight material matters of concern (see CC32, Independent examination of charity accounts: directions and guidance for examiners).

**Give here brief details of any items that the examiner wishes to disclose.**

There are no matters of concern.

**WEST STOW ANGLO-SAXON VILLAGE TRUST**  
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£	<b><u>RECEIPTS AND PAYMENTS ACCOUNT</u></b>		£	£	£
	<b><u>Receipts</u></b>				
14	Interest	1	18	3	21
6,000	Central Government Business Grant	2	0		0
328	Donations	3	91		91
58,425	Visitor Charges	4	77016		77,016
52,148	School Parties	5	71663		71,663
116,915	<b>Total Receipts</b>		148788	3	148,791
	<b><u>Payments</u></b>				
0	Archaeological Consultant	6	0		0
1,796	Other Expenses (Insurance - Premises)	7	1935		1,935
110,573	Service Charge	8	148679		148,679
112,369	<b>Total Payments</b>		150614	0	150,614
4,546	<b>Net Receipts/(Payments)</b>	9	-1826	3	-1,823
6,920	<b>Cash funds last year end</b>		9530	1,936	11,466
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**NOTES**

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3	Donations	Given to West Stow Anglo-Saxon Village Trust
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4		
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