

Update report from The Pennoyer Centre

Over the past 12 months The Pennoyer Centre has continued to meet its 3 charitable objects: education, social/recreational & heritage preservation. Open 6 days a week, the Centre provides a maintained facility where people can meet and socialise in an accessible and warm environment. We facilitate regular events and community groups to promote social engagement and combat loneliness.

As an Asset of Community Value Pennoyer's provides a central hub in the community and is a multi-purpose building running a community cafe and a small museum dedicated to local heritage of the Pulham airships which is free to enter.

During 2023 the following groups took place at the Pennoyer Centre

Book group (monthly)

Meet Up Mondays (weekly)

Knit & Natter (Weekly)

Gardening club (Monthly)

Bingo (Monthly)

Trailblazers (Weekly)

Youth Group, Gaming (Monthly)

Board Games (weekly)

We have also organised other events and projects from the community hub, including regular monthly Film Nights, Pub Nights and Quiz Evenings. All of these are popular and well-attended by residents of Pulham St Mary and surrounding villages. Over the winter months we were designated a Warm Space by South Norfolk Council and provided free hot drinks, space to relax and wifi facilities open to all in the community.

In April 2023 we organised a village litter pick as part of the South Norfolk Council Big Litter pick. This was well attended by residents from Pulham St Mary and many paths, verges and areas were cleared of litter.

In May 2023 we broadcast the King's Coronation on the big screen at Pennoyers which provided the opportunity to anyone in the community to view this historic event in the company of others.

In October 2023 we ran a successful Silver Sunday event attended by 25 local people and funded by the Parish Council.

Other seasonal events have been organised by the Pennoyer Centre for the enjoyment of the residents of Pulham St Mary, focussing on families. These have included an Easter Egg Hunt event, Annual Conker competition, a Halloween Village Trail and Crafts, Christmas Fun Event to tie in with Harleston's Round Table Santa Sleigh Run.

In 2023 we organised two village Beer & Gin Festivals, one in July and the other in December. We also organise a Spring and Christmas Craft Fair. These are popular events which contribute to social cohesion in the village but also are vital fundraisers for the Centre.

In December 2023 we organised a village Christmas Tree switch on to tie in the Annual Beer Festival. The lights this year were switched on by Rev'd Carl Melville. The Christmas Tree was paid for by the Parish Council and the lights and power provided by the Centre.

In May 2023 photovoltaic (PV) panels were installed on the south aspect of the building's roof, paid for from reserves. This has already reduced our energy bills and reduced our carbon footprint significantly. This step has helped to reduce our risk of being overwhelmed by huge rises in electricity costs in the future.

In addition to the community events that take place in the Pennoyer Centre we have provided employment opportunities for 21 local people, of whom 14 live in the Pulhams.

Finally, it is important to state that none of this would have been possible without the input from a dedicated group of volunteers who run events, support the Centre, and fundraise to keep the building maintained. We are hugely grateful to all those who contribute to the Centre and make it a valued village resource for all to enjoy.