

Hinxworth Parish Council News Update

Just another short note from the Parish Council as we are still unable to meet up under the Covid-19 restrictions. In line with Covid -19 rules the APM that usually takes place in April was cancelled, it has yet to be rearranged.

- Our Annual Accounts for 2019/20 have been audited by Jayne Whitfield as Internal Auditor. These will be ready to be signed off by Richard Cobb as Parish Council Chairman and Wendy Kitchener as Financial Officer Responsible prior to submission to PKF Littlejohn the external auditor in August.
- The small amount of Planning Applications received during the “Lock Down” have been dealt with, using the guidelines set out by Local Government.
- The work of resurfacing the High Street and Francis Road was put on hold due to the “Covid Lock Down.” We hope to see this work take place when it is safe to do so.
- Village Hall car park. A gate has been fitted across the drive, level with the front of the Hall. This work has become necessary due people outside our community using the car park late at night for activities not connected with the hall or recreation ground. We have been reluctant to do this in the past because we didn't want people parking in Francis Road should the car park be closed off. I am pleased to say that Richard Ground who lives opposite will open the gate in the morning and close it at night. So, this will not be an issue. Plus, we will fit a combination padlock with the number available to those using the hall. Many thanks to Richard.
- I'm afraid to report we have had over the last few weeks people driving from the Sandy area to use our tennis court and recreation ground, but then staying on drinking with loud music, sometimes until 1.30 am. Plus large amounts of litter have been left, which residents have had to clear up. After consulting the local Police, the Parish Council have locked the tennis court and the front gates of the recreation ground. Access by foot is still possible by walking to the left-hand side of the Village Hall and into the Rec' though the rear car park.
- I hope this will be a short-term situation and when “lock down” subsides people will stop looking for this opportunity of open spaces which are unsecure. Should anyone want the combination lock number for the tennis court ask any Parish Council member and we will happily give it to you. But please do not publish this number on “Facebook” or other social internet platforms for obvious reasons. Thank you.
- I would like to thank PCSO Chris Brabrook and the local Herts Police who have stepped up their visits to Hinxworth to help us with this situation, which when writing does appear to be working in moving these people on. It has been an issue throughout the county during the Covid 19 lockdown.
- The allotments in Francis road are now 100% taken up. They have been a hive of activity with people enjoying the open air in the lock down. There is a great sense of community where people can social distance but still meet people. It has been a real tonic in these strange times. Even I have learnt to grow a lettuce!
- Water Pressure in the village has been a real problem over the last 4-6 weeks. I would like to thank Councillor Nick Tiffin for

his work with Affinity Water and the working relationship he formed with James the escalation manager at Affinity Water. Without going into detail, the supply line from Ashwell water reservoir (our local storage facility) has now been fixed. I have never known the pressure to be this good in 40 years. Let's hope it continues, along with some rain.

- The Parish Council would like to thank the efforts of the Village Hall Committee during the lock-down. They have secured a £10,000 grant though NHDC from the central government Covid -19 response. This will secure the Hall over the next 2-3 years where income to the hall will be lower because of the ongoing effects of the pandemic. Very well done.
- The acts of kindness continue with people helping neighbours out with shopping, picking up prescriptions, etc. The list goes on.
- The war memorial clock is not chiming, we hope to be able to have this repair work completed along with its annual service very soon. Again, things are slower due to restrictions.
- It has been great to see the support for our Landlord and Lady Gerry and Julie with people using their takeaway service over the last months. We all hope to see the pub open soon. fingers crossed.
- Also, we have heard recently that the Archery Group will restart their meetings on the recreation ground from the 8th July following the guidelines laid out by Archery GB .With social distancing and restricted to 8-10 players, who have pre-booked. Following current hygiene guidelines.

Keep safe

*Richard Cobb - Chair of Hinxworth Parish Council.
Tel: 07874 779 788.*

WI Creative Corner

Some WI members have been very creative during the lock-down period, these are a few examples.



Copy Date: Please send all copy / pictures for August edition by July 20th to Mike Wade. E-mail: villagevoice3@gmail.com

On the beat

with PCSO 6522 Chris Brabrook

Dog owners urged to take extra care

Officers in North Herts are appealing for dog owners to take extra care when walking their pets. This follows an increase in complaints about out-of-control and over-friendly dogs, frightening other walkers and animals. Since we have been in lock-down we have understandably seen an increase in the number of people out and about during the day, explained Neighbourhood Inspector James Lant. There have always been plenty of dog walkers around, but now there are far more people out walking with their family, or on bikes, enjoying the countryside during the day. With the easing of lock-down restrictions, this number has increased even further and there are now even more people trying to share the same space.

With this has come an increase in reports of dogs off the lead, running around and worrying both animals and other people. We want dog owners to be aware of this and make sure, as a courtesy, they put their dog on a lead when near other animals, or when approaching other people. You may consider your dog to be very friendly and well behaved, but many people are intimidated by dogs, especially if they are allowed to jump up or pester them. You may have also been walking your dog without issue prior to lock-down, but these are now challenging times and our outside space is now much busier than it was. However, with a bit of consideration and thought for others, we should all be able to enjoy the outdoors safely."

You can tell us what matters most to you about policing, crime or anti-social behaviour in Hertfordshire using echo. Go to bit.ly/police-nherts and have your say

Hertfordshire Police

email: chris.brabrook@herts.pnn.police.uk Tel: 01438 757935

Ring 101 if you have suffered a crime or need police within a couple of hours. Ring 999 for an immediate response if you have just suffered a crime and for hare coursing.

Bedfordshire Police Contact:

For readers in Edworth, in emergency dial 999 or 112 from your mobile. Non emergencies ring 101, or 112 from a mobile.

Soup Lunch

As you all must realise our monthly soup lunches are on hold for the time being. We do have some money in the kitty, and I thought it might be a good idea to make some donations with it in the meantime. So, if anyone would like to nominate a local charity that they have a special interest in, I can then pick a few names out of the hat and send a donation to them. Let me know via email please (christinehook53@gmail.com). Many thanks.

Chrisi Hook



Three Horseshoes to Re-open

A Really Big Thank You...

First of all we would like to express our deepest gratitude to those of you who have supported us so loyally over the last few months. Whether you have used our takeaway or delivery service or simply called or popped in to see how we were doing.

THANKYOU

Like so many others, we have endured a period in our business that we could never have imagined. It has been tough, and definitely fair to say we've had more than a few sleepless nights since March. But the kindness and support we have received from so many of you will not be forgotten and gives us the motivation we need to embark on this next stage as we excitedly prepare for re-opening.

We are Opening on 4th July

We will initially be operating with a reduced team. This is whilst our furloughed staff are safely phased back and vulnerable members of our team continue to shield where necessary. Please be patient and understand that on occasion this may present some limitations and longer wait times than usual. We will do our very best to serve you as quickly and safely as possible.

The last chance to get a takeaway will be Wednesday 1st July lunch time. Thank you all again for your support. We look forward to seeing you all at the pub where we will have our full menu back on offer. And beer of course!

Please check our website or Facebook page for further details and for forthcoming events.

Gerry and Julie

A Poem in Praise of the Lockdown

*The first thing I noticed was I could hear the birds sing
Well that's not unusual, it's the beginning of spring,
The next thing I noticed was the road noise was hushed
Well that's not unusual when we get snow and slush,
But the next thing I noticed was no trails in the sky
And remembered one September when the planes couldn't fly.
And as the days began to pass I noticed more things:
Blue skies and badgers, red kites and buzzards
Skylarks and pigeons, starlings and mallards
Apple trees posied and conker trees candled
And earth in the glory of nature full mantled.
2020 by the lockdown will always be remembered -
'Cos I am not the only one who'll forever be thankful
For the trees, hedges and verges with flowers by the bankful.
And all the cars by the roadside with their petrol tanks still full!*



Corner Cottage in Hinworth recently re-thatched, Chris and Chris Vallely pictured outside. Similar picture taken approx 40 years ago by a previous owner, bottoms up

Hinxworth and Edworth WI

The Hinxworth and Edworth WI held its second successful virtual WI meeting on June 11. Nearly twice as many members as last time joined the meeting hosted by Sylvia Scales, via a lifesize computer link. As usual Sylvia welcomed all the members and said how lovely it was to see so many members joining in. WI business and notices were dealt with first, including Sylvia's hope that the planned July garden meeting will still be able to go ahead, much depends on government guidelines she said. Then our guest for the evening joined the meeting.

The speaker was Sally Mabey joining from Cardiff to give her talk entitled "From Eggheads to Mastermind". Sally a member of a Cardiff Women's Institute, gave her talk on her experiences of appearing on the quiz show Eggheads along with other fellow WI members and her teams' triumphant win against the Eggheads. The programme showed the six women win £11,000 after beating the Eggheads. Sally said that between them they managed to get three Eggheads out and that the whole experience was amazing. One of the best parts, she said, was putting across a better image of the WI proving to people that the WI is not just about jam and Jerusalem.

Sally then went on to appear on Mastermind, not once but twice. She concluded that it had been a wonderful experience but thought that her TV days were now over. It was really great to have a speaker for the evening and her talk was much enjoyed by the members.

The meeting concluded with the drawing of the raffle organised by Hilary. A surprised and highly delighted Heather was the lucky winner of a gorgeous hydrangea. All in all a very successful meeting.

Chrisi Hook

Archery to re-start

Hinxworth's archery club are due to start shooting again on the recreation field from 6pm to 8pm Wednesday evening the 8th July continuing on Friday evenings and Sunday mornings 10am to 1pm as in previous years. A restricted beginner's course will operate on Saturday mornings 11th, 18th & 25th July 10am to 1pm.

Due to restrictions required for social distancing only 8 to 10 archers per session can be accommodated. A booking system will be in place to even things out so that all archers will have an opportunity to get at least a couple of hours practise each week for the remaining summer months.

Only a small step but a hopeful sign for future activity in the village.

Hinxworth Archery Club

A Senior's Version of Facebook

For those of my generation who do not and cannot comprehend why Facebook exists: I am trying to make friends outside of Facebook while applying the same principles. Therefore, every day I walk down the street and tell passers-by what I have eaten, how I feel at the moment, what I have done the night before, what I will do later and with whom. I give them pictures of my family, my dog and of me gardening, taking things apart in the garage, watering the lawn, standing in front of landmarks, driving around town, having lunch, and doing what anybody and everybody does every day. I also listen to their conversations, give them "thumbs up" and tell them I "like" them. And it works just like Facebook. I already have 4 people following me: 2 police officers, a private investigator and a psychiatrist.

From a Newspaper cutting sent in by Gerald Clare

St Nicholas Church re-opening

I have been asked to pen a few words about our Church re-opening for services. In truth this is very difficult because things are changing if not every day then at least every few days. As I write this on 26th June, it seems likely that the Church will re-open on Sunday 5th July.

We will have to take precautions and these will need to be in place before this happens. We must maintain social distancing and this needs to be 2 metres. We must have hand sanitisers and equipment to clean as needed, a one-way system and other measures to keep us all safe. We are waiting on specific instructions from the diocese about some issues and we cannot confirm the opening until we have received them. We will post notices at the entrance of the Church to keep you informed. We will continue to do some services from St. Mary's, Ashwell on YouTube and Zoom for people who cannot or should not attend services in Church for the time being.

Robert Evens

A Note from Robert and Caroline

As I think many of you know, Caroline and I have been planning for my retirement. We have bought a property in Ashwell for this purpose and we will be moving into Library Cottage in due course. The Church of England, under common tenure, expect you to retire before you are 70. I have been in discussion with the Archdeacon about the timing of my retirement and I have decided that this should be at the end of October this year. My final services will be on the 18th October and I will retire on 31st October. I have enjoyed my ministry in all of the parishes that I have served immensely and feel very privileged that, having been ordained later than some, I have achieved twenty years of service in this Diocese. Coming back to this area has seemed almost like coming home and Caroline and I would like to thank you all for your friendship and support which we hope will continue in our retirement.

Robert and Caroline Evens

Onkey the Donkey

Seventeen-year-old Onkey the Donkey who used to live at Thorn's Farm with John and Antonia McKinley, has died. He hadn't long been in his new home at Millow Hall, Dunton, when around June 7th he caught his back leg in a rabbit hole. His stable mate, Winston the horse, was upset to lose his friend and began to show signs of equine depression, standing stock still in the middle of a field looking into space. He's better now that a new friend has been found for him, Flash a 24 year old Welsh pony.

Onkey will be much missed, he took part in a number of Palm Sunday walks through Hinxworth as well as appearing in nativity plays in the area.

Patrick Forbes



Ashwell Patients' Group

Testing for Coronavirus

If you have suspected coronavirus symptoms you can book either a drive-through or mail-order test. Visit www.gov.uk/coronavirus and enter your details to book a test, or for anyone who needs additional help, call 119 between 7am and 11pm or 18001 0300 303 2713 if you have hearing or speech difficulties.

You will be sent a booking code. The booking system will only show you details of test locations which are available in the following 24 hours. The coronavirus test centre can help you book a test, answer your enquiries about the testing process and what to do once you have your result, or chase up any delayed results.

Hertfordshire's mobile test sites are all open 10am to 4pm and are as follows:

- on Thursdays in Watford at the Central Watford Leisure Centre, WD17 3HA
- on Saturdays in Hertford at County Hall, Pegs Lane, S follow the signs to the test centre to ensure that you do not join a queue for the Household Waste Recycling Centre.

PLEASE TAKE A MOBILE to the test centre.

Tests are effective if people are swabbed in the first three days of having suspected symptoms. The nose and throat swab test cannot detect whether someone has had coronavirus in the past. Symptoms of coronavirus are: a new continuous cough, a high temperature, a loss of or change in a person's sense of taste or smell.

When all available slots have been booked at a particular site, that location will not appear on the national list. Additional capacity is added regularly so check-in on the website throughout the day if you are not successful in booking a local drive-through or mail-order the first time you try.

Tracing

If your test is positive you will be contacted by someone from the NHS Test and Trace team and will be told to self-isolate for 14 days.

Genuine contact tracers will:

- call you from 0300 013 5000
- send you a text message from "NHS"
- ask you to sign into the NHS test and Trace website
- ask for your full name and date of birth to confirm your identity, and postcode to offer support while you are self-isolating
- ask about your coronavirus symptoms
- ask you to provide the name, telephone number and/or email address of anyone you have had close contact with from 2 days before your symptoms started
- ask if anyone you have been in contact with is under 18 or lives outside the UK

Search online for "NHS Test and Trace – how it works" for more information. You will NEVER be asked to disclose bank details or ring an expensive phone number beginning with 09 or 087 by a genuine Test and Trace team member.

North Herts Garden Waste

Garden waste subscribers in North Herts will receive two additional months on their current 12-month subscription which will now run until 30 September. This follows a six-week suspension of the paid for service due to the coronavirus pandemic. The extension, agreed at a meeting of North Herts District Council's Cabinet on 23 June, is to acknowledge the disruption to the garden waste collection service and the inconvenience caused during the seasonal peak of garden waste production. NHDC will be contacting all subscribers to advise them of the extension shortly.

Celebrating Birds!

I am no expert but after a recent tot-up, I reckon I can identify about 70 different birds and their songs. This is down to my mother teaching me to recognise them as a child, longer ago than I can remember. There is an advantage in seeing a bird when you hear it, but it's not such a pleasure when you know full well that many of them are disappearing.



I grew up at the Corner Post Office in Letchworth next to Spring Road woods. I have a vivid memory of the 'sonic power shower' of the dawn chorus every spring. It was a huge sound tunnel - hundreds and hundreds of birds. I also remember falling asleep to the hooting of many owls that nested in the ancient trunks and branches of giant elms- pre 'dutch elm' disease. How lucky I was.

For the last three months we have had almost no aircraft noise and here in Caldecote, when there are north or east winds the A1 (M) is silent. As a result, it has been a treat to hear the birds singing. I've also had more time to observe what they're up to. In early March they begin to build their nests, first cleverly selecting stalks and twigs from winter debris in the garden and finishing with the luxury items-feathers and moss.

Around our little community I have noticed nesting song thrushes, blackbirds, robins, blue tits, great tits, long-tailed tits, dunnocks, goldfinches, chaffinches, wrens and wood pigeons. There are many reasons for a nest to fail- it may be disturbed, or a parent is killed. If all goes well, it's easy to miss the moment the young birds fledge- all of a sudden the nest is empty. The chicks hopefully survive hidden in the undergrowth or end up as food for other young - I have seen a magnificent weasel in the garden!

Living in Caldecote I have definitely improved my recognition of the farmland birds and their song. Around the fields here I can hear skylarks, garden warblers, corn buntings, reed buntings, yellowhammers, wagtails, whitethroats, willow warblers and linnets. I have nicknamed a nearby dense bramble patch 'linnet corner'.

Unfortunately, you have to drive a long way from here to hear a cuckoo, even further to hear a nightingale. In deepest Suffolk where my parents moved to from Letchworth, we would go for regular night time walks and hear the unbelievable, virtuosic song of not one, but several nightingales spread out amongst the natural 'scrub' and hawthorn bushes - their preferred habitat. Sadly in the last 30 years they have pretty much disappeared. And where are all the swallows, swifts and housemartins? I have seen the odd one or two pairs but the sky used to be criss-crossed with them.

When the BBC's Springwatch broadcast from the 'wilded' 3500 acre Knepp Estate in West Sussex, the incredible success of this 'wilding' project and the astonishing birdsong brought a tear to my eye. A tear of joy and hope. It's important to find reasons to be cheerful. Watching that programme on TV this year I am so inspired by the wonderful, infectious passion of all the presenters.

We can all do our bit they say: tidy up our gardens and hedges LESS, especially during the nesting months (March until the end of August), put (loud!) bells on our cats, feed the birds, dig a pond, put up nesting boxes. However, the bigger picture of what's happening in the environment- the struggle of our natural world to survive- can overwhelm us. We must cherish and celebrate what we have.

Clare England