

Hamstead *Hornet*

Hamstead Marshall's quarterly newspaper since 1996

December 2023

issue no 108

LOCAL LINKS

[Parish council](#)

[Community market](#) [FB](#)

[St Mary's Church](#)
[FB](#)

[Dogs Trust at Plumb's Farm](#)

[Good Hope Farm](#)

[HM Wildlife Group](#) [FB](#)

Whatsapp groups

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

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

Watery Lane lives up to its name

Charity's future assured

Elm Farm application awaits decision

Crime reports

Bus shelter

Carols at Chapel Corner

Bonfire bonanza

Good Hope Farm

Bob Williams

Last meeting of the year for garden soc

Planning applications

Property on the market

What's on in the village



Watery Lane lives up to its name

Many local households were affected by a burst eight-inch water main in Watery Lane on 14th November, releasing a reported 80 litres per minute. Holtwood residents had their water cut off and reduced pressure was experienced as far away as Chapel Corner.

Thames Water remained curiously silent about the leak and its repair, and it was down to nearby residents to enquire and relay news obtained from the engineers on site. There were rumours that bottled water was to be supplied, and that a tanker might be stationed at the village hall, but neither happened. Nor was there any official recommendation to boil tap supplies, although this too was suggested by residents.

Supply was restored in the lane the following day but the road remained closed until 21st.

Pictures courtesy of Chris Moss



Charity's future assured

Hamstead's Relief in Need charity is now secure, following the sale in August of the field known as Poor's Allotment, near Gore End. At a recent public meeting the trustees confirmed that the charity's account now holds £185,999.99.

The present-day charity was formed by the merging of two historic parish charities:

Thomas Wedge's: a cottage donated in 1722, entrusted to the churchwardens for the benefit of the parish poor;

Poor's Allotment, being the transfer of the field as part of the Craven estate's enclosure of common land in 1815.

Both were founded for the relief of parochial need, which continues to be the purpose of the present-day, merged charity (registration number 237865).

In the past, the parish council exercised ex-officio trusteeship, but since 2022 the trustees have been Anne Budd (chair), Liz Copas, Richard Cotton, Kevin Barbey and David Hadnutt.

The trustees would welcome confidential nominations of candidates for grants from these charity funds. It's hoped that a request form will soon be available for this purpose but, in the meantime, nominations should be made to Anne Budd on anne.budd1@btinternet.com or 07479 986897. Confidence will be strictly maintained.

Elm Farm application awaits decision



Few of Hamstead's planning applications are made with quite so much supporting material as attends the current proposal for a new-build dwelling on the site of former agricultural barns at Elm Farm.

Following a site visit by two parish councillors in September, the newly submitted application was presented to a well-attended parish council meeting on 16th November. The applicants attended with a team of professional advisers, and a presentation was given. The full

application runs to 250 pages, but a summary was fortunately available.

Two versions of the proposal have been submitted.

Scenario A derives from a revised version of an earlier application (21/00098/FUL) for conversion of one of the former, twentieth-century agricultural barns. This original application was refused, partly in relation to uncertainty as to whether the farmstead was redundant, and partly on account of structural considerations.

Scenario B proposes removal of all the redundant barns (not the grade-listed eighteenth-century brick barn, nor the old farmhouse) to make way for a new-build house of traditional design, with extensive provision of bio-diverse habitats.

The parish council discussed the application at an extraordinary meeting on 29th November, at which it was decided to commend Scenario B. This follows 13 letters of support sent to WBC from parishioners and local walkers, in which several mentioned that the demolition of the redundant metal barns – considered to be an eyesore viewed from the public footpath – would be a benefit.



The eighteenth-century brick barn before the 2008 rebuild

Details of the application can be read on the [council's planning portal](#), searching under application number 23/02550/FULMAJ.

A BRIEF HISTORY OF ELM FARM

Elm Farm, formerly part of the Craven estate, was known both as Village Farm and Manor Farm before gaining its present-day name and peak acreage in the early twentieth century. Tenant farmers are named on various records dating back to the mid-eighteenth century.

The Organic Research Centre (ORC) bought Elm Farm in 1980, and at first ran a Jersey dairy herd on the 240 or so acres. The cows used to make a stately progress along the Kintbury road to and from the milking sheds twice a day, much to the frustration of commuting motorists. A switch to beef cattle was made around 1990, and soon afterwards ORC let the land to an organic farmer from Oare.

Research activities continued on site, and in 2008 ORC rebuilt the grade-listed brick barn, and renovated the farmyard buildings. Elm Farm was by then central to village social life, hosting fairs, fetes, markets, fundraising shows, barn dances, meetings and two royal visits, until the ORC ran into financial trouble and sold up, departing for Cirencester in 2019.



Crime reports

Thames Valley Police reports are hopefully listed on each parish council meeting agenda, but few can remember when a TVP representative last came to deliver one. Meanwhile, the most recent reports of local incidents have been:

24th September: an attempted theft on Watery Lane;

28th November: break-in to a VW Polo in Park Lane and theft of items.

Police were also reportedly called to attend a minor motoring incident in connection with Thames Water's two-day closure of the Kintbury road between Ash Tree Corner and the Craven.

The community WhatsApp continues to be an effective source of local alerts for parishioners, not only for crime but also for the tracking of misdelivered parcels, lost dogs, straying sheep, unannounced road closures, surplus household goods wanted or on offer, recommended local tradespeople and more. If you'd like to join this group ask Sarah Stevenson 0780 2235169.

Bus shelter



This could soon look like



A WBC grant has now been agreed to cover the cost of materials for rebuilding the Ash Tree Corner bus shelter. The labour will be carried out voluntarily by Chris Moss and Paul Hansen. Various additional functions for the shelter have been proposed, including the provision of a defibrillator, a plant exchange, a free mini-library, a history board and more local information.

Carols at Chapel Corner

Sarah and Mick Ward are once again leading a pop-up choir of local carol singers, starting from Chapel Corner at 7pm on Thursday 21st December. Funds collected have been earmarked for [Educafe](#), a weekly gathering in Newbury Library to which all-comers may meet, learn and make new friends.



Everyone is welcome to join. Bright clothes and torches are recommended. The singers usually enjoy some hospitality from households en route, and will be offered more at Sarah and Mick's home at Gully Cottage at the end.

Bonfire bonanza

The village bonfire and fireworks night was well attended in good weather on 5th November, raising £600, which will be split between the Alexander Devine Children's Hospice, Enborne School and Kintbury School.

Good Hope Farm

Following a successful year with two open days, Good Hope Farm in Park Lane has issued an upbeat newsletter which can be read here:

<https://www.goodhopefarm.org.uk/blog>



Bob Williams

The death was announced in late August of Bob Williams, familiar to longer-standing villagers as the former resident of Clareville (now renamed Hayseed Hollow) with his wife Sheila. They moved to the village in the early 1990s, and stayed for more than a decade, after which they moved to Matlock in Derbyshire to be nearer their family.

Bob had a podiatry practice in Reading, and also worked on the parole board at Reading prison. A famous teller of stories and jokes, he regularly supported the White Hart and village events with Sheila, and many local people enjoyed their hospitality both at Clareville and at their much-loved house in the Dordogne.

Last meeting of the year for garden society

Following a successful show in Enborne in September, and an AGM and social in November, the Enborne & Hamstead Marshall Garden Society meets for the last time this year at 7.30pm on Wednesday 6th December in the village hall. Lauretta Owen will give a talk on and demonstration of Christmas wreaths and table decorations, and she will be bringing items for sale. There'll be mulled wine and mince pies, and an opportunity to renew subscriptions for 2024. Guests and visitors are welcome.

Planning applications

Details taken from the WBC planning portal on 29th November 2023. To see more details visit [this site](#) and search on the application number.

DECISION TAKEN

Watery Lane Farm, Holtwood RG20 0JH
23/01635/AGRIC validated 11th August 2023

Application was sought to determine if prior approval was required for a proposed extension to agricultural barn to provide fodder storage for 25 alpacas. WBC decided (4th September 2023) that an application is required, in view of the staff facilities included in the proposal.

AWAITING DECISION

Fishery Cottage RG20 0JD

23/01928/FULMAJ Application validated 22nd September 2023

Demolition of current dwelling, to be replaced with larger dwelling, to provide storage space near the house. Demolition of the existing barn to be relocated and replaced with a smaller barn, separate for mini-diggers and equipment to maintain the river banks. Shortening of fish pool.

Supported by Hamstead Marshall Parish Council.

Elm Farm RG20 0HR

23/02550/FULMAJ Application validated 7th November 2023

Demolition of redundant farmstead buildings, new house, relocated barn, change of use of field area for re-location of solar panels and significant landscape/biodiversity enhancement.

Letters of support have been received from 13 neighbours and local walkers. The parish council has commended the application.

Property on the market

No 3 Elm Farm Cottages

This three-bedroomed, end-of-terrace, 1960s house is being offered by BCM of Winchester at a guide price of £335,000, alongside 19.73 acres of pasture land containing a 184-square-metre barn.

The property (cottage and land) last changed hands in November 2020 (before the addition of the barn and new fencing) for £314,000, as part of the ORC sale of Elm Farm.

The bridle path, which used to flood regularly, no longer does so, having been re-routed at a higher level



Holtwood Farm RG20 0JH

Hamptons' website describes this Grade II-listed, seventeenth-century former farmhouse as now being under offer. Offers had been sought in excess of £1,000,000.



Holtwood Farmhouse in 1976

White Hart Inn



Colliers' website continues to offer the inn, with nine letting bedrooms, for £895,000 freehold, or leasehold.

The White Hart bar in former days

What's on in the village

December

| | | |
|----------|-------------|--|
| Thu 7th | 19.00-22.00 | Circle of Friends' Christmas party in village hall |
| Sat 9th | 10.00-13.00 | Community market in village hall |
| Thu 21st | 19.00- | Village carol singing Chapel Corner |

January

| | | |
|----------------------|-------|--|
| Thu 18 th | 19.30 | Parish council meeting in 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](#).

Lanie Allen is hoping to restart Ladies who Brunch in the New Year. For details contact her on 07775 804143.

Circle of Friends contact is Sue Watts 07884 004418.

The mobile library will stop at Ash Tree Grove from 10.40 until 11.10 on Thursdays 14th December, 4th, 25th January, 15th February and 7th, 28th March.

The *Hamstead Hornet* is published quarterly online, in March, June, September and December. Back copies can be seen on <https://www.hamsteadmarshall.net/social-life/hamstead-hornet/>. Readers who have supplied their email addresses to the editor receive a link as soon as each issue is posted. News stories are updated between issues on the [village website noticeboard](#). The *Hamstead Hornet* is edited and published by Penelope Stokes admin@hamsteadmarshall.net.