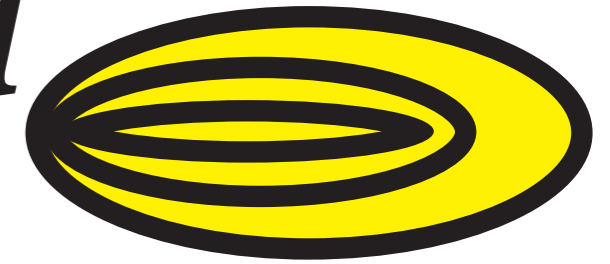


Hamstead Hornet



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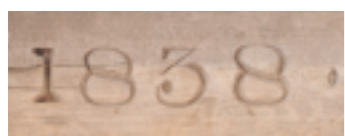
June 2008



Smart new offices at Elm Farm

Phase one of the Organic Research Centre re-development of Elm Farm is nearly complete, with staff already installed in the new offices (pictured left) which have been created from former Victorian cowsheds. These, until now, had not been fit for anything other than general storage.

The new offices, meeting rooms, kitchen and toilets are bright, airy and equipped with a variety of eco-friendly features such as underground tanks for the collection of rainwater which is then used for loo-



flushing, utilisation of ground heat, and light switches with movement sensors. Crushed recycled glass has been used (instead of sand) to attractive effect in the flooring. The roof has a solar panel and purpose-designed access points for bats. Some traditional features have been retained; the original cowshed beams (one dated 1838, and matched with a 2008 inscription in the managing director's new office) have been kept, and the walls are lime-plastered.

The Organic Research Centre first came to Elm Farm in 1980. There is no longer any laboratory research on site, but 17 staff currently work here in education, advice, publications and administration of the trust's other sites. The 240-acre farm, which once was the trust's testing ground for organic research, is now let to an organic dairy farmer from Hermitage.

Phase two of the redevelopment should begin in September, transforming the Grade II-listed eighteenth-century barn into more office space, and linking it with the former laboratory building. Another smaller, brick building will become the archive store. A decision will then be made as to future use of the original farmhouse.

Elm Farm regularly offers guided walks around the farm trail, which itself is open to the public all the year round. See What's On.

**No excuse
for
speeding
now**

Motorists can no longer delude themselves that Hamstead Marshall is an unlimited-speed zone. West Berkshire Council has erected gates and new signs on almost every entrance to the village, giving strong emphasis to the 30mph speed limit, which now extends for the entire east-west width of the village along the Kintbury Road. The message is reinforced with more signs within the village.

Andrew Garratt of WBC highways department has told David Harris, who chairs the village traffic committee, that a VAS sign will soon be added near Salters, and new signage at Chapel Corner is scheduled for September.

Meanwhile some practical enforcement of the limit is being sought from Thames Valley Police through the Neighbourhood Action Group.

Road closure

Milkhouse Road, which runs south from the A4 over the railway, river and canal to Morewood, will be closed for three days beginning Wednesday 11 June for patching and surface dressing works. A diversion will be set up.

WBC highways reports that there will be another closure of the same road during July, but details of this have not yet been posted.



The Hamstead Hornet is posted on www.hamsteadmarshall.net which also carries story updates and detailed village information.

The Hamstead Hornet is edited and published by Penelope Stokes at
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Ian Walker celebrates reprieve

Ian Walker of Chapel Corner was delighted to learn this week that West Berkshire Primary Care Trust will, after all, fund his treatment with the new drug Sutent.

Ian Walker has kidney cancer, for which he had major surgery last November. His doctor recommended Sutent as the preferred treatment for his condition, offering the best chance of extending his life.

However a review committee of the PCT decided that they would not fund this treatment under the NHS, because the drug had yet to be approved by the National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence (NICE), although it has been licensed since 2006.

The Walker family challenged the decision vigorously, gaining publicity in the *Sun* and the *Daily Mail*, and drawing attention to the unfairness of drug availability depending upon where a patient lived – the so-called postcode lottery.

The PCT's change of heart acknowledges the mental stress to which Ian Walker has been subjected by conflicting communications on the matter. When his doctor applied for funding for Sutent the priorities committee had only just changed from approving the drug to putting it on "low priority".

"Up to that point I had been told that I was likely to get the drug, as the West Berks PCT were approving it for my condition," says Ian Walker. "It came as a severe blow to hear of the refusal, and certainly caused a lot of mental stress."

Ian and Mary Walker have lived at Chapel Corner for around 30 years, and have always supported village events. Ian has often been the familiar voice of the village, in supplying and manning the PA system at fetes. Their daughters, Sarah, an ophthalmologist, and Fiona, the best-selling novelist, were raised in the village.

Inside this issue of the Hornet is the promised report from the village broadband committee, in which is described a (so far) successful experiment at Chapel Corner using an external antenna to pick up the Vodafone 3G signal from the mast by Shepherds Bridge. Frank Ellis, who chairs the committee, urges all who are interested in broadband to read the report carefully, and to respond as requested.

"These are still early days," he says, "and this solution may not work for everyone, in which case the alternative may have to be broadband by satellite. We can no longer hope for any solution from BT."

The report can also be read on www.hamsteadmarshall.net/broadband.



Village info at a glance

The transformation of the Ash Tree Corner bus shelter into a village information point is now complete. Repaired and re-creosoted, the shelter now has three information boards: one for general announcements of forthcoming events and two for village information. The latter displays a list of house names and postcodes, a map showing postcode areas, and footpaths, a map of cycle routes and information on the parish plan, village design statement, village hall, St Mary's church and the parish council.

What's on		
Sun 1 Jun	Open Farm Sunday at Elm Farm including a guided walk	Pam Tibbatts 01488 658298 x5
20.00 Sun 1 Jun	White Hart quiz £2 per person - all proceeds to charity	01488 658201
19.30-21.30 Thu 5 Jun	Circle of Friends meeting in village hall all ages welcome - £3 includes tea/coffee & raffle	Sue Watts 01488 658932
10.00-12.30 Sat 8 Jun	CLIVE bus in village hall car park (Community Learning and Information Vehicle)	Lanie Allen 01488 658168
10.00-13.00 Sat 14 Jun	monthly market in village hall cakes, local meat, veg & preserves, crafts, refreshments etc village design statement consultation	Sue Watts 01488 658932
19.30-21.30 Thu 3 Jul	Circle of Friends meeting in village hall all ages welcome - £3 includes tea/coffee & raffle	Sue Watts 01488 658932
12.00 Sun 6 Jul	Dogs Trust Open Day at Plumbs Farm	
20.00 Sun 6 Jul	White Hart quiz £2 per person - all proceeds to charity	01488 658201
19.45 Mon 7 Jul	village hall committee meeting village design statement consultation	01488 658168
10.00-13.00 Sat 12 Jul	monthly market in village hall cakes, local meat, veg & preserves, crafts, refreshments etc	Sue Watts 01488 658932
14.00 Sun 13 Jul	guided walk around Elm Farm as part of HADCAF	01488 658503
Sun 20 Jul	parish party food, drink and music for all at the village hall recreation field	Jon Phillips 01488 658731
20.00 Mon 21 Jul	parish council meeting in the village hall	Jo Wheeler 07766 692235
20.00 Sun 3 Aug	White Hart quiz £2 per person - all proceeds to charity	01488 658201
19.30-21.30 Thu 5 Sept	Circle of Friends meeting in village hall all ages welcome - £3 includes tea/coffee & raffle	Sue Watts 01488 658932
14.00 Sun 7 Sept	guided walk around Elm Farm as part of National Organic Fortnight	01488 658503
20.00 Sun 7 Sept	White Hart quiz £2 per person - all proceeds to charity	01488 658201
10.00-13.00 Sat 13 Sept	monthly market in village hall cakes, local meat, veg & preserves, crafts, refreshments etc	Sue Watts 01488 658932
Mon 21 Sept	parish council meeting in the village hall	Jo Wheeler 07766 692235
regular term-time activities in the village hall		
10.00-11.30 Weds	yoga classes	Inga Craven 01488 658744
13.30-16.00 Mons	oil painting classes for beginners & improvers	Newbury College 01635 42824
weekdays	Little Sunflowers nursery school	Teresa 01635 253201 Trudy 01635 255363



Village hall committee 2008-09

chairman
vice-chair
treasurer
secretary
bookings
parish council rep

Jim Clarke
Sue Watts
Gill Cook
Lanie Allen
Anne Budd (01488 657022)
Peter Benest

Since the kitchen refurb and acquisition of new furniture, hall facilities have been further enhanced by regular maintenance of the recreation field, on which a small orchard and wildflower area will be planted in the autumn. Redecoration of the hall is also planned.

Mansion for Holtwood?

Application has been made for planning permission to demolish Holtwood House and replace it with a larger house of five bays plus two-storey garage.

Holtwood House was built in the 1960s and, according to the present occupant Andrew Chapman, is no longer sensibly placed in relation to its enlarged plot. The new house would be set back a little further from the road.

The applicant is David Milligan of Fairfax Classical Properties Ltd, Ramsbury, through Newbury agent Robin Buchanan.

The parish council decided to raise no objection to the proposal, but expressed the view that existing landscaping should be maintained as a minimum requirement to screen the house from the road. A decision from the Downlands planning committee is expected 13 June.

PARISH PARTY

2008

13.00 - 17.00

Sunday 20 July

**music from Diggin on This
hog roast and bar
tickets £3 from the village
market**

**or £5 on the gate
under 12s and over 60s free**

Parish assembly

Hamstead's parish council continues into 2008-09 unchanged except that the chairmanship has passed from John Handy to Gordon Fisher.

The annual parish assembly was held on 19 May with a handful of members of the public in attendance. Reports were submitted from the retiring chairman and from WBC (Anthony Stansfeld). Penny Stokes reported on the progress of the parish plan, and Jim Clarke described a successful year for the village hall.

As a village charity trustee, Jim Clarke also reported that six payments of £60 had been made to Hamstead pensioners last Christmas from the village charity fund.

Betty Pointer thanks the friends and neighbours who helped her to raise more than £1,400 for the Newbury branch of the Parkinsons Society in 2007.

Other planning applications

Hamstead Growers has been refused permission to build a new residential dwelling to replace the mobile home on site, on the grounds that it lies within designated ASLI and open countryside, where there is a general presumption against new accommodation development unless exceptional circumstances exist.

Patrick Early of Foxlee Farm in Holtwood has been refused permission for residential use of the property within class C of 1987 use classes order.

Mr and Mrs North of No 2 The Village have gained approval to build a single-storey extension to the front of the house.

Bob Brown of North Lodge has been granted permission to change the use of the art studio to a separate dwelling.

Houses on the market

Merrowmead at Chapel Corner continues to be offered by Downers for £675,000.

Mansard, next door to the White Hart, is for sale through Hillier & Wilson for £495,000.

Henry George has recently been inviting offers in the region of £825,000 for the Barn House at Holtwood.

A one-bedroom maisonette at Chapel Corner is being offered to let by Orchard estate agents of Swindon at £595pcm.

Village design statement

The draft village design statement (VDS) will be available for public inspection and comment at the monthly market in the village hall from 10am until 1pm on Saturday 14 June, and again at the village hall committee meeting at 7.45pm on Monday 7 July. Robin Tandy and Penny Stokes will be present on 14 June, and Peter Benest on 7 July, to answer any questions villagers may have and to take note of comments.

The VDS is a summary of opinions expressed by local residents in the parish plan questionnaire of December 2006 relating to development within the village. When approved and accepted by WBC it becomes a statutory reference document for planning authorities, and should ensure that decisions take local opinion into account.

The present draft has yet to be approved by WBC planning department, before formal adoption.

The VDS can also be seen on <www.hamsteadmarshall.net/VDS>.

Too much illumination

A survey of Ash Tree Grove residents has found a majority in favour of (and three against) installing a single streetlight in the centre of the close to deter crime. However at the May parish council meeting the clerk reported that WBC has refused to instal just one light, saying that a minimum of four would have to be installed. This was considered unacceptable, and Gordon Fisher is investigating alternatives.