

Food For Thought - Part One

Following my last entry, I won't mention my visit to Rome, and the once in an 11-year home win for Italy vs Scotland for fear of upsetting our pub landlord. Grown men were in tears next to me in the stadium (home fans), and the after party was quite something as I'm sure you can imagine!



Instead, I wanted to share an interesting quote I read recently by Wendell Berry; 'eating is an agricultural act'. That might not sound very profound given the fields that surround where we live, but lots of people up and down the country wouldn't make that link. They don't realise that the food they buy and eat is directly connected to an agricultural environment somewhere, be it locally or internationally. They are just too distanced from it.

Our food supply has become so commoditised, which might have some advantages, that no-one stops to ask 'what kind of farm has this come from?', 'where is this farm?', 'what impact do their farming practises have on that farm's ability to keep producing in the medium/long-term?' and so on.

And that's important because there are some worrying noises being made from farming groups about the sustainability of our food system. According to the Nature friendly Farming Network website, 'There is an urgent need to adapt the way we produce food and build food security. Extreme weather events are estimated to have increased household food bills in the UK by £605 over the last two years and by 2050, climate change could lead to a 20% rise in food prices globally'.

According to them, changes to the food system 'represent one of the most important tools in averting the worst impacts of global heating and simultaneously building resilience to the effects of warming that can no longer be avoided. Such change requires a shift in how we value the natural environment and its role in putting food on our plates'.

I'll continue this article in next month's Village Voice – so stay tuned!

Matthew Flint



"The last thing I remember is being thrown into the dryer."



Ashwell at Home 2024

Join us on Sunday 12th May 11am-5pm for a great day out for all the family! This beautiful and historic village welcomes visitors from near and far for a whole day of entertainment and fun for all ages at its annual fundraising event 'Ashwell at Home'.

The theme for 2024 is 'Hidden Ashwell' and there will be lots to see and do including a wide range of open gardens of all types and sizes; live music, dance and entertainment around the village; free workshops for children and adults; talks, walks and displays; plant sales and garden advice; farmers' question time; delicious coffee and cake, lunches and much more. Come along and join in the fun!



Entry £10 adults on the day (children free with paying adult), or £9 in advance from the website www.ashwellathome.org.uk. Parking is free.

Location: Ashwell is in North Hertfordshire, near Junction 10 of the A1(M). Ashwell, Hertfordshire SG7 5NY

Please visit the website for programme updates and to purchase advance tickets: www.ashwellathome.org.uk

All proceeds to Ashwell Museum, St Mary's Church and Ashwell Primary School.

Annual Newnham Parish Lunch

This will take place at Newnham Hall Cottage on Sunday 23rd of June at 1pm.

Tickets are £15, children under 12 are £5. These will be available from Yvonne Tookey for Hinxworth only 01462 742439, Fiona Hughes 01462 742709, Trish Farr 07816178496 and Lyn Stark 07540690066.

Fiona Hughes

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for Caldecote, Edworth, Hinxworth and Newnham

No.271

Ashwell and Bassingbourn Patients Group

Following some questions from interested V.V. readers, Peter Chapman has kindly provided this update for Village Voice: "The Ashwell and Bassingbourn Patients Group has members representing the various villages covered by the practice. Harry King represents Hinxworth and Wendy Kitchener represents Edworth. Also on the committee are the Senior Partner, Dr Jarvis, the Practice Manager, Katie Prince, and the Operations Manager, Jo Coleman, so we can get answers and explanations directly from the surgery staff.

Membership of the committee was initially by invitation but we now tend to fill vacancies when they arise with local folk who have expressed an interest in joining. Recently 3 new members have joined in this fashion. Anyone interested in joining can contact me and I can get back to them should a vacancy arise. The full membership list is posted on the surgery notice boards.

There are no time limits to membership.

We usually meet as a full committee every couple of months but communication continues in between as matters arise. We also have sub groups working on particular topics.

I always send a report on our meetings to the 5 village magazines in our area.

I'm happy to be contacted by email - peterchapman70@yahoo.co.uk."

There is also an information sheet online, describing the terms of reference for the group. Important to note is that the group does not handle complaints. It does, though, deal with issues and questions and can act to explain matters more fully to service users. One question recently put to the group via Peter Chapman, is why there are consistently no online appointments showing on the online/systemone website? Another question was how do we make contact with the patients group? The absence of online appointments will be raised at a meeting of the ABPG on Wednesday March 13th.

Total Triage

This is an NHS approach to how surgeries deal with appointment requests from patients. Our practice will be adopting this approach in the coming months having observed it successfully in action in other practices. It means that however a patient seeks to make an appointment – online, by phone or in person – their details will be noted using a structured form which will then be passed to one of our doctors for assessment or "triage". They will then speedily decide which is the most appropriate course of action to be followed, which could be to see (or speak by phone to) the appropriate member of our medical team (doctor, physician's assistant, nurse, clinical pharmacist, physiotherapist, social prescriber), see one of our village pharmacists, attend the Urgent Care Centre or A&E, or be referred to hospital. The patient will then be informed in timely fashion. The aim is to make the processing of appointment requests more efficient by ensuring that a patient's needs are met in the most appropriate way and by making the best use of the resources we have available.

Peter Chapman

Green Fingers

"April prepares her green traffic light & the world thinks...GO!"
(Christopher Morley).

Spring is here, more daylight hours, more sunshine, less rain and more time to enjoy outside. Here are some spring jobs to kick off the gardening season....

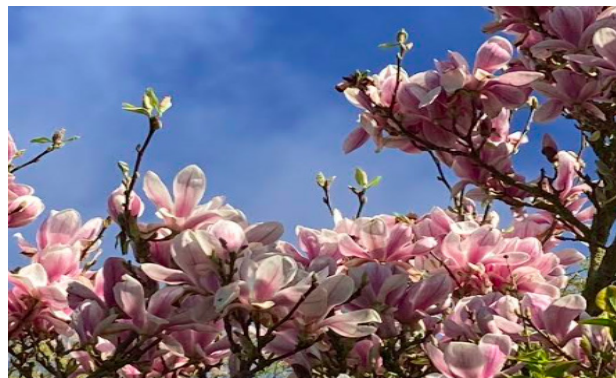


Photo above, by Sue Wilson - taken on New Inn Road

Fill Gaps in the garden: Divide plants that have become congested. Snowdrops can be divided and repositioned. Most self set perennials such as Aquilegia can also be moved.

Wild flowers/seeds: Annuals can be sown directly towards the end of the month. Buy a few packets and make your own mixture. Clear one small patch of earth to use. The results might inspire you to do more next year.

Flowers and shrubs: Evergreen shrubs and trees can be moved now provided the soil isn't frozen or waterlogged. Water regularly until the roots are established. Plant summer flowering bulbs such as Dahlias and Ixia into beds, borders or containers. This will give you something a little different through the summer months.

Put plant supports in place now so that plants can grow up through them and tie in climbers and roses to their supports.

Finish deadheading and cutting back dead foliage on perennials and ornamental grasses.

Trim back winter flowering heathers to prevent plants from becoming leggy - don't cut into the bare wood though.

Deadhead daffodils and tulips but leave the foliage intact to die back naturally.

If you haven't pruned your roses back yet - do so now before it is too late. The recommended months are usually February and March.

Vegetables and Fruits: Prepare vegetable seed beds and start to sow directly. Onions, shallots and garlic are an easy starter crop. Asparagus crowns are a great idea, nothing tastes better than fresh asparagus. Top tip - buy two year old crowns that can be harvested this year!

Apply slow release fertilizer around the bases of fruit bushes and raspberry canes.

Lawns: Lawn seed can be sown directly now. Aerate very damp or compacted areas with a fork. Brush away worm casts.

Parish Council Minutes

DRAFT MINUTES OF A MEETING OF HINXWORTH PARISH COUNCIL HELD IN THE VILLAGE HALL ON THURSDAY 7th MARCH 2024 AT 7.00 PM.

Present: Mr R. Cobb (Vice-Chairman), Mr T Lloyd, Mr T Dawson, Mrs. E Oliver & Mrs W Kitchener (Clerk).

Apologies: Nicholas Tiffin (Chairman), Steve Jarvis Hertfordshire County Councillor and Tom Tyson District Councillor.

Co- Opted Councillor:- The Councillors agreed to the co-opting of Elizabeth Oliver onto the Council. Proposed by Richard Cobb and seconded by Tony Dawson.

1. The Minutes of the last meeting: The minutes of the meeting of 1st February were agreed by the Parish Councillors. Proposed by Tony Lloyd and seconded by Dick Cobb.

2. Matters arising not elsewhere on the agenda. Nothing to report.

3. Correspondence: Nothing to report.

4. Finance: Current Parish Council Funds: The Councillors agreed to the expenditure for the current month. Proposed by Tony Dawson and seconded by Tony Lloyd.

5. Planning: Planning Consultations Decision Notices:

Application 23/02865/LBC:- The Old Bakery, Chapel Street.

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Application 23/02947/FP:- Marshfield Barn, New Inn Road.

Application 24/00219/TCA:- 6 Christy's Yard.

6. Highways: Traffic Calming Study: Steve Jarvis has notified the Parish Council of the following:- "The traffic calming work is all committed in the budget for the financial year 2024/25". The Parish Council was very pleased with this great news for Hinxworth given the backdrop of budget restrictions at County level.

7. Village Hall: Nothing to Report.

8. Recreation Ground: A request has been made to the Parish Council for the use of the recreation ground on June 22nd . The Chairman will write to organisation agreeing to this.

The Hinxworth Archery Club agreement has been signed with a 3% increase.

The Gate/Pedestrian Entrance work: This has now commenced.

9. The Tennis Court: Nothing to report.

10. Allotments: Nothing to report.

11. Any Other Urgent Business:

The War Memorial Clock: Graham Newman to be contacted again regarding the servicing of the clock.

The Footpath behind the Church: The Parish Councillors have been notified the local authority has closed this footpath temporarily to allow for a dangerous tree to be felled.

12: Date of the Next Meeting:

Annual Parish Meeting will take place at 8 pm on the 4 th of April.

The meeting closed at 7.50pm.

Wendy Kitchener (Clerk)

A New Arrival

Huge congratulations to Dan and Honor, who live in Forge Cottage (in Hinxworth). They welcomed baby Ezra Dorrell on 16th January....

Church Services For April

Sun 7th Apr	09.15	Family Service	St Nicholas, Hinxworth
Sun 14th Apr	09.15	Parish Communion	St Nicholas, Hinxworth
Sun 21st Apr	10.00	All Age Communion	St George's, Edworth
Sun 28th Apr	09.15	Service of the Word	St Nicholas, Hinxworth
Sun 28th Apr	09.30	BCP Communion	St Vincent's, Newnham

Your Church News

As is often true of a village church, the last few weeks at St Nicholas have included times of both joy and sadness.

A delightful baptism service was held on Sunday 4th February, when Ellie, Bobby and daughter Darcy, from Geoff, Viv and Heidi's family, were christened. Congregation numbers were bolstered by friends and family travelling from as far away as Nottingham to attend the celebrations.



The photo shows Ellie, Bobby and Darcy with Rev'd Chris, in front of the altar, following their baptisms.

Tragically, the baptism service was made all the more poignant by the sudden and unexpected death of Viv's daughter, Ellie's mother, Heidi, who died two weeks later. Our prayers are with the whole family at this time, and we know the service at the end of March, will be a fitting way to celebrate Heidi's life together.

After Easter, which we'll celebrate at the end of the month, we look forward to special events in April and May. These will include our annual St George's Day service at Edworth on the 21st April, our Annual Meeting on 5th May and the launch of our new monthly event on Sunday afternoons, which will be specially for younger children and their families to discover more about church (first one will be on the 26th May, so do save the date).

Alec Stephenson

Copy Date: Please send all copy/pictures for the May edition by April 20th. E: villagevoice3@gmail.com.

Visit Your Pharmacy First!



Did you know that Ashwell Pharmacy now offers you help with seven conditions without the need to get a GP appointment. These conditions are:

- Sinusitis - adults and children aged 12 yrs and over
- Sore Throat - adults and children aged 5 yrs and over
- Earache - children and young adults 1 yr to 17 yrs
- Impetigo - adults and children aged 1 yr and over
- Shingles - adults aged 18 yrs and over

NHS prescription charge rules apply where a medicine is supplied. In simple terms, when a pharmacist prescribes you certain medicines, if you are eligible, then they are free in the same way as they would be if prescribed by a doctor. If you normally pay for your prescriptions then the same charge applies at the pharmacy.

Many thanks to Harry King for providing the information for this article.

Some Issues with Tennis Shoes..! Demystifying Artificial Intelligence

Recently, I spent the day at our company's Head Office in Canary Wharf to test out the brand-new 'Ignition' suite which houses a range of cutting-edge, immersive technologies designed to take our clients on their AI journey. During one of these sessions, a colleague posed a seemingly simple question: "What actually is AI?" The room erupted in laughter, but I found it thought-provoking. How do we define this transformative force that's reshaping our world? Curious, I decided to delve deeper.

I asked a few friends to articulate their understanding of AI. Surprisingly, many struggled to put it into words. That's when I realised - we need to demystify AI. So what actually is it & how is it being used today?

I use AI tools in my day-to-day work, I rely on an AI companion called Co-Pilot. Perhaps you've heard of ChatGPT—it's akin to that. Co-Pilot takes on tasks that once demanded human effort. For instance, during meetings, it records audio and transcribes it into concise minutes & action items. When crafting documents, I jot down key messages and then let Co-Pilot polish them to perfection....in seconds!

Sounds fantastic? But what about the fear that AI will replace human jobs? My take is straightforward: Not in our lifetime, at least. AI is a powerful ally, but it's far from flawless. Case in point: While reviewing a Co-Pilot transcript, I stumbled upon the random phrase "tennis shoes" in the middle of a document about employee performance reviews. Odd, right? It turned out that it was meant to say "some issues." Clearly, we've got a little way to go before AI perfection, we still need the intervention of the human eye to get it right.



The AI journey is not about replacing us; it's about augmenting our abilities. And who knows? Maybe one day, Co-Pilot will stop confusing footwear with problems!

Karen Mills

Community Lunch

Great support as always for the March Community Lunch. Thank you to everyone who came along to the lunch - all the tables were full and the soup pans were soon emptied. As ever the soups all sounded so appetising it made for a difficult choice. We were also treated this month to some very tasty homemade bread, so a real bonus. Your support and generosity has allowed us to make donations this time towards the upkeep of St George's Church Edworth and also towards the funding for a rescue boat for marine mammals. Thank you everyone. And as always a big thank you to the soup makers, the bread maker and to those who helped clear the tables and chairs after lunch. Suggestions for your favourite charities that you would like the Community Lunch to help support are always welcome. The next Community Lunch will be on the 12th April 12.30 to 2pm. A date for your diary. Look forward to seeing everyone then.

Chrisi Hook

COMMUNITY LUNCH Hinxworth & Edworth Village Hall 12.30pm Friday 12th April



Price includes selection of homemade soups, breads & desserts plus tea / coffee

Local Farmers Publish New Book - The Annual Farmers Journal

A consortium of local farmers is pleased to announce the recent publication of their book: The Annual Farmers Journal (AFJ). The journal covers topics such as a day in the life of an arable farmer, dairy techniques, government subsidies, hedge cutting, ploughing fields, farm equipment and how to mend it, ditch clearance, combine harvesting, seed sowing at scale, crop rotation, preservation of local wildlife and footpath maintenance - It is beautifully illustrated and crammed full of useful information for farmers and countryside lovers alike. It's a must to read if you live in one of our villages.

This has been a long term project, said a consortium spokesperson, Mrs Annabel R. Able, and we are very pleased and proud to finally see the journal in print.



The book is available from April 1st in the Amazon bookstore in hard copy (£99.99) and Kindle versions (£26.99). Buy a copy now and support your local farmers.