

Community Networkers – Minutes, Wednesday 9 October, 7pm - 8:30pm

Attendees

Mari – Northstowe Arts
Peter – Northstowe Hub
Val – Foodbank
Graeme – Northstowe Hub
Audrey – Meridian Academies Trust
Firouz – County Councillor
Jawad – Northstowe Muslims
Michele - SCDC

Apologies

Petra – Northstowe Town Council
Beth – Northstowe Church Network/Youth Hive
Maria – Sustainable Northstowe

Agenda

1. Light Up Northstowe
2. Northstowe Art Exhibition
3. Meridian Academies Trust – final art showcase
4. Time Banking – to be carried forward

AOB

Updates from October meeting:

- African Heritage Event: this was held on Sunday 10 November with support from Northstowe Hub. They had a successful first event and moving on with that momentum, they are aiming for a spring/summer festival where they are able to use the outdoors to showcase their cultural heritage through dance, art and music. Around October 2025, they are aiming to commemorate Black History month where they can host events potentially with guest speakers with a goal to promote education, cultural pride and leadership especially amongst the youth.

Agenda

1. Light Up Northstowe

- Petra - The Christmas tree will be erected on 21 November, the net-lights on trees to the side will go up that week.
- Shola - was going to see if one of the residents would fit into the Santa Outfit, she was going to get back to Mari and Mark to let them know.
- Mari - There will be a programme of local musicians on stage including solo artists and groups. There will be a scene from We Will Rock You performed by students from Northstowe Education Campus, and a brass band.

- The light switch-on will be at 5:50pm followed by the school choir.
 - Lantern workshops have been very positive. They held a few new ones with some of the Northstowe faith groups, which were led by faith group leaders, the sessions included, what light in the winter means to faith groups.
 - There was a mixture of pre-booked and drop-ins. The half term event was very successful with approximately 50 people, plus a session with the Northstowe baby group. Pathfinder Church had an afternoon tea workshop (not faith based).
 - Northstowe Hub will be serving free hot chocolate before the light switch-on
 - There will be a toy swap from 5pm – 7pm
 - Call out for stewards and first aiders for the event, can you spare a couple of hours? If yes, please email: hello@northstowearts.co.uk
- Action, Firouz – will promote the food trucks attending the event on behalf of the Foodies

2. Northstowe Art Exhibition

Michele: we hoping to have an art exhibition in Northstowe in Autumn 2025, to include: local artists, people who inspire to be artists, people who are thinking about a career in art and would like to have a go at exhibiting for the first time. We would also like to include examples of artwork from various faith groups. We are also hoping to run some art workshops which will include instruction into preparing for an exhibition. The event is still in the planning stage at the moment, updates will be provided. We will be looking for volunteers to help with the exhibition, if you are interested, please email northstowe.community@scambs.gov.uk

3. Meridian Academies Trust – final art showcase

Audrey: On Wednesday, July 9th, there will be a showcase at Northstowe Learning Centre from 7pm. The showcase will feature the performing arts from NLC and from other schools within Meridian Academies Trust; however, the aim this year is to include arts items from the Northstowe community - music, dance, drama. There have already have been promotions for a Northstowe Chorus across social media sites - this chorus will perform at the showcase.

If you are interested in learning more about this, please contact acaldwell@meridiantrust.co.uk

They are also interested in having the choir at the Midsummer Festival next year.

4. Time Banking – to be carried forward

AOB

- Beth - Beer and Carols: the brass band has agreed to play before and after the carols. More volunteers are still required for the event, Beth will be sending out an email in the next couple of weeks.
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- Raised beds at The Cabin: the final part of the grant from Keepmoat was used to purchase a selection of spring bulbs for the raised beds at the back of the Cabin. These have now been planted, and hopefully will bring some colour to the garden in the springtime.
- Firouz – asked if there was any funding available to purchase music equipment for the Martin Bacon Academy.
- Val – Foodbank
 - They are interested in having a table at events so they can tell people about their work for the community. To make people aware that not everyone feels comfortable attending events, as they can't afford the additional activities if payment is required e.g. food and drink trucks, and therefore feel excluded. Graeme – wondered if a voucher scheme would be possible.
 - Language barriers often inhibit an understanding of how the Foodbank works i.e. requiring a voucher, how often people can attend, how much they can have and in some cases product ingredients.
 - Action- Firouz/ Graeme– to discuss how food truck vouchers etc. at events could be funded and provided to the correct people.

Networkers Action - Translators required.

- We are looking to keep a list of people who would be happy to translate for us. This may be for information relating to using the foodbank (especially for refugees) an event, activities and support groups at The Cabin in Northstowe. We are looking for a the biggest range of languages possible, please email northstowe.community@scams.gov.uk if you are happy for us to have your name, language/s spoken and written and the level of translation i.e. basic, fluent.

Date of next meeting: Wednesday 8 January