

FRIENDS' NEWSLETTER

Winter 2025: Issue 112



There did that year go!

It doesn't seem like 12 months ago that I met with Nigel and Anne to discuss the role of FOSP Newsletter Editor.....well here we are - a year on and 4 editions later!

I was extremely pleased and happy that my wife, Linda, also agreed to provide valuable help with the preparation and layout of the Newsletter - its "new look" is primarily down to her.

We hope that you like the "new feel" of the Newsletter, both from a content and layout point of view, based on our desire to make it appealing and more inclusive of the activities that take place at Stansted. Please don't hesitate to contact me if there is anything you'd like to say or if you have anything you'd like included on <u>peter.dudman1@virginmedia.com</u>. The last Copy Date for anything to be included in the Spring Newsletter is 30th January 2026.

Peter Dudman

Tews from the Director

Stansted Park has enjoyed another Recent ev

extremely busy season with a highly successful series of events including the Summer Festival and Proms Concert and with the Food Festival bedding in nicely in its 2nd year.

I think that everyone will be mightily relieved to have a somewhat quieter period - if only! The Winter events calendar is bursting with activity and events ranging from a horrifying Halloween experience in the Undercroft, a Murder Mystery evening, our annual Armistice Talk amongst others, to Christmas wreath making, Carol Services and Concerts. We have even managed to squeeze in a wedding over this period, so there is no let up as we seek to maximise the use of the Estate throughout the entire year.

I am very grateful to all the staff and volunteers who work so tirelessly to ensure that the House, Grounds, Footpaths and Forest always look at their best. Due to these intense efforts, the Estate is presented to the public and all our myriad of other guests to the very highest of standards; we should all be very proud of what we have achieved in pursuit of our Charitable Objectives.

Visitor numbers remain strong with over 5,000 people visiting the House so far this year with many 1,000s more enjoying visits to the Walled Gardens and wider estate.

Recent events have included a rather damp Open Air Cinema, Alfa Romeo and McClaren car rallies as well as a Wedding Showcase and a splendid corporate dinner entertaining clients who had attended the Goodwood Revival.

We have completed some major drainage work around Middle Lodge to ensure that all water is drawn away from the building and we have just started some further development work to improve the Main Visitors' Car Park.

We are in discussions with the architect to determine designs for the construction of 2 commercial units in the Maze Courtyard and the new Visitors' Information Point with a view to submitting a planning application shortly.

Following some reconfiguration of our commercial offices, I am very pleased to report that we are now fully let. Hopefully, the array of wonderful small businesses and entrepreneurs that we host at Stansted will thrive in this fantastic environment and weather the strong financial winds that seem all too prevailing at this time.

I do hope that we will see a great deal of the Friends over the Winter Season and, as ever, I would like to thank you for your continuing support, both financial and moral, which is hugely appreciated.

David Bennett



Chairman's Report

Membership continues to grow and there are a number of events in the coming months arranged by FOSP and the Foundation that you can still attend in 2025.

On behalf of the whole Committee, I would like to take this opportunity to wish all FOSP Members and their families a Happy Christmas and a Prosperous New Year

Nigel Smith

Notes from the Head Forester

Thankfully the brief period of useful rain we have had arrived just in time to save many of the young trees and hedge plants that were suffering from the drought, so recent inspections show much higher survival rates than I had earlier expected which is a bonus after such a difficult year for young trees. As I have deferred the start of the new woodland we are planting in Castle Field until the autumn of 2026 we will not have a huge planting programme this coming winter. We will therefore use that time to go through all recent plantings ensuring all maintenance is up to date and they are progressing as we would expect.

A recent formative pruning and general tidying up season by my team in the arboretum has prompted me to update the arboretum map and records. The Friends of Stansted Park generously paid for the original mapping and survey of the

arboretum in November 2006 which was carried out by Tom and Shirley Wright who I had met through the Royal Forestry Society. This was a huge improvement on the hand-drawn plan I had inherited from my predecessor John Rowe, although it was very useful as a base line for the new one. I updated the Wright's plan in 2014 and now have an excellent mapping system on computer so it was decided it was time to get all tree positions up to date and the species corresponding with the ongoing arboretum planting record.

A select group of the Highland cows are at present in the company of a new bull until Christmas when he will go back to the farm he is resident on. This means all being well we will have some calves in the spring. Stanley is a registered Highland bull and looks very settled in his temporary home

We will be continuing our Trees for a Tenner scheme this coming winter, focusing on the replanting of Oak Copse now the diseased ash have been removed from the centre of the wood. This wood has always been managed with an emphasis on wildlife so the new planting will be a mixture of native trees. The hazel that we coppied will re-sprout in the





spring and form the future shrub layer. We will be taking the opportunity to increase the width of the ride which will encircle the new planting so we can manage it on a two-zone cutting system with a short grass sward in the centre and taller vegetation on the edges which is cut in alternate years. Therefore, if anyone wishes to sponsor a tree or two or give them as gifts for Christmas, please contact the office for the forms required. The donor, recipient, tree species and site are recorded on a database and a certificate is sent out with details on it.

This autumn has seen an astounding mast year and trees, especially oak and sweet chestnut have been groaning under the weight of acorns and nuts. We have had several large chestnut branches break off due to the load they were carrying. This largesse will certainly be appreciated by a diverse range of

wildlife and I am hoping that in the spring there will be enough seedlings to get past the many things that will want to eat them.



Michael Prior



Garden News

Well autumn has arrived with great gusto, furnishing the estate with structures clothed in the beautiful warmth of autumnal colours. There is slight mist in the air most days, but when the sun decides to shine, textures and colours spring to life.

This is a time to enjoy the last of the life in the flower borders around the gardens, and these will then be enhanced with new plants to provide more interest next year. Annuals such as Cosmos and Tagetes are still flowering well. Perennials such as Dahlias and Salvias, continue to add colour. The birds have certainly had a feast this year with seedheads, fruits from various trees, and berries around the area including Cotoneaster and Pyracantha. Bees are still dancing on the Salvia uliginosa as it continues to dominate through these autumn months.

Autumnal walled garden

The weeks ahead will be filled with the pruning of large shrubs including Pyracantha and Elaeagnus, which will encourage a more balanced structure around the walled garden. December and January are a time to train the climbing roses. Crocus bulbs have been planted along the border leading to the tearoom as have Gladiolus byzantinus. Grasses, such as Stipa gigantea and Miscanthus 'Purple Fall', will be added to the central border along with a selection of new perennial plants including Catananche caerulea and Dierama pendulum.

The Dutch Garden is still a work in progress and the work party days have allowed us to clear some of the beds, which has provided a clearer view of the task ahead. Many thanks to the volunteers for their hard work.

At the moment it looks like we will have a very dry autumn, so enjoy the spectacle and let's hope we have some lovely crisp, sunny winter days to enjoy all that the garden has to offer.

Jan Atkinson - Contract Gardener





Stansted Park Foundation Bookshop

Why not visit the Stansted Foundation Second-hand bookshop in the Stansted Garden Centre and buy a pre-loved book for a Christmas present? There are also lots of lovely, smaller good quality books that will make excellent stocking fillers too. If you are into Christmas fiction, these will go on sale at the beginning of November. If someone you know has a favourite author, why not buy them a set of First Edition Hardbacks for their bookshelf. There are many good quality books in all subjects waiting for new homes.

We look forward to seeing you.



Regular Events

St Paul's Chapel Monthly Prayer Meetings

These will start again on Thursday the 8th January and the first Thursday of each month as before.

Complimentary light refreshments will also be served after the service - tea/coffee/biscuits. Entrance will be via the Pavilion Tearoom, through the Dutch Garden Gate to the Chapel. Everyone is always most welcome; and it would be appreciated by our Housekeeping Team if you can let us know if you are likely to attend so we can make sure we cater for enough people.

Guided Tours of Stansted House

Planned to restart in the Spring with more information appearing in the next Newsletter. Further information regarding these regular events can be had by phoning the Office on 023 9241 2265 Option 5.



Stansted Park Cricket Club 2025 Review

Following a very wet season in 2024 where every game seemed to be played in cold conditions under cloud and drizzle Stansted Park Cricket Club has relished the fine 2025 summer with long, hot days perfect for the sound of leather on willow followed by a refreshing beer at The Castle pub in Rowlands.

The club runs two friendly teams, one playing a full game on a Sunday afternoon and one playing the shorter twenty over format on midweek evenings through the height of the summer. We enjoyed mixed results on the Sunday games enjoying notable wins over Havant and Emsworth but lost the 'local derby' against Westbourne and coming out on the wrong side more often than not in the other games through the season. Traditionally, SPCC have enjoyed home advantage on a pitch which keeps low and catches out batsmen more used to harder, bouncier league pitches but with the sun baking down and the groundsman expertise of Pete Clutterbuck the pitches this year were very good for batting which perhaps removed our historic advantage somewhat! The Stansted Park grounds team have also been extra helpful in keeping the outfield mowed which allows the ball to fly off to the boundary more readily than in previous

The shorter format T20 side enjoyed more success winning 7 out of the 10 games played in total having won 5 from 6 at the start of the season. The success was built on having a settled team including a solid top order batting unit, some power hitters down the order and some miserly bowling figures from experienced operators keeping things tight. In the shorter format, one or two good players make a lot of difference, and we saw that to our advantage this season. The highlight of the season was beating Lord Sonic's XI who are a mercenary bunch of notable characters based around Albert Road in Southsea under the canny stewardship of ex-SPCC player lan Parmiter (AKA Lord Sonic and owner of Parmiter's antiques shop on Albert Road). This fixture has now been played for 15 years and the record going into the

game this season was 14-1 to the Sonics so expectations were not perhaps what they could have been. Things didn't start brilliantly; a 6 and a 4 off the first two balls of the Sonics innings but, from that point, SPCC dominated the game. A run out off the 3rd ball started a batting calamity which saw 4 ducks in the Sonics innings and only one meaningful partnership as they scrambled up to 111 from their 20 overs. They had a fast and fiery opening bowler who threatened to derail the Stansted charge to victory but once that storm had been weathered, we were able to get to the winning line with nearly 3 overs to spare and finally wrestle the ashes back from Lord Sonic himself!



SPCC team that finally regained the ashes from the

We are always looking for new players so if you like the thought of a game of cricket with a friendly and welcoming bunch please do get in touch. Our website is best place to start.. https://stanstedpark.play-cricket.com/home.

The fixtures for 2026, when finalised, should be available on our website towards the end of November - https://stanstedpark.play-cricket.com/Matches

Ian Graham

what's next for Friends in 2025 and 2026?

Friends Yuletide Tea – Wednesday, 3rd December 2025 @ 3:00pm

This popular event is back once again and tickets are on sale from the 3rd November. An invitation has been sent by email to FOSP Members with more detail. Please let us



know of any dietary and House access requirements when you book. We very much look forward to seeing you.

Springtime Tea – Thursday, 26th March @ 3:00pm





Past Events...

Stansted Park Foundation's Afternoon Music Concerts in 2025

Our Music Room Concerts have brought us all much pleasure in 2025; we have enjoyed a wealth of musical talent and entertainment and eagerly look forward to the next five concerts in 2026.

The 2025 season opened with a superb performance by the 'Fabulous Five' - aka 'Los Ladrones' - who brought us a fun afternoon filled with love in its many forms. We enjoyed excellent performances and some pretty dandy dressing up too. In April we were wonderfully entertained by Cathy Mathews, violin, accompanied by Eunice Pike on piano. who brought us a stunning programme from Beethoven, Elgar, Couperin-Kreisler and Grieg.



Jimmy Alderson

In September Jimmy Alderson, concert pianist, brought us a variety of composers including his favourite: Chopin. Jimmy said he wanted to end his concert hopefully and triumphantly; we all agreed he certainly achieved that and had inspired us all with his beautiful performance.

For our last concert of the year we were joined by Ensemble Concertante, Clarinet Quartet. They enchanted us with a sparkling performance of composers from Mozart to Gershwin and finished with calls of 'Encore' from a very large and delighted audience.

As another fantastic year closes, we look forward next year's programme opening on Thursday 12th March, with another splendid afternoon with Los Ladrones. I look forward to welcoming you. Discounted tickets available for FOSP member.

Maggie McMurray

"of Wars and Petticoats" - a FOSP Event

A great success!! The new FOSP event held recently, "Of Wars and Petticoats", the brainchild of Lynda Fulford and Jess Williams, was very well received by the members who attended.

After some refreshments, the three fifteen minute talks on the "Waterloo Sabre", "The Ponsonby Women" and "St Paul's Chapel" were enthusiastically delivered by our long serving Archivist Tessa Culley, House Steward Nigel Armstrong, and Jessica Williams, Stansted's Visitors and Collections Coordinator. Tessa took us back to the Battle of Waterloo and spoke of the history surrounding the sabre and how it came back to Stansted House. Nigel delved into the ancient history surrounding the Chapel up to the early 19th century, and Jess introduced us to Maria Fane, wife of the 4th Earl of Bessborough, and all her achievements, including 14 children!

The members then went on to enjoy one of two bespoke tours around the Mansion. During "The Ponsonby Women" tour led by Jess, she discussed their lives from the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. This is something Jess is very passionate about and it comes over in her ability to bring the Ponsonby Women to the forefront telling their often complicated stories and exploits, which made for a very interesting tour.

Those members who opted for "The Servants Quarters and those that worked at Stansted below stairs" tour, led by Lynda Fulford and Anne Burton were



The Footman's Quarters



The Kitchen

introduced to butlers, maids and housekeepers and other staff who actually worked at Stansted during the time when the Wilder family lived there, during the 1800s and through the early 1900s whilst the Bessborough family were in residence. Using information from the archives, the group learned their names, characters and their daily routines. These stories brought below stairs to life, painting a real picture of how the rooms were used by those living and working there over the years.

The FOSP Committee would like to thank the speakers and tour volunteers for their enthusiasm and insight to bringing the history of Stansted Park to life - a fascinating morning.



Corner

Contribution by Vanessa Bowler

Written from the London home of the Bessboroughs, 17 Cavendish Square, Blanche's letter reveals her pride in son Vere, Viscount Duncannon, who was standing for the Municipal Reform Party at the London County Council Election on 2nd March, 1907. And indeed, his party triumphed, pushing out The Progressive Party and

winning 79 seats on the council. The Mr Boyton mentioned in Blanche's letter was Sir James Boyton, an estate agent and Conservative politician. 17 Cavendish Square still stands today as office accommodation and the square itself was previously been home to a number of illustrious residents, including Princess Amelia, daughter of George II (whose portrait hangs in the hall at Stansted), Lord and Lady Nelson and painter George Romney.

The letter paper has a thin black border, suggesting a mourning period. Blanche's father-in-law, Rev Walter Ponsonby, 7th Earl Bessborough, had died just under a year before this letter was written.

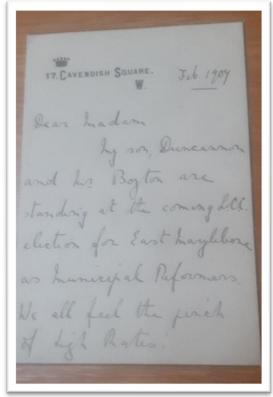
"17, Cavendish Square, W. Feb 1907

Dear Madam,

My son, Duncannon and Mr Boyton are standing at the coming L.C.C. election for East Marylebone as Municipal Reformers. We all feel the pinch of high rates! I therefore venture to appeal to you and to your sister for your votes and support on their behalf. Polling day is Saturday March 2nd.

Yours faithfully, B Bessborough"

Kindly reply to The Countess of Bessborough





The South Downs Food Festival returns to Stansted Park on the 6th and 7th June 2026, bringing a spectacular weekend of food, drink, and celebration.

Join cookery demonstrations, a live fire BBQ, live music, talks from producers, chefs and authors, craft cocktails, high tea on the terrace and plenty of family fun as we inspire the next generation to feast on healthy and delicious food.

Exclusively for previous festival foodies, use code EARLYBIRD25 to get 25% off ticket prices. Find out more at www.southdownsfoodfestival.com



Remembering Flying Officer Justin Gerrard Clermont.

on Armistice Day and what would have been his 104th birthday...

FLYING OFFICER JUSTIN GERRARD (GERRY) CLERMONT ROYAL CANADIAN AIRFORCE (11th November 1921 - 7th May 1944) 1939-45 Star, Air Crew Europe Star, Defence Medal, War Medal 1939-45, Canadian Volunteer Service Medal and Clasp. Gerry was also awarded the RCAF Operational Wings (posthumously).



Born on what would be Armistice Day, Flying Officer Justin Gerrard Clermont of 17\$ Squadron, South Holmsley. Gerry was returning from a sortie after attacking enemy shipping and targets of opportunity over the Normandy coast prior to D-Day when smoke was seen pouring from his Typhoon fighter by his wingman, Pilot Officer Rusty Townsend. Unable to land at RAF Funtington, due to another crash, he was told to make his way back to his operational airfield at South Holmsley, in the New Forest. This he was attempting when his fighter exploded over the Stansted Estatethe early Typhoon fighters, with their Napier engine, were prone to failure.

A memorial cross was erected in 1991 by local enthusiast, Graham Alderson, who witnessed the incident, aged 14 at the time. This memorial slowly became in a poor state of repair and it was agreed, after a suggestion of FOSP Committee Member, Bill Corrigan, in 2015 to replace it with a simple oak cross half-way

down the Avenue. This was confirmed by The Committee and was built and erected by Estate works staff under the guidance of the Head Forester, Michael Prior, in 2016.



Gerry's Funeral at Brookwood Cemetery, Surrey

Subsequently, on 6th May 2016, a dedication service was held by the Reverend Strain attended by Viscount & Viscountess Duncannon, Estate Staff and Volunteers, invited guests, local residents and four of Gerry's family from Canada. Also present was a representative of the Canadian Embassy, Lt Col Tressa Home, RCAF. During the dedication ceremony a Spitfire from Boultbee Flight

Academy, Chichester, flew over the Memorial site at low altitude dipping its wings in a salute.

We must also remember all of those that fell in action during two World Wars from the Stansted Estate.

Robert Godwin has made a DVD of Gerry's life, and the Memorial Service, so if any Friend would like to view it they can contact him at crana@ntlworld.com

Contribution by Robert Godwin

If you wish to attend the Armistice Service at Stansted it starts promptly at 10:50am on the front steps of the Mansion. Both the North and South car park are available for parking as the Dutch garden gate will be open. All are welcome and there will be light refreshments in the Main Hall directly after the service.

The Bread Oven in Stansted House









He swept the skies

To keep us safe

He gave his all

To keep us free

This young airman

Who showed no fear

That we might have peace And we might have hope

Of a better life to come.

By Robert and Valerie Godwin,

written for Justin Clermont's

Memorial Dedication Service.

During the recent redecoration of office space beyond the old kitchen in the Mansion I was fortunate to see, with Toby, the old bread oven and the adjoining room where meat/game would have been hung and stored from frames and hooks on the ceiling. The size of the bread oven and firebox suggest that much of the estate may have been provided with bread cooked there.

Unfortunately, this is not viewable by visitors but it is good to know that these items have been preserved and are in good order.

Tessa Culley, Archivist

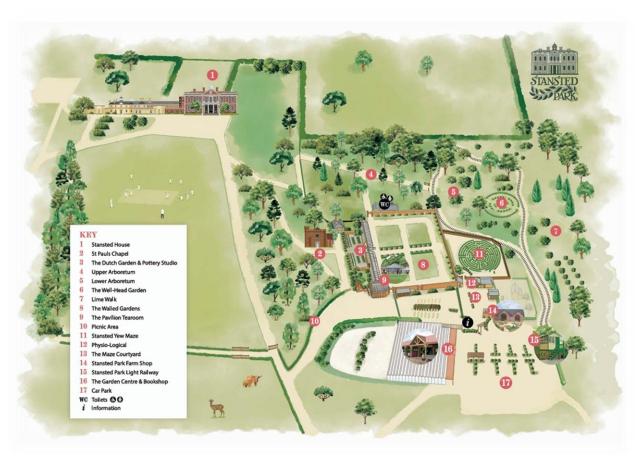




... also coming up in 2026



Explore all Stansted Park has to offer...





Physio-Logical

Managing Knee Osteoarthritis - How Exercise, Hands-on Therapy, and Shockwave Can Help

Knee pain is something many of us experience, particularly as we get older. One of the most common causes is **knee osteoarthritis** (OA). This is a condition where the protective cartilage in the joint gradually wears down. This can lead to stiffness, swelling, and discomfort, making it harder to do the things we enjoy, whether that's walking in the beautiful grounds of Stansted Park, gardening, or playing with grandchildren. The good news is that there are many ways to manage knee osteoarthritis. At Physio-Logical, based here at Stansted Park, we help people stay active and reduce pain through a combination of exercise, hands-on therapy, and specialist treatments such as **radial pressure shockwave therapy**.

Why keeping moving is so important

When your knee hurts, it can be tempting to rest more and avoid activity. While short periods of rest are fine, too much can actually make symptoms worse. Gentle movement helps to: *Reduce stiffness*.

- Maintain strength in the muscles that support your knee.
- Improve circulation and joint health.
- Boost overall confidence in using the joint.

Regular, low-impact exercise is one of the most effective ways to manage knee OA in the long term. Consistency is key, little and often is better than doing a lot in one go.

Simple exercises to try at home

Here are a few safe, practical exercises that can help support your knees.

1. Seated knee extensions

- Sit on a chair with feet flat on the floor.
- Slowly straighten one leg out in front of you and hold for 5 seconds.
- Lower back down.
- Repeat 10 times on each leg.

2. Sit-to-stand

- Sit on a sturdy chair.
- Stand up slowly, using your legs as much as possible (try not to push too much with your arms).
- Sit back down with control.
- Repeat 8-10 times.

3. Calf stretch

- Stand facing a wall, place hands on the wall.
- Step one leg back, keeping the heel down and knee straight.
- Lean gently forward until you feel a stretch in the calf.
- Hold 20-30 seconds, repeat 2-3 times per side.

4. Walking, cycling or swimming

These are excellent lowimpact activities that help keep joints mobile without putting too much strain on them.

Hands-on therapy

Alongside exercise, physiotherapists and sports therapists often use manual therapy (hands-on treatment) to:

- Reduce stiffness in the joint.
- Improve flexibility and mobility.

- Relieve muscle tension.
- Make it easier and more comfortable to get moving again.

This is particularly effective when combined with an exercise plan tailored to your needs.

Shockwave therapy - a modern option for knee pain

At Physio-Logical, we also offer Radial Pressure Shockwave Therapy (RPST). This is a safe, non-invasive treatment that uses sound waves delivered to the affected area. It helps by *stimulating healing in the tissues, reducing pain and improving mobility and function*. Shockwave therapy is often a good option for people who have tried exercise and hands-on treatment but still struggle with ongoing pain. Many patients find that combining all three approaches - exercise, manual therapy, and shockwave - brings the best results.

Staying active in Stansted Park and beyond

Living with knee osteoarthritis doesn't have to mean giving up the things you love. With the right support, most people can continue to stay active and enjoy life. Whether it's walking through the estate, joining in community activities, or simply moving with more confidence, there are effective options available.

If you would like advice, an assessment, or to find out more about the treatments we offer, including shockwave therapy then please get in touch with us at Physio-logical here in Stansted Park. Call our clinic today on 02394 350270 to find out more about how our team of experienced Physiotherapists and Sports Therapists can help. Alternatively, you can contact us via enquiries@physio-logical.net or book online at https://physio-logical.net/contact-us/



Diary Dates

To see the full itinerary of coming events and house tours either visit the Stansted website www.stanstedpark.co.uk.whatson, or contact the Office by email - enquiry@stanstedpark.co.uk or phone 023 9241 2265, option 5. FOSP Members can get discounts on most Foundation Events. Contact the Office with your Membership number for discount codes.

FRIENDS OF STANSTED PARK EVENTS

How to get here: Unless otherwise directed, please use the North Entrance to attend FOSP events. Drive through the automatic gates, veer to the right where the drive forks and park in front of the House.

STANSTED PARK FOUNDATION EVENTS

Please use the underlined links to web pages for more information or visit the What's On page for Stansted Park.

Buy a Gift Membership for someone for Christmas

If you are looking for a Birthday or Christmas present why not consider buying an annual membership for friends or family so that they can enjoy the benefits throughout the year? You can delay the start of this to suit the occasion by contacting the Membership Secretary at: friendsofstanstedpark@outlook.com.



COMMITTEE MEMBER CONTACT DETAILS

Chairman	Nigel Smith– <u>ngs.1957@hotmail.com</u>
Secretary	<u> </u>
Treasurer	
Membership Secretary	
Newsletter Editor	

For membership enquiries, please contact <u>Paul Bennett</u>. Membership cards will be issued to new members only. <u>Membership Renewals</u>: When renewing your membership, would you please consider setting up a Standing Order to save on volunteer time. Our Bank Details are: Sort Code 60-10-20 Account 61788627. Please give your membership number as a reference.

Consider keeping a photo of your membership card on your phone for ease of access.