

ISSUE

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2023

The Village Voice



Welcome to our village newsletter

Have an idea for a new village club? Our community consultation highlighted how much interest there is in the village to start some new community groups. So we are holding a special Community Club Drop-in Morning on Saturday 1 April at the village hall where you can come along and chat about getting a new club started. We look forward to seeing you there and sharing your ideas!

We're also having an authentic Indian curry night at the village hall on 1 April, with all food prepared by Suzi Surti and family. In 2015 the village hall was swathed in traditional saris and fairy lights, and looked absolutely stunning. Don't miss out on what will be an amazing evening.

In this issue there are also a lot of reports on our festive events at the village hall. Read about all the fun we've been having! And please step forward to begin preparations for our Spring Plant Fair in May.

Note our copy deadline for the next issue of the Village Voice is end March 2023, just 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.

Winter/Spring diary dates

Friday 10 February – Maglia Rosso evening mini-quiz and two-course meal

Thursday 23 February – The Life and Times of Mary Queen of Scots from 10am at St Petronilla's Church, Wkepstead

Monday 27 February – **Hawstead Community Council Meeting** at Hawstead Village Hall from 6.30pm

Friday 3 March – Lightning Talks, 7pm onwards at Maglia Rosso

Thursday 9 March – **Hawstead Parish Council meeting**, 7pm onwards at Hawstead Village Hall

Saturday 11 March – **First Churchyard tidy up of 2023**, 10am-12pm at All Saints, Hawstead

Saturday 11 March – **Lent Lunch** at Hawstead Village Hall, 12-2pm

Saturday 1 April – **Community Clubs Morning** at Hawstead Village Hall, 10am -12pm

Saturday 1 April – **Authentic Indian Curry Night** at Hawstead Village Hall, 7pm onwards

Sunday 9 April – **Easter Service** from 11am at All Saints Church, Hawstead, followed by Easter Egg Hunt

Saturday 15 April – **Churchyard tidy up**, 10am-12pm at All Saints, Hawstead

Thursday 4 May – Local elections

Monday 8 May – Hawstead's **Coronation Celebrations** at Hawstead Village Hall

Thursday 11 May – **Hawstead Parish Council meeting**, 7pm onwards at Hawstead Village Hall

Saturday 13 May – Hawstead's **Spring Plant Fair** at Hawstead Village Hall

Saturday 20 May – **Churchyard tidy up**, 10am-12pm at All Saints, Hawstead

Sunday 3 September – **Hawstead Fete and Produce Show**

October – **ShantyFolk Shindig**

PLUS Takeaway Fish & Chips Nights as advertised

Lent lunch

Come and join the All Saints, Hawstead Church team for a Lent Lunch at Hawstead Village Hall. Enjoy soup, cheese and a roll, plus good company, from midday on Saturday 11 March.



From 12 midday on Saturday 11 March at Hawstead Village Hall you can enjoy a simple lunch of homemade soup, bread and cheese. Donations on the day will be gratefully received. If you would like to join the meal, please let a member of the church team (below) know so that they make sufficient soup!

To help with catering, please contact Lesley 386132, Rosemary 386157 or Jackie 755150.

Church services in Hawstead

The service pattern at All Saints, Hawstead is:

- 2nd Sunday of the month, Morning Prayer at 11am
- 4th Sunday of the month, Eucharist at 11am

On the 1st and 3rd Sundays, services will be held at Nowton at 11am.

Dates and times of all Benefice Services are on the noticeboard at Church.



Lent boxes

Once again this year, the Church team is arranging for the donation of Lent boxes though the Vineyard Church in Bury St Edmunds to families needing help. Can you take part?



Lent starts this year on Wednesday 22 February. The first day of Lent is called Ash Wednesday, and

it is a holy day of fasting and prayer within Christianity. Lent lasts for 40 days (not counting Sundays) and it represents Christ's time of temptation in the wilderness, where he fasted and where he was tempted.



Lent is often considered a time during which something should be 'given up'. However, Lent can also be acknowledged by acts of kindness and giving. With the latter in mind, over the past couple of years the Church team has sought help from Hawstead villagers to create special Lent boxes filled with food items, as well as love. Instead of giving up chocolate, cake and biscuits, you could provide a box for the less fortunate. Can you help this year?

Each box contains approximately 40 items, including food, toiletries and other useful items. Boxes should be delivered to Lesley 386132 or Rosemary 386157 before 1 April to ensure that the Vineyard Church receives them before Easter.

Easter Sunday Celebrations

Join in the Easter Sunday service at All Saints, Hawstead on Sunday 9 April from 11am. All are welcome, and the Easter bunny will be visiting afterwards too!

All Saints Church, Hawstead welcomes all villagers to its special Easter Sunday service starting at 11am on Sunday 9 April. This is a shared service with Nowton, and will include a Eucharist Service led by Stuart Batten, the current Diocesan Director of Ordinands.

Following the service there will be refreshments and an Easter Egg Hunt! If you wish to just come to the egg hunt, please arrive at around 11.45am.

Please dress for the occasion... we would really like to see the ladies, gentlemen and especially the children wearing Easter bonnets!

All Saints Church 100 Club

The first two draws of the All Saints 100 Club have taken place... but who were the lucky winners?

The logo for the 100 Club features the number '100' in a large, bold, blue font, with the word 'CLUB' in a smaller, black, serif font positioned directly below it.

All 100 tickets were sold for this fundraising 100 club, and the Church Team would like to thank all ticket holders for their support.

The first draw took place at the Carol Service on 18 December at All Saints, Hawstead. You might remember it... the day it rained on the lying snow, making everywhere like an ice rink! The two lucky winners of £250 each were Fran Evershed (66) and Bill Crockford (60). The second draw for two £20 tickets took place on Sunday 22 January in the church. The two winners were Judy Carter (27) and Denise Baker (98). Congratulations to you all!

The next draw will take place in church at All Saints, Hawstead on Sunday 26 March after the service.



Authentic Curry Night in Hawstead

Tantalise your tastebuds at our Authentic Curry Night in aid of St Nicholas Hospice. Cooked by villager Suzi Surti and family (who provided the curry for our Jubilee celebrations last summer), you can be sure of a real taste of India!

On **Saturday 1 April from 7pm at Hawstead Village Hall** we are hosting a traditional Indian curry night full of authentic tastes and flavours. The hall will be decorated with saris and fairy lights, making a very special space to enjoy this wonderful food offering.

Hawstead resident Suzi Surti will be using some of her favourite family recipes to provide us with a delicious feast, with 80% of profits going to St Nicholas Hospice and 20% to the village hall.

The menu will include two vegetarian starters with raita, followed by two vegetarian main dishes and one meat dish with rice and dahl. A takeaway service can be arranged for collection by pre-ordering.



This will be a fantastic opportunity to enjoy an authentic Indian meal with village friends in aid of very good causes!

Tickets are available through the village hall at £15 per adult and £8 per child up to 12 years. Email bookings@hawsteadvillagehall.co.uk to book tickets, and drop off monies through the village hall letterbox.

Hawstead Community Council will provide water and squash, but please BYO alcohol.

Coronation celebrations

Here's advance notice of our Coronation celebrations on Monday 8 May at Hawstead Village Hall. Keep the date free in your diary for an afternoon of fun and food.

Community Council Members Amanda Lomas-Farley and Ali Bovill are spearheading our Coronation celebrations on Monday 8 May. If you have ideas for the event, or would like to lend a hand with setting up/tidying away and catering, please contact Amanda on amanda.birdlane@btopenworld.com. Planning has already started!



Caring for the Churchyard in 2023

In 2023, why not come and join the volunteers at the churchyard helping to keep the hedges and weeds under control? The Church relies on village volunteers to maintain its grassy areas, trees and hedgerows. Whether you can give an hour or a morning, your efforts will be very welcome. Dates for your diary below!



With the help of volunteers, we managed to keep the village churchyard looking neat and tidy last year. Sadly the grass, weeds, brambles, etc., don't stand still. Soon they'll be girding their loins for another assault this Spring. So under the general umbrella of 'Jammie Dodgers', I'd like to encourage villagers to come along on a (roughly) monthly Saturday morning between 10am-12 noon to help keep it tidy. We have a couple of mowers, but if you're able to bring your own, or a strimmer, that would be great! (We have fuel.) Otherwise, simple hand tools would be great for clearing around gravestones or trimming hedges. There's an excellent chance of coffee and biscuits too!

After the first session on Saturday 11 March, those who'd like to can repair to Hawstead Village Hall for the annual 'Lent Lunch'! Here are the proposed dates for your diary:

- March 11
- April 15
- May 20
- June 10
- July 8
- August 12
- September 16
- October 14
- November 11

Andy Parrett



Filing cabinet... thank you!

Our thanks to Jayne and Paul Robertson who came to our rescue by donating a filing cabinet for our village hall paperwork. Hopefully very soon everything will be in order and nicely filed away!

Hawstead play area update

Plans are afoot to dig out and resurface the play area this Spring, possibly adding a bit of additional drainage. Please be ready when called with forks, spades and wheelbarrows to help remove all the old material and to get the new membrane, sand and playbark into position.



Hawstead's play area is in need of some TLC in 2023. Over recent years we've been topping up the bark to ensure the safe depths are maintained. However, drainage over winter has become problematic and it has been recommended that everything is dug out and replaced. Hopefully this will radically improve the drainage in general and extend safe use of the play area throughout the winter months. We'll also use this period of maintenance as an opportunity to carefully assess the state of the bases of all the play equipment, and to treat the bases with more preservative if that's an option. If any equipment needs urgent replacement or removal, we can deal with that too.



We are also considering reinstating the springer equipment for very young children. It had to be removed a few years ago due to significant rotting. And following our Autumn village consultation, an extra picnic table will be going in to offer more seating for users.

We are seeking a volunteer to keep an eye on the play area generally and remove any weeds as they appear. A careful check a couple of times a month over the spring/summer/autumn is all that is required. Please contact bookings@hawsteadvillagehall.co.uk if you think you can help.

Shannon's cake baking for charity

Shannon's off to Thailand to volunteer with her college. Thanks to all who helped support her cake sale fundraising. We're looking forward to a report on her tropical adventures.



Resident Shannon (far left in this photograph) is studying for a T-level in education and childcare at West Suffolk College. She's joining a college trip to Thailand which includes a large element of volunteering for the Future Sense Foundation. Part of Shannon's commitment to the project includes making efforts to fundraise for monies to help support the volunteering. With help from villagers, Shannon has raised more than £250 with her cake sale. Well done Shannon!

For more information on the charity, please visit <https://futuresensefoundation.org>.

Mini-quiz at Maglia Rosso on Friday 10 Feb

Fancy an evening meal and mini-quiz in Hawstead?
Get yourself down to Maglia Rosso on Friday 10
February and take a seat!

Maglia Rosso is opening its doors on Friday 10 February for a two-course meal followed by a mini-quiz at £15 per person. To book your place, contact Sonia or Debbie on (01284) 386884 or pop down to the café.



Lightning Talks at Maglia Rosso

For a bit of mental stimulation and conversation, join the team at Maglia Rosso for an evening of lightning talks. The next one is on Friday 3 March from 7pm. They're always looking for speakers too, so why not share you interests and thoughts with others?

On Friday 3 March from 7pm Maglia Rosso will once again host a fun and informative evening of lightning talks. Talks can be on any subject under the sun – humorous, serious, poetic, informative, even controversial – but all talks must last **JUST FIVE MINUTES... no longer!** It's always a fun evening, and you can choose to have a curry supper served at £10 per head, with a veggie option.

Volunteer speakers are always wanted! We know that everyone has something interesting to say. Contact Barry Denny on barry@magliarosso.co.uk for more information or pop down to the café.



Maglia Rosso event dates

Friday 10 February – Evening Meal and Mini Quiz

Sunday 19 February – Mille Maglia cycling event, about 150 riders expected

Friday 31 March – Evening Quiz (to be confirmed)

Friday evenings – Classic Car Shows – 28 April, 26 May, 23 June, 28 July, 25 Aug

Monday 29 May (Bank Holiday) – Spring Sportive Cycling event

Tuesday 6 June (evening) – The Handlebards present Mid Summer Night's Dream (details to be announced shortly – professional outdoor theatrical event)

Sunday 9 July – The Edge Cycling event on behalf of St Nicholas Hospice

Hawstead Spring Plant Fair – 13 May 2023

After the success of Hawstead's 2021 and 2022 plant fairs, plans are afoot for another on Saturday 13 May 2023. We need seedlings and plants grown, and kind offers of cakes for the catering on the day. Can you help?

It might still be cold, but the sun is shining, snowdrops are blooming and seed catalogues are enticing us to think about our summer gardens. This year the event is on Saturday 13 May, 10am–1pm. In true Hawstead style, even if you don't garden, the Plant Fair is also a chance to enjoy a cup of tea/coffee and delicious cake with friends.

The plants and seedling we sell are all produced by villagers, and the funds raised go towards the Community Council, which in turn supports future village social events.



There are many brilliant gardeners in the village, both professional and keen amateurs, with years of experience and stunning gardens. We rely on the generosity of residents to help us produce the plants we sell. Lesley Carey and myself have already started to plan ahead. We have ordered seeds, everything from Cosmos to Nasturtiums and vegetables. I have begun to split perennials from my garden and pot them up ready to sell, ranging from Siberian iris to Shasta daisies, from Crocosmia to Goldenrod.

Can you help with the plant fair? The more of us involved, the lighter the workload and the more social and fun the event will be. Here are six ways you can join in:

1. Grow some extra seedlings for the Plant Fair. I have plenty of plant pots. If you need any, just let me know.
2. Take a tray of seedlings that Lesley and I have planted and look after them! We always run out of greenhouse space, but the seedlings are also happy on a windowsill.
3. Split perennials to provide a pot or two for the plant fair. If you can't split them yourself but are happy for us to come and take a piece of plant, that would also be great.
4. Make a cake.
5. Volunteer for 1.5 hours on the day.
6. Help with publicity for the event.



If you'd like to volunteer, please email carolinemiller033@gmail.com or call her on **07980 675137** or **01284 388841**. *Caroline Miller, Hillside, Whepstead Road*

Winter/Spring at Hawstead Village Hall

So far this winter we have:

- installed a new remote heating controller to remotely track heating in the hall
- repaired the hall boiler (three times!)
- installed a new CCTV system to enable remote access for security, etc.
- approved new kitchen flooring for installation ASAP
- approved a new picnic bench for installation ASAP
- approved a new sound limiting system for installation ASAP
- serviced the boiler, fire extinguishers, fire alarm, CCTV and hearing loop
- installed a filing cabinet for secure storage.



This Spring, we are planning at Hawstead Village Hall:

- carefully scrutinising all the hall's chairs to assess whether it is time for their replacement
- replacing the hall's curtains and blinds
- organising a play area surface revamp
- organising a full stock take
- arranging a hall deep clean by volunteers
- assessing the surrounding play area fencing for repair or replacement
- considering improving the Bluetooth and wireless reception (dependent on visual impact of the equipment).

Hearing loop at Hawstead Village Hall

In our recent consultation, a villager asked whether the village hall had a hearing loop. Well, the answer is 'yes!' Here's how to access it.

If you didn't know, Hawstead Village Hall has a hearing loop. To access it, simply set your hearing aid to 'T' (Telecoil setting).

We also have a small device that enables you to plug into it a set of headphones for even more improved hearing. Let us know if you would like to use it. Ideally bring your own headphones so you know they will be comfortable and work well for you.



Christmas Quiz: results – eyes

1. Michael Parkinson; 2. Oliver Reed; 3. Victoria Beckham; 4. Judi Dench; 5. Andrew Flintoff; 6. Emma Thompson; 7. Dara O'Briain; 8. Lily James; 9. David Jason; 10. Michelle Obama

Hawstead Village Hall: resident bookings

In light of the recent village consultation, it's important that we remind residents of the role of the village hall within the community, and how residents can book the hall. We also need to put into perspective the reliance of the hall on non-resident use so villagers understand our bookings policy.

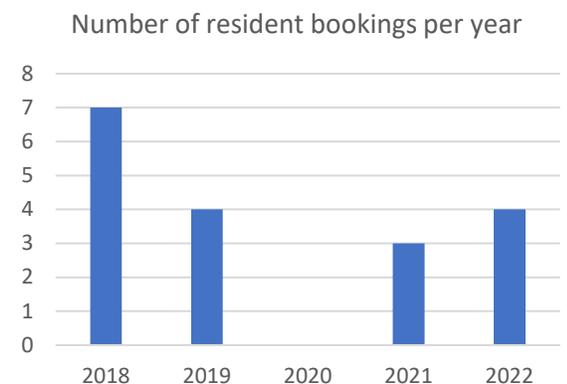


Hawstead Village Hall is our community centre. It is there primarily to be used by the village. But village use also has to be balanced with the need to fund the hall's maintenance.

This year we have reviewed our bookings policy to residents and can confirm that the following village 'clubs' are receiving free hall hire for their events to May 2023: bowls club, HATS club (wine appreciation) and the parish council. This policy will be reviewed annually after Hawstead Community Council's AGM in the light of income from the previous year.

These clubs 'qualify' for free hall hire because they are open to all villagers, and members are predominantly villagers. If that changes for the club, then the Community Council will review the offer.

We have analysed all hall bookings over the past few years and it is noticeable that few villagers hire the hall for their own events (see bar chart right). The peak hire periods for villagers are August–October (see bar chart below).

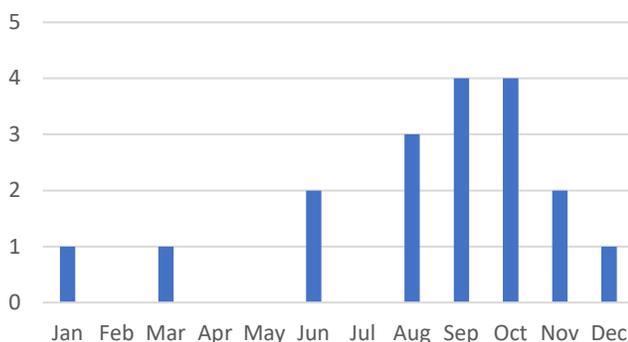


Some residents said that we should greatly reduce hires to non-residents to make way for more resident bookings. Clearly that is neither financially viable nor necessary. In 2018 we accepted just 7 resident hires

totalling 42 hours. Multiply that by £15 an hour and you reach £630. As reported previously, annually the hall needs £15–16,000 to break even, and that was before the energy price rises. Relying wholly on resident hires to fund £16,000 annually would require 1067 hours of whole hall hire.

Lack of villager hall hire is not unique to Hawstead. Indeed, it is an issue reported by the Charities Commission in its 2004 report, *Village Halls and Community Centres*. We are, however, fortunate that in

Distribution of resident bookings throughout the year 2018-2022



2008 a group of villagers had the foresight to seek to design and build a community hall that could offer a unique building for hire with the potential to prove popular with and attract interest from non-residents. Without this, our village hall would have closed for lack of funds years ago.

Residents receive special hire rates

If you are resident in the village, hall hire rates are heavily discounted. While some residents felt the hire rates should be raised, Hawstead Community Council has decided to keep rates as follows: £15 per hour for the whole hall; £10 per hour for the main hall; £5 per hour for the meeting room. This rate has remained fixed for more than 10 years.

All hirers can access the kitchen. Note that any hire period must include the time it takes to set up your event and clear up afterwards.

Residents cannot book on behalf of non-residents, charities or businesses in the hope of receiving resident discounts. They apply exclusively for residents holding private events with no intention of raising money.

Residents must set up and tidy away themselves

Residents hiring the hall are responsible for collecting the keys, setting up their event and tidying away completely afterwards.



are maintained. While this cost is included in non-resident hires (hence the higher hourly rates), at least 3 hours of post-event cleaning will be required to bring the hall back to the standard required for hire. We pass on this charge direct to the resident at cost. Note that there is no option for the resident to wash floors, etc., to avoid this charge.

'It is well documented that some charities, village halls in particular, are struggling to survive because of falling demand for the services they provide. Ageing rural populations, lack of interest among younger people or among new residents in commuter villages, competition from nearby towns and cities that are now easier to reach - all of these factors have been identified as problems for some rural village halls and community centres.'

Village Halls and Community Centres,
Charity Commission 2004

Residents must adhere to our terms and conditions of hire

All residents are required to adhere to our terms and conditions of hire, with particular attention to washing up, removing rubbish, decorating the hall and minimising noise disturbance.

Residents must pay additionally for cleaning of the hall

After every event hire commercial cleaners attend to wash the floors, clean the kitchen and toilets, etc. In this way we can be sure that standards of cleanliness

Residents must pay an event bond

On top of the hire charge, we require a £100 event bond ahead of any private event. Once the hire has ended, we will use this bond to pay the cleaning fee. The remainder will be returned subject to adherence to our terms and conditions of hire.

Resident wakes

The family of a resident who dies may hire the village hall at no charge for the resident's wake. The Community Council will pay for a maximum of 2 hours of cleaning after the event. Any further cleaning charges will be passed on to the family for payment. The family needs to set up and tidy away afterwards, and adhere to our terms and conditions of hire. A washing up service can be organised in advance if required and is charged at the usual professional cleaning rate.

Resident bookings take priority

If we have two bookings in front of us at the same time, a resident's booking will take priority. We cannot cancel a booked event to make way for a resident booking.

Residents must book early to secure their preferred dates

Any residents who would like to hire the hall for a special event in the near future should make the booking as soon as possible. Our village hall is a popular venue for small weddings (indeed, in recent years they have been the events that have kept the hall's finances in good condition), and bookings for these are usually 18–12 months in advance.

Remember, your community council is a team of village volunteers elected to serve Hawstead residents. We have responsibility for the village hall and the nearby wooden play area. If you have any questions, please contact a committee member or come along to one of our bimonthly meetings. Meetings are usually 6.30pm onwards on the first Monday of a month. Details are on the village hall's bookings calendar at <https://www.hawsteadvillagehall.co.uk/booking>.

Bowling into 2023

**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! The club meets
every Thursday evening from around 7.30pm.**



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!

Hawstead Community Council: revised bookings policy to May 2023

Balancing the hall's finances is a key responsibility for Hawstead Community Council members. Our consultation responses raised a number of issues from near neighbours of the village hall relating to the impact of events on their peace. As a result, we have made the following changes to our bookings policy to try to mitigate some of these effects.



Noise

There is no doubt that noise seeps from the hall when it is used for events. To try to minimise disturbance, we have approved the fitting of a noise limiting system (before April) which will cause power to be cut to sockets when noise exceeds a set level. It will also be fitted with a traffic light indicator that is in position for parties so hirers have a visual indication of their current noise level. It is our understanding that discos and live music bands are very respectful of these devices because the sudden removal of power from their equipment can be damaging. Hirers will also be required to stop their music by 11.15pm at the latest, leaving them 45 minutes to remove equipment and lock the hall.

Hirers will also be required to keep all windows and doors shut if they wish to play loud music.

Parking

Hirers are already required to control parking and to park in the designated areas only. This will be emphasised event more strongly. In our experience, the vast majority of hirers adhere to these requirements.

Rubbish

Some concern has been expressed about rubbish left around the village hall and across the village green after events at the hall. In 2022 we doubled the number of general waste bins at the hall to try to ensure that any post-event rubbish can be stored securely. In addition, we pay an event caretaker to check the surroundings as soon as an event has finished. With wedding hires usually ending at midday on Sunday, it seems unfair to criticise these hirers before their event hires end.

It is our experience that the vast majority of hirers clean up the surrounding areas very well after their events. There is, though, an occasional problem with glitter balloons and confetti. We are adding to our terms and conditions of hire that no glitter balloons are permitted, and only biodegradable confetti can be used in or around the premises. We will monitor this situation closely.

Too many weddings?

We have mentioned elsewhere that in recent years weddings have been a very important revenue stream, and this is not something we can afford to lose. They bring in the most amount of money for the least amount of

effort from the volunteers. Indeed, the income from one wedding equates to around eight noisy evening parties! We remain uncertain whether the hall's popularity in 2022 and 2023 as a wedding venue is a temporary post-COVID 'blip' or whether it is here to stay.

The main issue with weddings appears to be the noise impact (see above). On reflection, we feel what needs to be considered is any evening event with a disco or similar loud music, not just weddings. We are going to try limiting such events to no more than two per month throughout the year, but with a wary eye on the finances. This may mean in the near future we lose some wedding bookings in the summer months. However, we need to see whether finances can cope with that loss of income to free up some quieter summer weekends for residents. We feel this is a proper balancing of interests at present.

Event bond

Our event bond for weddings and parties will be raised to £300 and run alongside a clear document outlining reasons for withholding this bond in part or in full. This document will include defined penalties for noise disturbance, use of fireworks/sparklers, use of glitter/confetti, etc.

If you are disturbed by an event at the village hall, please contact a member of the community council. Please do not try to deal with it yourself. All weddings have an on-call caretaker. Near neighbours will be given that contact number for the summer events.

This policy will be reviewed annually by the incoming Community Council. However, please be quick to talk to us if you have any suggestions for additions or improvements. Remember, all villagers can stand for a position on the Community Council. Elections are in May each year. If you feel you can make a difference and are prepared to give some of your time, please step forward and make yourself known.

Report: Children's Christmas Party

In the quieter period between Christmas and New Year, Hawstead Community Council hosted a children's Christmas lunch party 11.30–2pm on Friday 30 December. Here's what happened...



On a wet and windy December morning, Hawstead Village Hall was ready to welcome resident children to a Christmas buffet lunch with Santa-approved party games, festive crafts and glitter tattoos! With only 12 children registered, we did consider cancelling the event... clearly everyone was very busy! However, those who did join us enjoyed the session and feasted on lots of food.

This event was fully funded by Hawstead Community Council. Huge thanks to Sarah and Shannon Bullen, as well as Susanne White, who teamed up to offer this event.

Report: Pantomime family fun

This year's pantomime at the Theatre Royal in Bury St Edmunds was *The Legend of Robin Hood*. Three village families took us up on the offer of free tickets for children, and all they had a fabulous time.

Young Hawstead residents Tula and Poppy visited the pantomime and had a wonderful time, even though Tula does look less than happy in the photo!

The Rout family also had a fantastic time. Dave was picked out by the baker's mum as a potential boyfriend (Oh no he wasn't... oh, yes he was!), and Spencer won a prize!

Eddie Mayes' favourite bits were cream pies being splatted in faces, water pistols spraying the audience, and the confetti showering the audience. Mum Lorna said: 'It was a really lovely day, and such a kind thing for the Hawstead committee to do for the children in the village.'

Unfortunately some criticism has been received about the Community Council funding child tickets for village families. Note that this offer was open to all families in the village with children aged 12 and under. We made this offer thinking that families were more likely to be able to enjoy this festive event if they were given the flexibility to select their own seats and to choose their own date/time rather than being restricted to a specific performance. We would appreciate your thoughts to inform our decision about whether we support this event in future.





That said, in the past, this event has been an organised whole village trip on one date. When we have asked previously for a volunteer to liaise with the theatre and organise tickets and payment, no one stepped forward. If you would like to take this on board as your responsibility, please step forward now.

Tickets for the 2023 pantomime are already selling fast. And it's... Snow White!



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 any 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.



Report: 'Triple-20s' Christmas Lunch

Another Christmas lunch, and another group of well-fed, happy villagers. The 2022 'triple-20s' Christmas lunch went with a bang... and that wasn't just the crackers!



On Friday 9 December 2022 we held our annual Hawstead Christmas lunch for 'Triple 20s' (villagers aged over 60). It's been a long-standing tradition in Hawstead, and proved as popular as ever in 2022. More than 40 residents joined in the festivities, with catering provided as usual by Andrea and her team from Elite Cakes & Buffets.



The lunch is organised and funded by Hawstead Community Council, with the team putting in a lot of effort to

decorate the hall and provide the service to table during the event. The Christmas tree was heavily adorned and looked absolutely beautiful, with fairy lights strung across the hall adding to the atmosphere. Curtains were festooned with tartan pelmets and swags, and bunches of decorated fir hung from the walls.



Volunteer waitresses for the day were Caroline Miller, Amanda Lomas-Farley and Susanne White, and our thanks to them for their support of this special event.

Prosecco cocktails and zero-alcohol prosecco welcomed the guests on arrival, with the odd sherry for those preferring that tippie. The glorious three-course lunch included fan of seasonal melon with raspberry coulis, followed by traditional roast turkey, chipolata sausage, stuffing and cranberry sauce (or parsnip,



cranberry and chestnut loaf served with a cranberry and madeira sauce) all served with roast potatoes and a selection of vegetables. A choice of homemade Christmas pudding with brandy butter and cream, homemade lemon meringue cheesecake or fresh fruit salad finished Andrea's contribution. After the meal, port and a cheeseboard were served, with coffee and chocolates to finish.





Report: Christmas Drinks Party

Pre-Christmas drinks and nibbles were on offer at Hawstead Village Hall on Saturday 17 December from 6 til 8pm. More than 40 villagers joined us for this annual event, fully funded by Hawstead Community Council.

Hot mulled wine welcomed residents to this festive opportunity to



touch base with neighbours and prepare for Christmas. A wide selection of hot and cold buffet food was provided, and our special thanks to Amanda Lomas-Farley, Susanne White and Chris Pamplin who organised the event.

Special marmalade-infused sausage rolls combined with pigs-in-blankets, vol-au-vents, smoked salmon bilinis, cheeses, olives, dips, mince pies, chocolates and much more made a tasty background to plenty of lively conversation.



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 COME ALONG TO OUR SPECIAL CLUBS MORNING ON SATURDAY 1 APRIL AT HAWSTEAD VILLAGE HALL.



Christmas Elves in Hawstead

The Christmas elves were at it again between Christmas and New Year, delivering chocolate coins to our youngest residents. Did you spot them? Thanks to Hawstead Community Council for organising their attendance.



Report: Jubilee Tree Planting

Just before our village Christmas lunch, villagers tramped outside to watch villager Sonja Monk put the final touches to the planting of the Platinum Jubilee crab apple tree. It was a bit chilly, but residents were soon warmed up by their Christmas feast.

Before Christmas, Hawstead Parish Council sourced and planted a crab apple tree to commemorate our wonderful late Queen's Platinum Jubilee. Our planting event took place adjacent to the village hall just prior to the very enjoyable annual Triple-20's Christmas lunch.

The Platinum Jubilee of Elizabeth II was the international celebration in 2022 marking the 70th anniversary of the accession of Queen Elizabeth II on 6 February 1952, the first British monarch to ever celebrate one. We chose the variety *Malus Evereste* because it's described as disease resistant and will be fairly compact in this prominent spot.

It has unusually large, soft pink-white flowers opening from red buds. These are followed by heavy crops of small red-flushed orange-yellow fruits that persist well into the autumn and can be used for making crab apple jelly. The dark-green foliage turns yellow-orange in the autumn.



A plaque has been installed next to the tree as a reminder of its important commemoration.

Thanks are due to James Carr, our village tree warden, for all his help selecting this important specimen tree.



Report: Advent service and tree lighting

Advent is an important part of the Christian calendar, marking the period of anticipation of the Nativity. On Saturday 3 December, residents joined members of the Benefice to welcome Advent and light our village Christmas trees.

More than 30 people attended this year's celebration of Advent, joining with the singing and prayers for peace. A number of residents read the readings, including Spencer Rout, who was also invited to switch on the Christmas tree lights!



Resident musicians were led by Fran Evershed on her flute, supported by a violin (Ray), cello (Ros) and organ (Rosemary).

The evening finished with a social mine pie and mulled wine (drinks donated by Hawstead Community Council).



Raising the Christmas trees

The village Christmas trees add so much to the feeling of Christmas in Hawstead. But they don't just magically appear in position and decorated. Here's how things panned out in 2022.



On the morning of Saturday 3 December, a team of village volunteers met to erect and decorate the two village Christmas trees. This event is always fun, marking the start of the festive period. Thanks to the team pictured here (Giles 1, Giles 2, Andy, John, Phil, Michael, Chris, David and Wilma), plus indoor tree decorators Lesley Carey, Caroline Miller, Rosemary Harrison, Chris Pamplin and Susanne White.



Get to know Mary Queen of Scots!

An opportunity to exercise your little grey cells is available in February at St Petronilla's Church in Whepstead. Come along and learn about Mary Queen of Scots (aka Mary Stuart). She was the only surviving legitimate child of James V of Scotland, and was just 6 days old when her father died and she inherited the throne!



On Thursday 23 February from 10am, St Petronilla's Church, Whepstead is hosting a talk by Michael Whatley about the life and times of Mary Queen of Scots. The talk is followed by lunch at Whepstead Community Centre. Tickets are £28 each, including lunch and a glass of wine. To book your ticket(s), please contact Becky at becky@countryflowerssuffolk.com or call her on 01284 830322. This event is raising funds for St Petronilla's Church.

Thanks to Sonja Monk for letting us know about this local event, which may well be of interest to some of our residents. If you spot anything local that may interest your fellow villagers, do please send it to us.

Programme:

- 10.00 Coffee On Arrival
- 10.30 Talk Starts
- 11.15 Interval & Coffee
- 12.00 Resume Talk
- 12.45 Questions
- 13.00 Lunch at Community Centre

Cheques payable to Whepstead PCC or bank payments to our account at sort code 600416, account number 87616408 with 'talk' as reference.

Parking is limited at the church. Please park at the Whepstead Community Centre, where we are having lunch and walk to the church (about 300 yards away).

Disabled parking at Church - disabled ramp available. A hearing loop and sound system has just been installed. Additional heating will be provided on the day.

You are invited to
A Talk by Michael Whatley
“My End is my Beginning”
The Life & Times of
Mary Queen of Scots

on Thursday 23rd February, 2023

A Fundraiser for St. Petronilla's Church, Whepstead

To be held at
St. Petronilla's, Whepstead, Bury St. Edmunds,
Suffolk IP29 4SP

Followed by Lunch at
The Whepstead Community Centre

Tickets £28
(to include a glass of wine)

RSVP:
Becky - 01284 830322
becky@countryflowerssuffolk.com
or
Gillian - 01284 735258
8kens@atlasframgroup.co.uk

Hawstead's Photography Book: celebrating an historic year

Photographer Rick Senley is making a final call to residents to be part of this once-in-a-decade book. To be part of this special Hawstead project, make contact quick before 31 May 2023.

We are creating a new photography book about Hawstead and its residents, led by professional photographer Rick Senley (a friend of Caroline Miller's from Whepstead Road).

Over the past year or so, Rick has been taking portrait photographs of residents to mark this historic year. It's a once-in-a-generation moment when we have witnessed both the Queen's Platinum Jubilee and will celebrate the coronation of our new King. We want to capture this moment in Hawstead's history for future generations.

Thank you to those villagers who have already got involved. Some of the portraits Rick has already taken will be on display at the village hall during the Plant Fair weekend (13 May 2023), so you can see how the project is progressing.



We'd like to include as many villagers as possible. All it requires is as little as 5 minutes of your time to have your photograph taken. The photo 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 will visit the village several times between now and the final

deadline of 31 May to continue to take photos. We hope to publish the book in September 2023, accompanied by an exhibition of portraits, Hawstead's landscapes over the seasons, drone shots of the village, and of course the summer Jubilee party. The exhibition will be in Hawstead Church.





Books will be for sale (dates and costs to follow, the latter dependent on the number of portraits, the book's final size and how many villagers pre-order copies... the larger 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.

To get an idea of what the final Hawstead book will look like you can view an online preview of the similar photography book that Rick created for his home village 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>

WANTED: Play area weeding volunteer

Interested in a small regular task March–October to help out your village? No one has come forward yet to offer their time. Please give it some thought.

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 a couple of times a month 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.





Stowmarket Chorale

Music Director
Benedict Collins Rice

COME AND SING!

HANDEL'S MONARCHS ODE FOR THE BIRTHDAY OF QUEEN ANNE

Saturday 25th February 2023

10am - 4.30pm

United Reformed Church,
Ipswich Street, Stowmarket, IP14 1AD

£20 to include music score
(bring your own food)

Booking: 07972 668180
tickets@stowmarketchorale.org.uk



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