

Hamstead *Hornet*

Hamstead Marshall's quarterly newspaper since 1996

June 2023

issue no 106

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Whatsapp groups

Community chit-chat, news, tips, advice, requests. Contact [Sarah Stevenson](#)

HM Growing Tips gardening triumphs and disasters. Contact [Lanie Allen](#)

WBC elections

our new councillors

Good Hope Farm

it's all coming good

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a local landscape change

Parish council

two meetings and an assembly since the last issue

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Chris Moss and Geoff Watts captured the scene

Garden society summer meeting

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what's approved/refused/awaiting decision, or for rent/sale

What's on

community market, Garden Society, Circle of Friends, parish council

WBC elections: two new councillors join one re-elected for Hamstead

Hungerford and Kintbury ward, which includes Hamstead Marshall, now has two new ward councillors joining Dennis Benneyworth, who was re-elected in May 2023.

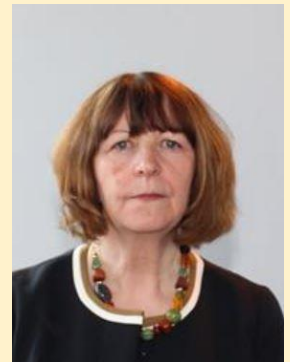
Two former councillors, James Cole and Claire Rowles, did not stand this time, but their replacement candidates nominated from the Conservative party were beaten by two Lib Dems, Denise Gaines and Tony Vickers.

The local elections of 4th May 2023 put an end to 18 years of Conservative rule in West Berkshire, where the Lib Dem party is now in the driving seat for the first time in 20 years, with 29 councillors. The Conservatives have 11, Greens 2 and Labour 1. The new leader of the council is Lee Dillon.

Dennis Benneyworth (Conservative), who has represented the village since 2019, is a former jockey who later became a racing reporter. He has also worked as an in-flight horse attendant (details from this [Pennypost interview](#)). He first joined WBC representing the Victoria ward in Newbury, and lives in Hungerford.



Denise Gaines (Lib Dem) has lived in Hungerford for the last 26 years and she formerly served as a district councillor for the town. She has a particular interest in youth services and education, having served as a governor for John O'Gaunt School, and currently holds the WBC executive portfolio for housing, highways and sustainable travel.



Tony Vickers (Lib Dem) has lived locally for 42 years and represented Kintbury for 17 of them. A former army officer, he has a particular interest in planning, and has a passion for the local countryside. Tony Vickers attended Hamstead's parish assembly and meeting on 18th May.



All three can be contacted by email, post or phone. Details are given on the [WBC website](#).

Good Hope Farm:

the dream is coming to life

Potato, sweetcorn, tomato, squash, pumpkin, beetroot, garlic, bean, onion and cucumber plants are overcoming the odds at Good Hope Farm on Park Lane, and a fruitful summer is in prospect. The Trojan work of Karine Giannamore, her son Alex and their regular team has been supplemented by a series of volunteer teams from local companies.



On 8th June a dozen people from Carter Jonas rolled up their sleeves and toiled willingly in the sunshine to clear weeds, mulch fruit trees, transplant seedlings and earth up potato plants on the hectare of former Elm Farm pasture in Park Lane. Rebound Electronics, Totalmobile, Intuita and Vodafone will also be sending volunteers later in the summer. Local MP Laura Farris

has visited and promised to raise her own team for a session.



Left, the herb garden and above, part of the veg patch at Good Hope Farm

Karine's enthusiasm for an organic market garden benefiting not only the learning-disabled adults for whom it was created, but all visitors, is infectious. The Carter Jonas volunteers departing at the end of the day looked not so much exhausted as inspired and invigorated. Fresh air, sunshine, herbal aromas and

productive hands-on contact with nature has made some volunteers reluctant to leave.

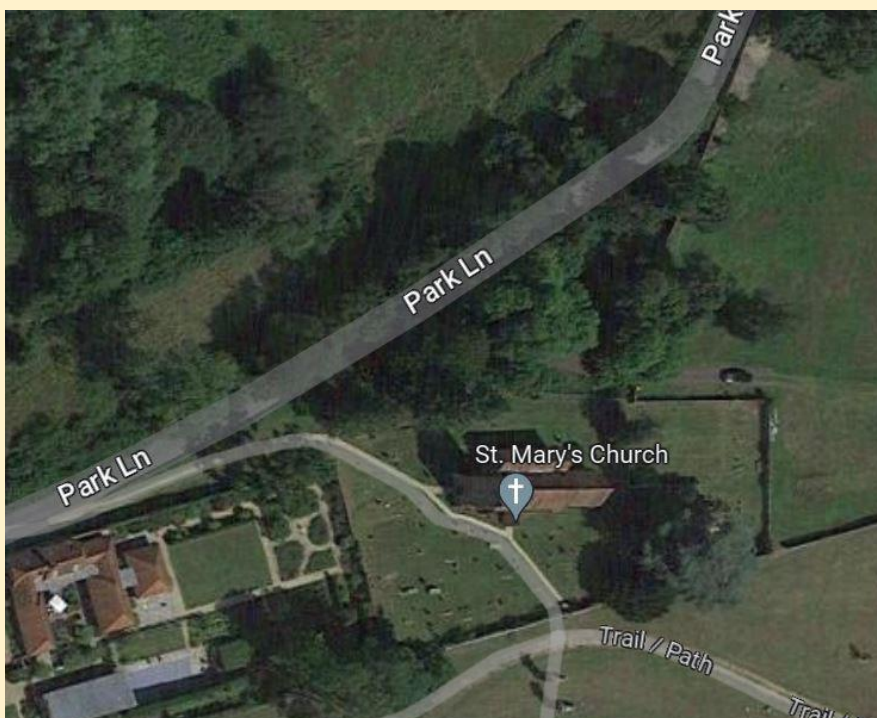
Karine is experimenting with a variety of organic techniques for moisture retention, weed suppression and fertilisers. She has a keen interest in herbs and medicinal remedies, and seeks sustainable cultivation methods which encourage wildlife (in the right places). "Every day is a learning day," she says.

The site is already equipped with a surfaced car park, water supply, a container for secure storage, a walk-in polytunnel, compostable toilets and an office with kitchenette, as well as a simple roadside sales booth. There's an ongoing need for fund-raising, the farm's current needs being a fruit cage and a ramp to facilitate wheelchair access from the newly completed car park. The appeal can be supported on [the Good Exchange](#). More shade is needed for workers on site, and donations of gazebos (or even just gazebo tops) would be welcome.

Good Hope Farm as a facility for learning-disabled adults is already on the radar of WBC social services, and is soon to be promoted in local primary schools. West Berks councillor Dennis Benneyworth has visited to lend support. Newbury College brought 19 students to the March open day, and Mencap has also visited.

Tree-felling changes the landscape near the church

(Some may query Google's labelling "Park Lane", considering it to be a continuation of Milkhouse Road.)



Following an announcement by Hamstead Park Estates, tree-felling began on 5th June on land adjoining St Mary's churchyard to the north.

The triangular site of less than half an acre had several mature chestnuts, as well as oak and ash trees. All of these were deemed dangerous and have now been felled, leaving the site virtually cleared.



This plot has existed for several centuries, being described in a survey of 1775 as measuring nearly an acre, and known as Common Pleck.

Former glebe (church) land, it lost its common-land status to enclosure in 1815, and was granted to the Craven estate.

In the tithe survey of 1841 the plot had reduced to near its present size.

From then, being largely left to its own natural devices, it had become a small wildlife haven, the only noticeable change being the creation of a back driveway to Park Lodge a few years ago.

Parish council meetings were held on 20th March and 18th May, the latter preceded by a brief parish assembly

Meetings are drawing a larger public attendance than was usual a few years ago, but the parish council remains one councillor short. A volunteer is to be sought for co-option.

Hamstead Parish Council ended the financial year with nearly £20,000 in reserves, having received £2,750 from this year's precept, and a CIL payment relating to Enborne Equestrian and the new house on the former Sovereign garages site.

At the 18th May meeting Anne Budd was re-elected to the chair, with Kevin Barbey as vice-chair.

No activity has been observed at the Craven Keep quarry site (apart from vandalism of the signs) but the council will continue to keep watch.

No report has been sent in by Thames Valley Police report for several years. TVP will be invited to remedy this.

Chris Moss is moving data across to the new [parish council website](#), which it is hoped will be ready for launch at the next meeting.

The next meeting will be on Thursday 20th July, with agenda and timing to be confirmed on the parish council website.

Other local hot-button issues under discussion at the meetings

bus shelter renovation

In reinforcing the Ash Tree Corner bus shelter with new beams, Chris Moss and Paul Hansen found the entire structure to be rotten and in need of replacement. The lowest cost option would be in aluminium and perspex, costing £1,500 - £2,000, but this was thought inappropriate for a rural site. A more attractive structure, possibly of local design, might cost £8,000. Ideally it should include a noticeboard fulfilling the present information point function, a defibrillator, a history board, and possibly even a free mini-library. Solar panels could be incorporated to power lighting.

Fencing on the park side needs work, and the overall footprint would benefit from a small expansion. Grasscrete was laid down on the western side "for emergency services parking" many years ago, but this is thought never to have been used, and it could be more useful as general parking.

Part-funding of this work may be available from WBC, not least because the Lib Dems are keen to encourage bus use.

roadways

WBC's target of fixing of dangerous pot-holes within 72 hours is rarely met these days. Furthermore, repairs don't last, as exemplified by Holtwood Road where WBC's patching failed within two months. Anne Budd proposed a detailed survey and photography of the worst stretches of Hamstead's lanes for sending to WBC. Park Lane (unclassified) was mentioned as a particularly urgent case, being the first alternative river and rail crossing west of Newbury. Tony Vickers assured the meeting that road surfaces were a hot topic for the new Lib Dem council, with new technologies under consideration including drones for survey work.

volunteer speed-monitoring

Volunteers who raised their hands at the November 2021 meeting were not called into action, and the initial enthusiasm for parishioner speed-monitoring appears to have lapsed. A renewed effort is to be made to recruit volunteers for a new programme. The original (SID) scheme under consideration proved too unwieldy, but the council will now investigate hiring a speed gun (requiring at least two people to operate).

Other suggestions from the floor (for speed bumps, cameras, or an even lower limit) came mainly from newer parishioners unaware that this subject has been more or less a standing item on the parish council agenda for at least 25 years, and almost all remedies have been explored many times. The subject will be discussed again in July (and doubtless at many more meetings).

The consequences for a motorist caught in a parishioner-operated speed trap were not discussed this time, but they're not thought to include the ultimate deterrent: prosecution.

CORONATION LUNCH

The raffle at the village hall coronation lunch on Monday 8th May raised £200 (supplemented by £40 gift aid) for Macmillan Nurses, which would fund a patient's care for one day.

The lunch was organised by Jane Arnold-Round, Stella Coulthurst, Sue Watts, Trish Tandy, and Val Russell with her daughter Beth and granddaughters.

Chris Moss and Geoff Watts captured the scene.



GARDEN SOCIETY SUMMER MEETING

Members of the Enborne and Hamstead Marshall Garden Society visited Andy Pocock's garden in 2019, and this year his sister has invited them to her and Gary's garden at Linden Lea, North End, RG20 0AY on Wednesday 5th July at 7.30pm.

Gillian and Gary moved in January 2019 to Linden Lea, which had been empty or rented since 2015, so the garden had become overgrown and unloved. They have painstakingly transformed it into an old-fashioned cottage garden with flower beds and vegetable patch.

There will be refreshments, a raffle (donation of prizes would be appreciated), a bring-and-buy plant stall and a produce stall. Please bring any contributions with you.

The competition for the Meadowfresh Cup has classes open to all members.

- sweet peas – 9 stems
- roses – hybrid tea – 3
- roses – floribunda – 3
- rose – 1 specimen
- indoor pot plant – container no more than 6" diameter
- outdoor pot plant – container no more than 6" diameter
- flower arrangement in a basket
- summer fruits flan

The Redhill Rose Bowl will be presented to the member with the best overall rose exhibit from the three rose classes.

Please bring your exhibits on the day. Points are awarded at evening meetings, prior to the Flower Show on Saturday 2nd September.

Directions and parking: drive through North End, passing the telephone box on the left. After about 100 yards, turn right into a gravel track between two big hedges. Follow this and park in the paddock on the right-hand side. There will be a sign where to turn into the lane, and also by the paddock.

Schedules for the 2nd September Flower Show will be available, or can be obtained from Dawn or Penelope (details below).

New membership cards for 2023 will also be available. If you haven't yet renewed your membership please contact Dawn Taylor (01635 32006) or Penelope Lake (01635 4870).

The society started life as the Hamstead Marshall and Enborne Garden Society, with its first show in 1906

Hamstead Marshall & Enborne
HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY.
PRESIDENT: J. BRUNN, Esq.
THE
FIRST SHOW
Of the above Society will be held in the Grounds of
HAMSTEAD PARK,
On **Wednesday, August 10th, 1906**
(By kind permission of J. Bishop, Esq.)

THE WOODHAT (St. Martin's) BAND
This band is engaged, and **DANCING** will take place
on the Lawn from 7 to 9 p.m.

Willers' Handbells & Bells will be in attendance.

SPORTS PROGRAMME:

1	50 YARDS FLAT RACE, Boys under 10.	...	...
2	50 YARDS HURDLE RACE, Girls under 10.	...	...
3	50 YARDS HURDLE RACE, Boys under 10.	...	...
4	100 YARDS HURDLE RACE, Boys under 10.	...	...
5	50 YARDS HURDLE RACE, Girls under 10.	...	...
6	100 YARDS HURDLE RACE, Girls under 10.	...	...
7	100 YARDS HURDLE RACE, Boys under 10.	...	...
8	ONE MILE WALKING RACE, Open.	...	...
9	BICYCLE RACE for Men, Open.	...	...
10	QUARTER MILE FLAT RACE, Boys under 10.	...	...
11	FLAT RACE, Open.	...	...
12	FLAT RACE for Ladies, Open.	...	...
13	HURDLE RACE, Open.	...	...
14	OBSTACLE RACE, Open.	...	...
15	LONG JUMP, Open.	...	...
16	THROWING CHUCKER BALL, A New Ball.	...	...
17	ONE MILE FLAT RACE, Open.	...	...
18	WOMEN'S RACE for TEA.	...	...
19	HALF MILE RACE, Open.	...	...
20	MEN'S RACE for TOMATOES.	...	...
21	100 YARDS FLAT RACE, Open.	...	...

The Sports will commence at 2 p.m.
All Events not marked Open will be confined to the
Top Families of Hamstead Marshall and Enborne.
Refreshments will be supplied by the Sports Committee of
the Society. Entrance Free for Open Races and such.
Bicycle Repairs, and Refreshments supplied.



Give a dog a home

The Dogs Trust is looking for a home for Diageo, who has been at Plumb's Farm for quite a while. He's lovable and affectionate, but needs a quiet home where he can be the only dog, as he is an attention sponge. He gets a little worried at being left alone, so a home where his family are around a lot would suit him best.

If you'd like to know more about Diageo contact Candice or Rhian at the Dogs Trust, Plumb's Farm.

The village hall management committee is looking for a new trustee. If you're interested and would like more information contact [Sue Watts](#).



Circle of Friends

The Circle of Friends enjoyed a tour of All Angels vineyard in May, and the following month Lucy gave a talk on how the Dogs Trust works today in partnership with the RSPCA. The July meeting will, as usual, be with strawberries and fizz, before the group takes an August break.

The Circle of Friends is a Hamstead-based women's group which meets monthly and is open to all. If you're interested in attending, contact [Sue Watts](#).

PLANNING APPLICATIONS

Details taken from the [WBC planning portal](#) on 8th June 2023.

To see more details visit this site and search on the application number.

APPROVED

Old Post Office Kintbury Road RG20 0HW

23/00489/LBC validated 1st March 2023

Replacement front door, alterations to 3 No. C20 windows and replacement of 22 No. other windows and 1 No. pair of French doors

Approved 9th May 2023

AWAITING DECISION

Pear Tree Cottage, Irish Hill Road RG20 0JB

23/00634/LBC validated 17th March 2023

Dismantling and removal of a late twentieth-century external brickwork chimneystack. Repair and reinstatement to the external wall and thatch roof covering where the chimneystack has been removed, including render finishes. Blocking up of the associated redundant fireplace internally and making good internal finishes.

The Barn House, Holtwood RG20 0JH

23/00583/FUL validated 15th March 2023

Erection of replacement dwelling, following substantial demolition of existing dwelling and conversion of remaining floorspace for ancillary residential purposes; with associated parking, turning, landscaping, private amenity space and access.

No objection from HMPC. Letters of support from two neighbours.

Oak Tree Barn, Holtwood RG20 0JH

23/01073/COND validated 5th May 2023

Application for approval of details reserved by condition 7 (ecology enhancements) of planning permission 20/00901/FULD for conversion of existing redundant building into a dwelling and garage, together with associated landscaping.

PROPERTY ON THE MARKET

No 3 Hamstead Mill

Ground floor with two bedrooms; basement.

Previously with Marc Allen at guide price £450,000, now with Chancellors seeking offers in excess of £400,000.

Last sold 2012 for £240,000 (Nethouseprices)

What's on in the village

July

Wed 5th 19.30: **Garden society summer meeting**
Thu 6th 19.00: **Circle of Friends** at the village hall
Sat 8th 10.00-13.00: **Community market** in the village hall
Thu 20th 20.00 **Parish council meeting** in village hall

August

Sat 12th 10.00-13.00: **Community market** in the village hall

Pilates in the village hall continues on Tuesday mornings in termtime, 09.30 to 10.30. To enquire or join, contact [Jenny Carter](#).

Ladies who Brunch meet monthly for brunch with bubbles. For details contact [Lanie Allen](#).