

ISSUE

22

28 November
2022

The Village Voice



Welcome to our village newsletter

Hawstead is a great place to live, but it could be even better. From our recent village consultation, residents have lots of fabulous ideas for new clubs and groups. While your Community Council can help to facilitate the formation of new village groups open to all, the Community Council's small group of volunteers does not have the capacity to do it for you. So if you have made suggestions and would like to see more village activities for all age groups, please talk to friends and neighbours and make a plan. Contact a member of Hawstead Community Council for help with funding ideas, and if you need a venue for meetings, check out the village hall's online diary.

Note our copy deadline for the next issue of the Village Voice is 26 February 2023, in time for Easter! Send items to bookings@hawsteadvillagehall.co.uk. If you are new to the village, please make sure we have a valid email address for you so that you can be included on our regular email updates and the distribution list for the Village Voice.

Hawstead Community Council: consultation results

In mid-October 2022, Hawstead Community Council (HCC) sent out (by email and hand delivery) a residents consultation with a return date of 31 October. The aim was to gain a sense of the community's thoughts about the play area, village hall building and facilities, as well as the social community aspects of village life. Here we report on the results.



In May each year, you have the opportunity to elect your Community Council for the following 12 months. Your elected Council members are charged with preserving the community's village hall and the nearby fenced play area. Specifically, the current Object of Hawstead Community Council is as follows:



Hawstead Community
Council Consultation 2022

'To provide and manage recreational facilities, playing fields, playgrounds, community centres, social facilities and other amenities of a similar nature in the interests of social welfare for the benefit of the community residing in the parish of Hawstead Suffolk, the advancement of education, the protection of health, the relief of poverty, distress or sickness and in pursuing any objects which are now or hereafter may be deemed in law to be charitable by improving the conditions of life of the persons for whom the facilities are primarily intended'

Our consultation document was divided into four main sections as follows.

About the village and the respondents

Some 41 households replied to our consultation before the closing date, equating to 95 residents. We know that there are ~130 households within Hawstead, so that is a 32% response rate. The age profile of respondents can be seen in Figure 1. Of the respondents, 15% were aged 18 and under, 9% aged 19-30, 37% aged 30+-60 and 39% aged 60+ years.

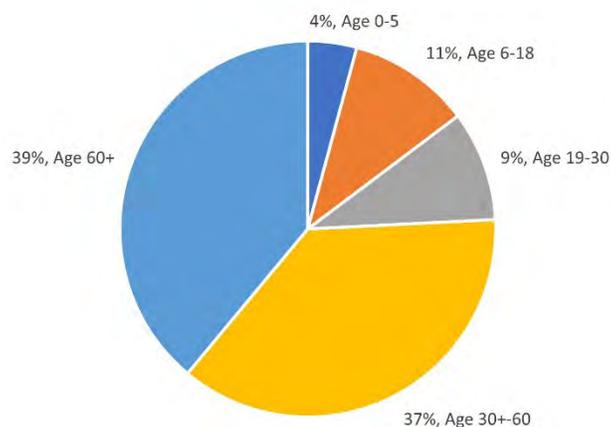


Figure 1 Pie chart showing the age profile of respondents.

We also asked about how many years the household has lived in Hawstead. The range was 1.5 to 85+ years, with an average of 20 years.

Of course, respondents to the survey are likely to be those most engaged in the community. So these results are not necessarily a true reflection of the actual proportion of Hawstead residents in each age category, nor the real average number of years a household has been resident in the village. Nevertheless, the age profile information was still worth collecting.

Hawstead's wooden play area

In general, the wooden play area adjacent to the village hall is still fulfilling the needs of villagers well (see Figure 2). It is felt by respondents to be safe, well maintained, well respected by users and accessible.



Clearly the original design and installation teams did a good job in providing a play area that is in keeping with the setting, has met the needs of young residents and has lasted well.

From the responses, items HCC needs to think about include perhaps more seating, a repair/replacement schedule, and a larger play area.

Residents made a number of suggestions for the play area: one new item each year; replace bark with safety bark; install a slide; install a zip wire; install a big net swing; add some equipment for residents aged 12+; build a basketball court; add equipment for younger children; install a better climbing frame; improve the surrounding fence; add more seating for adults; add a shade for the summer.

Hawstead Village Hall

We next asked a number of questions about the village hall building. Does it still meet the needs of residents?

Some 73% of respondents said that they use the village hall, so will have direct experience of the hall's facilities. When we focused on the facilities, the vast majority of respondents are very happy with them (see Figure 3). The main point worth mentioning is that of storage, of which we are already very well aware. Storage limitations at the hall do mean that some activities requiring items/materials to remain on site from day to day or week to week are extremely difficult to accommodate.

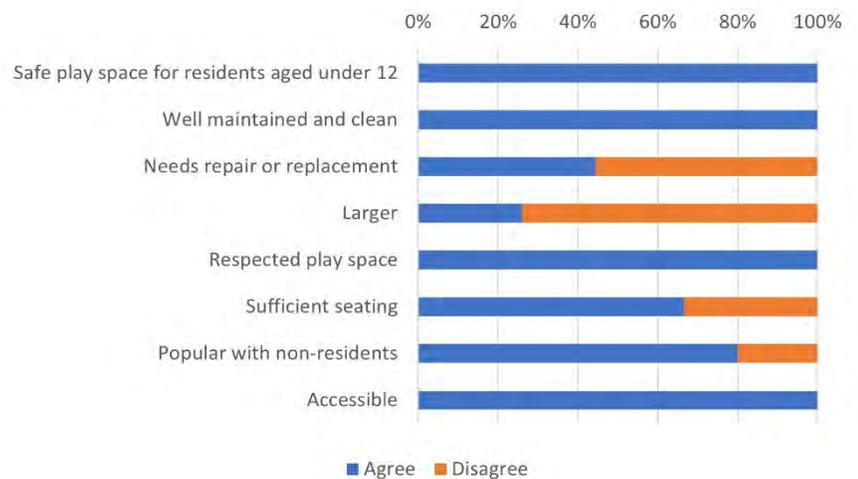


Figure 2 100% stacked bar chart showing the respondents' views on the play area.

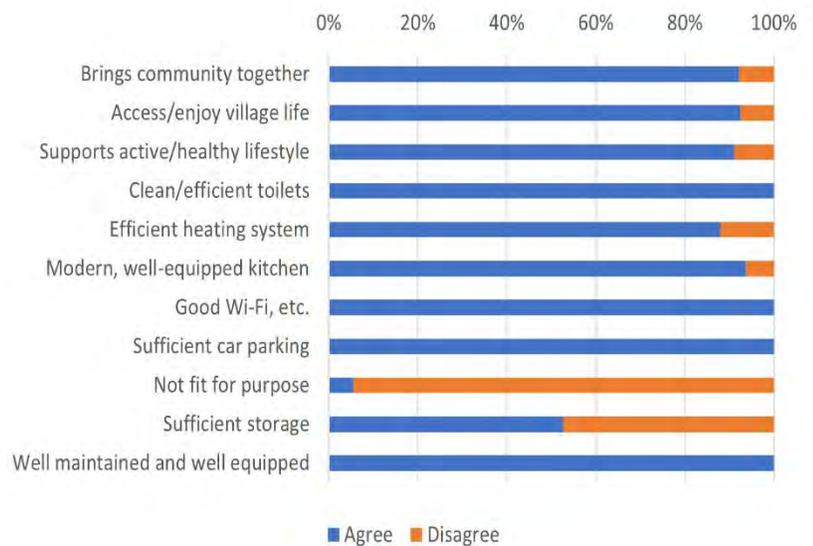


Figure 3 100% stacked bar chart showing the respondents' views on the village hall building.

In the recent past we have asked residents for ideas about what we might consider funding relating to the village hall premises and community activities. We received no replies. So in an effort to gain some sense of the perceived funding priorities of villagers, we asked for an opinion on a number of key costed projects. The results are shown in Figure 4.

Other ideas proposed by villagers include: install solar panels; buy a marquee/bouncy castle to hire out; install outdoor keep fit equipment; buy table tennis equipment; buy a large commercial dishwasher; buy a separate glass washer; improve ambient lighting for social events; install underfloor heating; invest in acoustic treatment of the ceiling; repair damaged radiators; install a wind turbine; buy a new front door mat; build an external storage facility; put more rubbish bins inside/outside; build a bigger car park; install another bottle bank; build extra inside storage space.

Note that some of these items are not within our remit. The parish council can consider any that fall within its remit.

Hire rates

We also asked some questions about hire rates and availability of the hall. 80% of respondents are happy with the village hall hire rates. Some residents felt they should be increased, while others felt hire should be free to residents if financially viable, and/or free to village clubs.

Availability of the hall to residents

Statistics relating to hall availability to residents are as follows:

- 56% of respondents have not needed to book the hall.
- 31% of respondents have booked the hall when they needed it.
- 3% of respondents (one person) has been unable to book the hall on their required date.

One respondent was not able to use the hall because they found it too expensive. One respondent would like to book the hall but it does not allow bouncy castles so the family had to go elsewhere. One respondent has been unable to book the hall next year for an event because it is already booked.

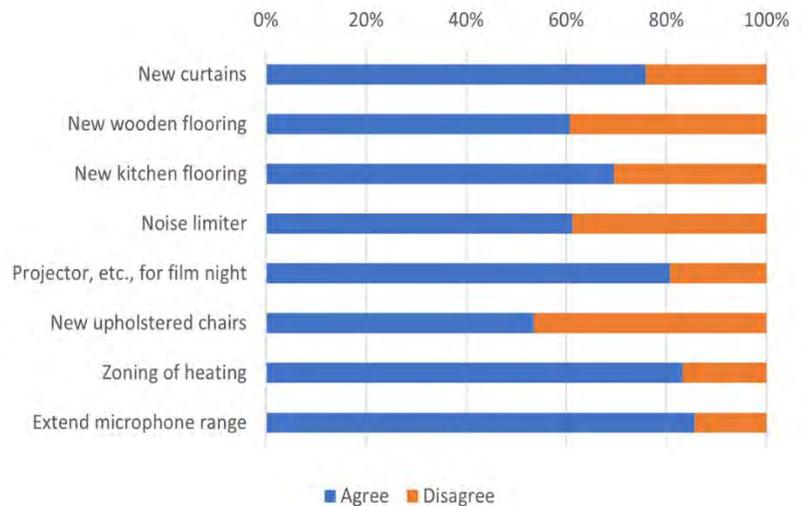


Figure 4 100% stacked bar chart showing respondents' views on costed improvements at the village hall.

Social activities and clubs

The last part of the consultation focused on social events within the village. Which events do residents attend and what else might residents like to see hosted by the village hall?

Figure 5 shows the relative popularity of the various events hosted by Hawstead Village Hall or staged by HCC.

The most popular event is our September village fete, with the Christmas drinks, Macmillan Coffee morning, plant fair and attendance at public meetings/elections following closely behind.

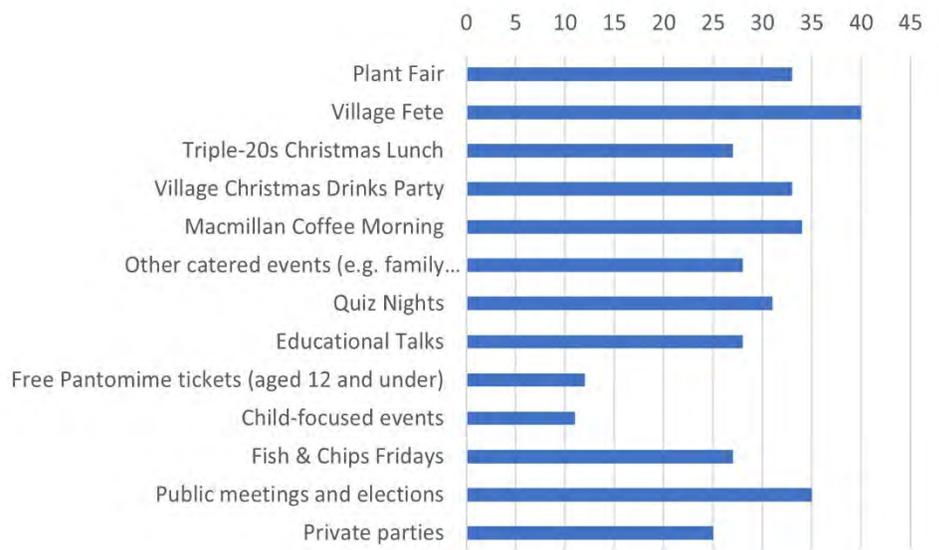


Figure 5 Bar chart showing the number of households (out of 41 respondents) that attend each of the currently offered social events.

While the child-focused events look poorly supported, given the low number of families in the village with young children (15% are currently 18 and under, 4% are 5 and under), a more careful analysis reveals strong support from families with young children.

Ideas for more child-focused events included: social nights/afternoons so the resident children get to know each other; a mother/toddler group; discos; treasure hunts; art/craft club; sports club; annual street party; occasional after-school/holiday activities; craft/baking morning; sewing club; youth club.

There was also a comment that teenagers and young adults are not catered for at all. We have mentioned this previously, and that is something our youth representative on HCC will be considering.

We also assessed the popularity of current clubs/events hosted at the hall. The results are shown in Figure 6.

Clearly the most popular use is attendance at parish council meetings, followed by church meetings and yoga classes (of which we currently host three).

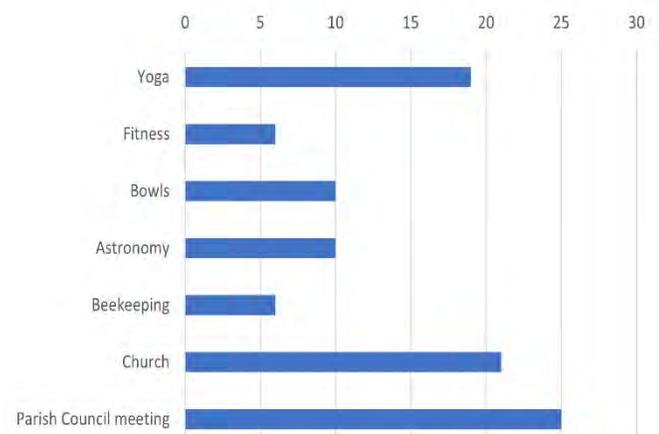


Figure 6 Of the 41 respondents, how many have and/or will support these activities based at the village hall?

Residents were also asked to rate their level of interest in a range of possible new activities (Figure 7). Clearly the most popular potential offerings are a film night, an art/craft club and more live music/dance events. Again, as expected, child-focused events are very popular with young families only.

Resident suggestions for new village events

or clubs include: more educational talks; more music/drama events; a curry night or similar; pub nights; a darts club; occasional weekend social events in winter months; a youth club; a pool table; a coffee morning (monthly or every 2 weeks); carol singing; a village pantomime; classical music concerts; a craft club; a music club; a choir/singing group; a dance club/classes; a Zumba class; a gardening club; a youth club/scouts/Young Farmers; a football club for children; a flower arranging group; an art club; Christmas wreath making; a Help a Neighbour group.

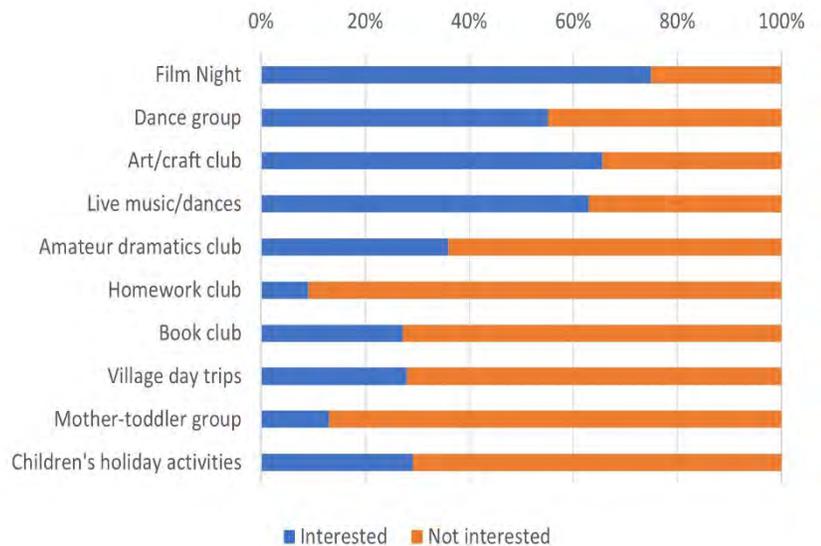


Figure 7 100% stacked bar chart showing levels of interest in a number of suggested new activities.

We also asked a few extra questions about specific events:

- 53% of respondents agreed to keep the 'Triple-20s' Christmas lunch for residents aged 60+ only
- 27% of respondents (10) supported a shared warm space, with a few villagers also offering to help out if this is actioned
- 81% of respondents read the Village Voice, but only 23% of respondents support a printed newsletter and the associated costs.

[So where do we go from here?](#)

Any late submissions will be added into the analysis of residents' views, but we will draw a line at the end of November. Results of the consultation will be fed into discussions about Hawstead Village Hall's financial stability going forward. We can then plan as a committee for hall use in 2023 and beyond and review hire rates and our terms and conditions.

New community-focused activities at the village hall

We are very happy to encourage the formation of community-led groups, but as a small team of volunteers we cannot form them ourselves. Our focus has to be managing the play area/hall building and organising the whole-village events. But our consultation has highlighted a desire for more activities, so it is up to residents to get together and make it happen.

There is local authority funding to support new groups in establishing themselves and buying equipment. We can point you in the right direction.

What else needs to be considered?

Hawstead Community Council has a responsibility to ensure that the village hall and play area remain available for village use. We can't achieve that without being financially viable.

At present, Hawstead Village Hall needs an income of £15–16,000 annually to break even, and that does not include the cost of repairs, new/replacement equipment, funding village events/activities, etc. In addition, the figure does not include the inevitable increases in heating and electricity costs. Costs to date from 2022 are show in the green panel. As a result, the hall needs to be hired as a venue for private and commercial bookings to bring in crucial income.

Current weekday bookings in 2022 (assuming they continue into 2023) bring in £6,500 annually. So other bookings have to raise as profit at least £9,500 for finances to break even. We will require more in 2023 to cover increases in fuel costs and to provide an income buffer for maintenance, repair and replacement. And assuming we wish to continue giving back to the village in terms of financing events like the Christmas lunch, Christmas drinks, Easter eggs, chocolate coins for Christmas, pantomime tickets, celebration lunches (e.g. Jubilees, Coronation), etc., further funds will be needed. We must also balance the amount of work required to run the events booked. If that work is too onerous for volunteers, then we will need to consider employing a caretaker and/or bookings clerk, and that approach adds even more to the annual amount of income required.

Hawstead Community Council

Basic annual hall costs in 2022

Insurance	£1018
Fire/alarms	£790
Oil	£970
Boiler	£410
Electricity	£780
Water	£270
Rates	£170
Waste	£450
Email/website	£500
Window cleaning	£200
Cleaning	£3500
Supplies	£260
Music licence	£550
Bank charges	£60
Maintenance	£5560

A weekly social catch up with our bowlers

Do you fancy a friendly weekly meet up with fellow villagers? Why not join the jolly members of Hawstead Bowls Club? They offer a great night out to chat informally about anything and everything, while also practising indoor bowls. The evening even includes a hot drink and biscuit!



Hawstead Bowls Club meets weekly on a Tuesday evening from 7.30pm at Hawstead Village Hall. It's the longest-running social club in the village, and welcomes residents of all ages and abilities. Absolutely no previous experience is required, and club equipment can be used, or bring your own. Just come along one evening, meet some friendly residents and give it a go!

Winter diary dates

Saturday 3 December – Hawstead's Advent Service and Christmas Tree Lighting Ceremony from 6.30pm at Hawstead Village Hall, followed by mince pies and mulled wine

Friday 9 December – Hawstead's 'Triple-20s' Christmas Lunch, 12.30pm for a 1pm start

Saturday 17 December – Hawstead's Christmas Drinks Party, 6-8pm

Sunday 18 December – Carol service from 6.30pm at All Saints, Hawstead, followed by mince pies and mulled wine

Friday 30 December – Children's Christmas Party 11.30am-2pm at Hawstead Village Hall. All resident children welcome, plus any visiting cousins or grandchildren, etc. All children must be accompanied by an adult. The focus is ages 12 and under.

Report: Children's Halloween Party

Friday 28 October at 4.30pm was the time set for the start of Hawstead's 2022 spooky experience for resident children. With 19 children and their families attending, it made for an exciting and fun-filled few hours, including party games and glitter tattoos.

Members of Hawstead Community Council combined forces to offer resident children the opportunity to gather together during half term for a Halloween Party. We appreciate that not everyone supports these celebrations, but many young families enjoy the fancy dress and spookiness. Offering them a safe place to come together and meet other village children, and take part in a short Trick or Treat walk with their



family, also meant that carers got to know each other and perhaps will offer each other support in the future.

Community Council members Scary Shannon and Spookalicious Sarah Bullen worked hard alongside family members Fearsome Faith and Ghastly George, and friend Jittering Jess, to create a Haunted Tea Party. The Halloween experience included ghoulish games and creepy crafts. Hiding in a dark corner was Slimy Susanne White with a range of Halloween glitter tattoos.

The young families enjoyed a fantastic few hours getting to know each other. The Halloween event culminated in a hair-raising worrying walk past the bone-chilling bus stop housing a resident wretched zombie, and onto perilous Pie House for a frightening welcome from Abominable Amanda and Jeopardous Jim.

Huge thanks to all the volunteers who joined forces to offer what might be our first Halloween children's tea party. This event was fully funded by Hawstead Community Council.





Children's Christmas Party

After the success of our Halloween party for resident children, we thought 'Why not do something similar for Christmas?' Let's try 11.30-2pm on Friday 30 December!

In the quieter period between Christmas and New Year, when parents are feeling tired and children might be a bit bored, young families can come down to the village hall and receive a festive welcome to include a jolly Christmas lunch party, Santa-approved games and more sparkly glitter tattoos! We'll provide some Christmas crafting activities, then a buffet lunch followed by Christmas fun and games.



Hawstead's Children's *Christmas Party*

Hawstead Village Hall
Friday 30 December
11.30am-2pm

Christmas crafts • Christmas lunch party
Christmas fun and games • Festive glitter tattoos

All children must be accompanied by an adult. Contact Sarah Bullen on 07470 097635 or sarahbullen84@gmail.com to book a place.

There is NO CHARGE for this event... it is fully funded by Hawstead Community Council. We need to know child and adult numbers. Visiting cousins and grandchildren also welcome... just book yourselves in!



All children must be accompanied by an adult carer. To register, simply contact Sarah Bullen on 07470 097635 or sarahbullen84@gmail.com with details of attendees. Cousins, grandparents, aunts and uncles invited too! There is no charge for this event, but if you fancy bringing along something to share, please let Sarah know. And don't forget to come dressed in something festive! This event is fully funded by Hawstead Community Council.



Hawstead Appreciation and Tasting Society

Hawstead's popular wine appreciation society (HATS) is open to all residents with an interest in wine. Since 2011, the club has met monthly to sample different vintages and discuss the various tastes and aromas. If you are interested in joining a waiting list for the club, please contact Judy.



HATS club members take it in turns to host an informal presentation, either individually or in couples. Presentations are diverse, covering anything from grape varieties to a particular country or even how much influence a label has on consumers. Eight bottles of wine are purchased, usually four white and four red. Members sample each variety and score on aroma, colour and taste.

Membership is open to all residents, with a membership fee of £12 per person per club night to cover the costs of wine and nibbles. Contact Judy Carter on judy@mmgd.co.uk for more information.

WANTED: Play area weeding volunteer

Interested in a small regular task March–October to help out your village?

Between around March and November our play area needs a watchful eye kept on it to ensure that no weeds start taking hold in the bark. If you feel you could check it for us once a week and pull up the odd weed, maybe while walking the dog or supervising children, please do get in touch. There's now a brown waste bin at the back of the village hall, so weeds are easily composted.

Contact bookings@hawsteadvillagehall.co.uk for more details or to offer your time.



Lucky winners of £20 M&S vouchers

Congratulations to Lesley Carey, Rosemary and Michael Harrison, and Dave Norman, the three lucky winners of a £20 gift card for Marks & Spencer. Enjoy spending it!

The gift cards were the potential reward to residents for returning their consultation documents before the closing date of 31 October. We had 41 returns by the end of October. The draw took place at the Hawstead Community Council meeting on Monday 7 November, with tickets selected by resident Judy Carter.

We are keen to receive consultation responses from the remaining Hawstead households that have not yet posted them through the village hall letterbox. Please do so by the end of November.



Christmas tree recycling

If you have a real Christmas tree that needs recycling after Christmas, why not arrange for a collection through SARS (Suffolk Accident Rescue Service) in return for a charity donation?

Local SARS volunteer and Hawstead resident Amanda Brown is keen to remind villagers that Suffolk Accident Rescue Service (<https://sars999.org.uk>), Suffolk's emergency medical charity, will benefit from a Christmas tree recycling scheme being offered by SUN SKIPS. If you would like to recycle your real tree in an environmentally friendly way without having to squash it into your car boot or chop it up for your brown bin, please consider supporting this good cause. Visit <https://www.sars999.org.uk/news/index.php/christmas-treecycling-194.html> to book your slot. For those who would prefer to arrange a collection date, you can call the SARS office on 01359 244186.



Churchyard tidy ups end for 2022

The organised Churchyard Tidy Ups for 2022 are finished, although villagers are welcome to pop in at any time and have a clear up!



We've had a great deal of support from residents helping to keep on top of mowing, weeding and hedge trimming... such a fantastic community spirit. A HUGE THANK YOU to all those who have turned up on one or more occasions armed with gardening equipment and gloves. Without the support of volunteers, the churchyard would very quickly become overtaken by

nettles and weeds, and fall into a state of disrepair. And an extra thank you to Lesley Carey and her team for the accompanying catering.



New compiler needed for the Village Voice

Since the start of lockdown early in 2020, Anne East has worked hard to generate content for this, our village newsletter. While we do have some regular contributors from the Community Council and other villagers, we need more! Anne has now stepped away from managing the Village Voice, so we would like to find another villager who has the necessary skills to pick up the baton. Can you send out emails to remind contributors of upcoming deadlines? Can you lay out content attractively in Word or similar? Can you handle photographs and write content yourself to fill the gaps? If so, and you would like to help villagers stay up to date with what's happening in the village and further afield, please get in touch through bookings@hawsteadvillagehall.co.uk.



It's pantomime season: 'Oh no it isn't...'

This year's pantomime at the Theatre Royal in Bury St Edmunds is The Legend of Robin Hood.

Hawstead Community Council is delighted to be able to fund tickets for our youngest residents... and here are the details.

'Pity the impoverished people of Nottingham. Their scheming Sheriff is relentlessly raising his taxes. Most folks have had to quit the city and move out to Sherwood Forest as Nottingham becomes the preserve of the uber-rich. Yet fear not... a hero has emerged: Robin of Loxley. Not only does he steal from the rich and give to the poor, but he also looks fantastic in tights! But Robin is not alone. Maid Marion, loud-mouthed Little Joan and puny pauper, Young Rob, have joined the fight. It's people power versus 'the Man'. Let's just hope the little guy can save the day!'



Hawstead Community Council will refund the cost of seats for each resident child's (aged 12 and under) ticket up to the value of £19.50 per child. This enables families to choose their own seats. Parents/carers will need to book and pay for tickets direct with the theatre.

Note there are special **family saver performances**, as well as **accessible shows**, including a **BSL performance** on

7 December, a **Touch Tour** on 8 January and a **Relaxed performance** on 8 January. Check out the website at theatreroyal.org/shows/the-legend-of-robin-hood for full details.

To apply for a refund for your child's ticket, please contact bookings@hawsteadvillagehall.co.uk. All we'd like in return, if possible, is a photograph of the family enjoying the show!





'Triple-20s' Christmas Lunch

Once again, Hawstead Community Council is pleased to invite all residents aged 'triple-20' and over to its annual Christmas Lunch. Welcoming superb cuisine, sparkling decorations and great company, this traditional Christmas meal is offered free to all qualifying residents. Get yourself booked in quick to secure your seat at the festive table!

Our annual Hawstead Christmas Lunch is offered **FREE** to all villagers aged 'triple-20' and over (60+). The lunch is organised and funded by Hawstead Community Council. The aim is for everyone to enjoy a meal together in the spirit of community and friendship. **RSVP to carolinemiller033@gmail.com or 07980 675137.** Last year, both guests and helpers had a great time. We served cocktails on arrival, followed by a catered three-course meal, and ending with delicious Christmas pudding, port, cheese and biscuits! It was such a success, we are following the same format this year. Remember, we can also cater for **Meals on Wheels** if there are any residents unable to make it down to the village hall. Just let us know!

Partners from outside the village are very welcome (as well as a younger friend or partner), but we do then ask for a contribution to cover the cost of the lunch (£22). Dress code: party... or whatever you feel comfortable in!



All villagers are invited to the
FREE Hawstead
Christmas drinks party
Saturday 17 December, 6-8pm, Village Hall



Wear a Christmas jumper or hat for the chance to win a bottle of champagne or kids' prizes for the most creative entrants.

* If you'd like a lift to or from the party just ask when you RSVP to carolinemiller033@gmail.com

Free drinks & nibbles provided by
Hawstead Community Council.

Regular weekday events at the Village Hall

The following events are **open to all villagers** and are run at the Village Hall

Weekly events

- **Yoga** with Sam every Tuesday morning from 9.15am
- **Yoga** with Amber every Tuesday evening from 6pm (picture on the right in the summer)
- **Bowls Club** every Tuesday evening from 7.30pm
- **Yoga** with Saffron Yoga (Siobhan) every Thursday from 9.30am
- **Fitness** with Michelle every Thursday from 7pm



Other events

- **Fish & Chips Fridays** – dates as advertised, 5-7pm
- **HATS** – Hawstead Appreciation & Tasting Society – meeting monthly on a Thursday evening from around 8pm



If you have an idea for a regular village club, please get together with a group of like-minded residents and make it happen. Subject to finances, Hawstead Community Council will consider supporting the club with free hall hire if it meets a number of requirements, including being open and welcoming to all residents, and comprising a majority of residents within its membership. We can also offer tips on gaining extra funding should it be required.

CALL FOR VILLAGE VOLUNTEERS to help set up for and serve our festive 'Triple-20s' Christmas lunch

Traditionally, this event is set up and served by younger members of our village who also join the guests for lunch. Volunteers will be well fed and watered, so it won't be all work! And you'll also have the opportunity to socialise with neighbours. Volunteers are also needed to help decorate the hall on the evening of Thursday 8 December, including hanging fairy lights. We will also need waiters to serve lunch and clear away on Friday 9 December (12–4pm, or part thereof). Please contact Caroline Miller on 07980 675137 or carolinemiller033@gmail.com if you can help as a volunteer.

All Saints, Hawstead

The small Church Team works hard to maintain the church building and surrounding churchyard, and to keep offering services of reflection and celebration. Here's an update for residents on church activities over the next few months.



Join the 100 Club to support Hawstead's Village Church

Hawstead PCC has now obtained a Small Lotteries Licence and will be relaunching its 100 Club. It's a great way to support the village church while, at the same time, possibly winning back your 'donation' and more!

The first draw of the new 100 Club will take place at December's Carol Service (18 December) at All Saints Church, Hawstead. To secure your 'lucky' ticket, please contact Lesley (386132), Rosemary (386157) or Joyce (388628).

The cost is £24 a year, with two tickets being drawn out twice-yearly for a £250 prize each, and for the other 10 months for a £20 prize each. You can purchase as many tickets as you like! All funds raised will be divided between the churches in Hawstead and Nowton. As you will know, church funds are always tight, so every penny will count. Cheques should be made payable to 'Hawstead Rector & Church Wardens'.

Upcoming Services at All Saints, Hawstead

All are welcome to the following services.

Saturday 3 December – Advent Service, from 6.30pm at Hawstead

Village Hall

To coincide with the turning on of the Village Tree Lights and followed by mince pies and mulled wine

Sunday 4 December – 11am Eucharist service at Nowton with Max, shared with Hawstead

Sunday 11 December, 11am morning prayer at All Saints, Hawstead

Sunday 18 December – Carol Service from 6.30pm at All Saints, Hawstead (shared with Nowton)

Come and celebrate Christmas with the singing of traditional Carols, followed by mince pies and mulled wine

Christmas Day – 10am shared morning prayers at Nowton Church with Max



An astronomical experience

If you've enjoyed the free talks given by the Athenaeum Astronomy Association (AAA) at Hawstead Village Hall, you need to follow the group back to Whepstead to continue your journey through the stars... and take out a membership!

Sadly, the Athenaeum Astronomy Association has moved back to its usual base at the freshly roofed Whepstead Village Hall. A bit more effort will now be required to join the group exploring the solar system and beyond. But we've enjoyed a number of free talks at Hawstead Village Hall, including archaeology and astronomy, Autumn constellations, moons of the solar system and radio astronomy. If your interest has been piqued, do make the effort to stay in touch with this friendly group of enthusiastic amateur astronomers.

To discover more, and to get in touch, visit www.3a.org.uk or email enquiries@3a.org.uk. You can also find AAA on Twitter and Facebook @AthenaeumAA.

Jammie Dodgers in action

Our community volunteer action team was busy in October trying to open up to villagers more currently overgrown parish land. Here's a short report on progress.

As part of our exciting Parish Council project, we've made good progress on creating a new path along the roadside at Brook Green on Bells Lane. The idea is to create a much safer walkway for pedestrians, and eventually to make an accessible area of the Brook Green woodland. We are hoping that our village Jammie Dodgers volunteer group will be able to continue this work shortly. Thanks to all those volunteers who have helped to date.

If you are interested in joining this Jammie Dodger-fuelled volunteer group, please contact John West direct to be added to the email list for notifications and updates.

John West

john@johnwestfinance.co.uk



Hawstead's vital statistics

The Office for National Statistics (ONS; www.ons.gov.uk) is the UK's largest independent producer of official statistics. You've probably heard its name being bandied about relating to current rates of COVID infection.

Recognised as the UK's national statistical institute, it is responsible for collecting and publishing statistics related to the economy, population and society at national, regional and local levels. It also conducts the census in England and Wales every 10 years. Here are the vital statistics relating to Hawstead since 2001.



Office for
National Statistics

Population

In 2001, Hawstead was home to 334 residents. This figure rose by 4 in the 10 years to 2011, and slipped back to 317 in 2021. We estimate that this equates to 130 households. Our parish area is 9.454 km², which gave us a population density of 33.53/km² in 2021.

In 2021, 52% of residents identified as female, with 95.6% of residents confirming the UK as their country of birth. The 2021 Census confirms that at the time of the census, seven residents had been born in an EU country, with six hailing from Africa, and two from 'other countries'.

Call for help with our Christmas trees

The village Christmas trees will be arriving in Hawstead on Friday

2 December. Are you able to help put them up on Saturday

3 December from 9.30am and/or decorate them?

If you are fit and strong and have some spare time early on Saturday 3 December, we need help moving the trees into their upright positions. A team of six or so would be wonderful for the main lifting, plus some extra volunteers for decorating the inside tree. Both trees need to be ready for the evening Advent service when we also turn on our Christmas lights. Please contact John West (01284 388723 or john@johnwestfinance.co.uk) to offer your services.



Warm Homes Suffolk

If your home doesn't give you a warm welcome anymore, then Warm Homes Suffolk can help with grants and advice to reduce energy bills. Visit www.warmhomessuffolk.org for more information.

This special initiative has been set up by councils in Suffolk to help households implement measures to reduce their fuel bills and also reduce their carbon footprint. These changes will help Suffolk towards its target of Net Zero by 2030. Funding comes from the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy as part of its aim to upgrade the energy efficiency of properties across the UK.

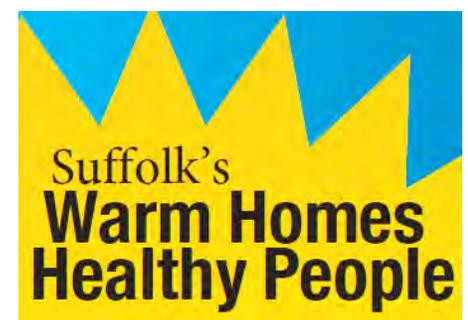
Warmth that doesn't cost the Earth

Heating our homes can be costly, both financially and environmentally. If your property is less efficient at retaining heat, then more energy is needed to bring it to and keep it at a comfortable temperature. Generating this energy increases the amount of carbon released into the air and uses up precious natural resources. And each unit of energy you use increases your bill. If heat is escaping from your home too easily, then you're losing money.

By making homes as energy-efficient as possible, heating costs can be cut. This in turn reduces our carbon footprint and helps in the fight against climate change. It also means energy bills will be lower... it's win – win!

Warm Homes, Healthy People

Warm Homes Suffolk isn't the only help available for people who are struggling with energy bills. Warm Homes, Healthy People is a project that helps vulnerable people and families make their homes cheaper to heat. There is a range of different measures that residents in Suffolk might be able to benefit from. You might be eligible for a free home survey by a trained energy surveyor, free loft and wall insulation, free small boiler repairs, grants for servicing gas appliances, loan of temporary oil-filled electric heaters and more. Visit www.suffolk.gov.uk/community-and-safety/communities/healthier/warm-homes-healthy-people to learn more.



Hawstead's 2022 Jubilee Book Needs You!

Photographer Rick Senley is looking for more residents to take part in the 2022 Hawstead Jubilee Book. To be part of this special Hawstead project, make contact quick!

As some of you might know (since you have already had your portrait photograph taken!), Rick is building on an idea he started during lockdown in Gloucestershire when he photographed as many villagers as possible as they navigated a rather unexpected pandemic. The result was a wonderful and memorable book of photographs featured in the national and local press, combined with an exhibition and fundraising for his village's church roof.



Rick is now doing the same in Hawstead so will be popping up for visits over the next couple of months. He would love you to take part in the project. All it requires is as little as five minutes of your time to have your photograph taken. The photograph can be either of you alone or with your family or pets, at home or in your garden, or in a setting relevant to your role in the village or your hobbies. Rick is also now proficient at socially distanced photography!



There will be an exhibition of pictures (portraits, Hawstead's landscapes over the seasons, drone shots, flowers and of course the summer Jubilee party) either in Hawstead Church or at the village hall, and books will be for sale (dates and costs to follow, the latter dependent on the number of portraits and the book's size and how many villagers pre-order copies... the bigger the print run, the lower the price). If you would like to take part, or

have any questions about this project, please email ricksenley@yahoo.co.uk or speak to Caroline Miller for more details. If you know anyone who may wish to be involved but who won't have seen this article, then please suggest the idea to them, or print out this article and pop it through their letterbox.

For an online preview of Rick's Guiting Power book (the format of which will inspire Hawstead's), please take a look at: <https://www.blurb.co.uk/b/10772548-guiting-power-a-year-in-lockdown>

A history of the Christmas pudding

I am fairly indifferent to Christmas pudding (I will, of course, eat it, *if I have to*). But there's a lot more to it than just dried fruit and a whole lot of brandy. Here's a brief history of the plum pudding and what it represents.

Christmas pudding (or plum pudding) hasn't always been a dessert. Its origins can be traced back to the 14th century when it was known as frumenty. Made mainly with wheat, milk and then seasoned with cinnamon, it was more like a porridge. As a fairly austere dish, it was commonly served as a simple starter around Lent and Advent.

Over time, other ingredients were added, including eggs, dried fruit, breadcrumbs and beer, giving it a thicker consistency. The fruit added sweetness, making it more of a dessert than it had been before. The name plum pudding may well have been a reference to the fruit included.

When Cromwell came to power (1653–1658), legislation essentially 'banned' Christmas because it was seen as wasteful and frivolous. New laws meant feasts associated with Christmas, Easter and Whitsun were effectively abolished, and soldiers in the City of London were told to seize any food particularly related to Christmas. Needless to say, this didn't go down well. Riots broke out (the so-called 'Plum Pudding Riots'), but it wasn't until King George I was on the throne that the plum 'pudding' was reinvented as a yuletide dessert.



It was, of course, the Victorians, with their fondness for Christmas, who reinforced the idea of the Christmas pudding as something sweet to be enjoyed at the end of the meal.

It was also around this time that many of the ideas and traditions associated with the Christmas pudding started to surface. For example, a pudding should have 13 ingredients, which represent Jesus and the 12 disciples. The brandy that is set alight symbolises the passion of Christ.



Traditionally, puddings should be made on 'stir-up Sunday', which is the Sunday before Advent. Family members would be encouraged to all take part in stirring the pudding while making a wish. There were even customs about how to stir the pudding, with convention being from east to west – reminiscent of the journey made by the Three Wise Men. The wooden spoon is also thought to represent the manger.



For added excitement, trinkets were added:

- Sixpence – this would mean good luck to whoever found it
- Bachelor's button – single men who found this would stay single for the next year
- Thimble – single women who found this would stay single for the next year
- Ring – single people who found this in their portion could look forward to getting married the following year.

Adding these charms stems from another traditional cake known as 'Twelfth Night Cake'. This cake would contain a dried pea (or bean). Whoever found it would be 'king or queen' for the rest of the day. This tradition was practised as early as the 1300s.

Incidentally, in Spain, 'Roscón de Reyes' is a type of brioche-style bread eaten on El Dia de los Reyes Magos (loosely translated as 'three kings day'). The bread is studded with dried fruit. Within it will be a small figure of



Roscón de Reyes

either one of the three kings or the baby Jesus.

Whoever finds it wears a paper crown or has to make the Roscón de Reyes the next year.

So when, or if, you enjoy Christmas pudding with a bit of brandy butter, think of all the iterations it has been through to become the tradition it is today, and raise a glass to Christmas.

Anne East

Christmas Quiz

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