

## Bad news for foxes

*It's a wet Sunday morning and you deserve a lie-in, but the chickens need to be let out, so up you have to get and put on your coat...*

Not any more you don't, thanks to the Pullit, a microprocessor-based gadget for automating the opening and closing of chicken-houses. Unlike ducks or geese, hens instinctively roost as daylight fades, making the job of securing the hen-house each evening easier to automate, and the Pullit's hours of opening and closing can be set according to season. Whilst not recommended as a substitute for daily checking in person, the Pullit leaves poultry-keepers a little freer to enjoy life.



The Pullit, pictured in situ above, is the brainchild of Phil Gunn of Chapel Corner. He and Kate produce and keep stocks of around 20 at home, from where sales in their first year of trading (as Henwise Ltd) have been upwards of 50 units, which have gone all over the UK and Ireland. The problems of after-sales service have so far precluded selling further afield than France, although the first Stateside enquiry has already been received.

Marketing has so far been limited to the website, <www.henwise.com>, and an ad is soon to appear in *Country Smallholdings* magazine, but Phil has plans this year to attend local chicken shows and poultry auctions.

Now, having sorted the chickens, maybe Phil could turn his talents to the automated handling of early-rising grandchildren...

## Property on and off the market

*information taken from estate agents' websites on 27 Feb 2012*

Mansard, a four-bedroomed house next-door to the White Hart, continues to be offered for sale by Hillier and Wilson at a guide price of £495,000.

The Barn, a one-bedroom conversion at Holtwood Gate, is advertised by Zoopla for rent at £625 pcm. Knowle House, near Chapel Corner, has just been let unfurnished by Jones Robinson at £1,300 pcm. *East Gate Cottage is back on the market for the third time in as many years, this time with a Knight Frank board on display.*

## New rector due in March

The new rector, the Rev Rachel Lewis, will be inducted at a service in Kintbury on Wednesday 21st March, and the following Sunday she will hold her first service at St Mary's, Hamstead.

Rachel Lewis was among the first women priests to be ordained in the Church of England in 1994. Beginning as a university chaplain, she has most recently served as vicar in a parish in Glamorgan.

She is expected to move into Enborne Rectory, from where she will head the team that serves the parishes of Hamstead Marshall, West Woodhay, Inkpen, Enborne, Combe and Kintbury.

## Holtwood rides again

The stables at what was formerly Hamstead Growers has been reborn as Enborne Equestrian under the new owner, Ruth Gardiner, and it is thriving on three fronts.

First, Ruth is buying and training horses for resale. Second, she has a livery business that is already at capacity occupation, and third, her riding school is up and running with around a dozen horses and ponies. She teaches adults and children, one to one or in classes.

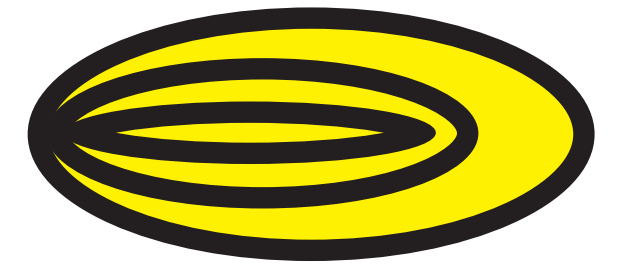
Holtwood residents are delighted to see the 33-acre holding once again under effective management and offering local employment.

## Got something to say?

<www.facebook.com/pages/Hamstead-Marshall> Hamstead Marshall now has a community Facebook page where you can post local news, information, questions, observations, photos, requests for help, offers of goods/services (but only if free – no ads please).

Copies of the Hamstead Hornet are posted online at <www.hamsteadmarshall.net/noticeboard>. News stories are updated between issues on the same page. The *Hamstead Hornet* is edited and published by Penelope Stokes at The Holding, Hamstead Marshall, Newbury, Berks RG20 0HW 01488 658759 <admin@hamsteadmarshall.net>

# Hamstead Hornet



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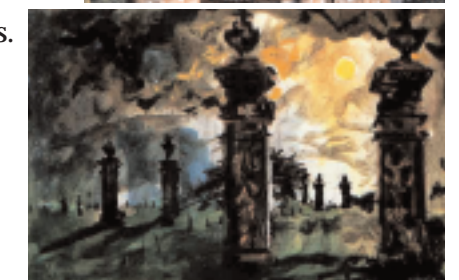
## Planned restoration of Park gatepiers

Tim Gwyn-Jones of Hamstead Park has filed a planning application to repair and conserve the three pairs of seventeenth-century, Grade-I listed gatepiers which stand on his land.

The brick and Bath stone gatepiers were surveyed in 2009 by the London firm of Rees Bolter Architects, which found them in "fair overall structural condition", but suffering from weathering and invasive vegetation. Two are in urgent need of stabilising as a result of ground movement. Extensive repointing and some rebuilding is needed. Existing materials will be reused where ever possible, and replacement materials commissioned to special order, replicating the original style. Lichen on the stonework will be preserved, as will the metalwork which once supported grand gates. Iron railings will be needed to protect the restored gatepiers from livestock and farm machinery.

As Grade-I listed monuments these gatepiers fall within the top 2.5% of historic design structures in England. The proposal has met with approval from various bodies with a local conservation interest, such as those concerned with historic parks, ancient monuments and SSSIs. The project will also surely be applauded by villagers, who hold the gatepiers in great affection as emblematic of Hamstead Marshall's romantic history. With the old estate walling they are the sole remnants of the magnificent house which the first Lord Craven built for Elizabeth, the Winter Queen.

Anyone wishing to read the illustrated architectural survey in full can see it on <<http://publicaccess.westberks.gov.uk>>. Enter the application number 12/00066/LBC, click on the *Documents* tab, and then *View associated documents*.



*The Hamstead Park gatepiers were painted twice by John Piper (1903-92).*



This 1709 engraving of the Craven manor house (which burned down 10 years later) shows 10 pairs of gatepiers in position. One pair has not survived, and another was moved to Benham Park. The three for which restoration is planned are marked by red dots, and can be located in the modern landscape by reference to the church, on the far right.

*"..a sense of vanished magnificence expressed in the richly decorated but isolated gatepiers which now rise from a pastoral landscape setting."*

Oliver Hill and John Cornforth in *English Country Houses* (1966)



What's on in the village		
19.30 Thu 1 Mar	Circle of Friends (ladies' group) meeting in the village hall <i>fun art with Val Russell</i>	Sue Watts 01488 658932
20.00 Wed 7 Mar	Monthly mindbender quiz at the White Hart <i>£1 per person entrance; charity benefit Air Ambulance</i>	01488 657545
10.00-13.00 Sat 10 Mar	Community market in the village hall <i>food, crafts, gifts etc</i>	Sue Watts 01488 658932 Lanie Allen 01488 658168
19.30 Tue 13 Mar	Wine tasting supper at the White Hart	01488 657545
Sun 18 Mar	Mother's Day lunch at the White Hart	01488 657545
20.00 Mon 19 Mar	Parish council meeting in the village hall	parish_clerk@hotmail.co.uk
11.30-14.30 Sat 24 Mar	Easter Bunny Festival at the White Hart	01488 657545
all day Sat 24 Mar	First-aid course (equine-related) in the village hall £49	Sarah Morgan 01488 73071 or 07786 5 12298
20.00 Wed 4 Apr	Monthly mindbender quiz at the White Hart <i>£1 per person entrance; charity benefit</i>	01488 657545
19.30 Thu 5 Apr	Circle of Friends (ladies' group) meeting in the village hall <i>appliqué techniques</i>	Sue Watts 01488 658932
10.00-13.00 Sat 14 Apr	Community market in the village hall <i>food, crafts, gifts etc</i>	Sue Watts 01488 658932 Lanie Allen 01488 658168
20.00 Wed 2 May	Monthly mindbender quiz at the White Hart <i>£1 per person entrance; charity benefit</i>	01488 657545
19.00 Thu 3 May	Circle of Friends (ladies' group) meeting <i>bluebell walk; meet at Craven Hill tbc</i>	Sue Watts 01488 658932
10.00-13.00 Sat 12 May	Community market in the village hall <i>food, crafts, gifts etc</i>	Sue Watts 01488 658932 Lanie Allen 01488 658168
19.00 Mon 21 May	Annual parish assembly and village hall AGM in the village hall	parish_clerk@hotmail.co.uk
pm Sun 3 Jun	Jubilee celebration tea at ORC Elm Farm followed by the evening parish party	watch noticeboards
09.00-16.00 Sun 3 Jun	Garden furniture sale in village hall	
20.00 Wed 6 Jun	Monthly mindbender quiz at the White Hart <i>£1 per person entrance; charity benefit</i>	01488 657545
19.30 Thu 7 Jun	Circle of Friends (ladies' group) meeting in the village hall <i>plant swap and strawberries</i>	Sue Watts 01488 658932
10.00-13.00 Sat 9 Jun	Community market in the village hall <i>food, crafts, gifts etc</i>	Sue Watts 01488 658932 Lanie Allen 01488 658168

<i>regular events in the village hall</i>		
13.30-16.00 Mons termtime	Oil painting classes for beginners & improvers	Chris Turner 01488 658587
17.00-18.30 Weds	Yoga classes	Inga Craven 01488 658744
weekdays termtime	Little Sunflowers nursery school	Teresa 01635 253201 Trudy 01635 255363

## Broadband

Two prospects for bringing faster broadband to the village were presented recently at the village hall

### *AB Internet/ORC Elm Farm*

ORC Elm Farm is likely to have its own AB Internet system in place by early summer, and MD Nic Lampkin has offered to share the connection with local households.

At the village hall meeting Neil Tucker of AB Internet Ltd outlined a system of wireless broadband offering 4, 6 or 10Mb to Hamstead users piggy-backing on ORC Elm Farm's planned installation. Line-of-sight problems could be overcome by a series of POPs (small relay stations mounted on walls, poles, trees etc, which would bend the signal around geographical obstructions) to a receiver (about the size of a paperback novel) mounted high on the outside of each house. Installation cost to the householder is likely to be around £100, and a 4Mb (up and down) subscription would be £20 per month. There are no latency issues (as with satellite) although the signal might be affected by bad weather. The monthly download cap is likely to be in the region of 100Gb per household.

If you think the ORC/AB proposal may be the solution for you, please register your interest by emailing Neil Tucker at <info@abinternet.co.uk>, mentioning ORC Elm Farm and giving your post code.

For further information see:

<www.hamsteadmarshall.net/broadband.htm> detail and links on both these systems  
<www.superfastberkshire.org.uk>  
<http://wireless.abinternet.co.uk/ABInternet>  
Or contact Chris Allen at ORC on 01488 659298  
<chris.a@organicresearchcentre.com>. Chris has taken over the village broadband co-ordinator's role from Frank Ellis, who has retired from the project.

## Planning applications

Information taken from <http://publicaccess.westberks.gov.uk> on 27 February 2012

### PENDING CONSIDERATION

Enborne Equestrian (formerly Hamstead Growers Equestrian) 12/00302/FUL: retrospective: to change the grass surface of the manege to all-weather surfacing composed of sand and rubber.

Holtwood Corner 12/00314/COND2: to approve details in connection with bat loft above swimming pool.

Hamstead Park 12/00066/LBC: see front page **APPROVED**

50-51 Craven Hill 11/02140/HOUSE and 11/02142/LBC2: to extend the existing brick

### *Superfast Berkshire*

Superfast Berkshire is the local arm (led by WBC) of a national project to bring 20Mb to 90% of the UK by 2015. Berkshire has been granted £1.43 million to seed the project, currently estimated to need £5 to £10 million in total. Sources for meeting this shortfall are still under discussion, but WBC is seeking from "notspot" parishes such as Hamstead £3 to be added to the parish precept, annually for three years, as a pledge of support.

However, if and when Superfast Berkshire achieves its target, it seems likely that Hamstead will still fall within the unlucky 10% rather than the 90%. The project plans BT fibre optic to four roadside cabinets outside the parish, but not into Hamstead Marshall itself. Householders living more than three kilometres from these cabinets (ie, most of the village) may receive significantly less than the 20Mb ideal.

A parish council meeting on 21 February decided to add £5 per household to the 2012-13 parish precept, thus raising £585 for the project. On realising that the figure requested was actually just over £3 per household in year one, the council hopes that a single £5 levy, together with other savings, may suffice to meet the Superfast requirement over the full three years.

boundary wall and instal a timber gate.

Ash Tree Cottage 11/02191/HOUSE: to demolish a single-storey extension and to replace it with a new extension and summer house.

East Gate Cottage 11/02356/HOUSE: for a single-storey extension and other alterations.

### REFUSED

White Hart Cottage 11/02299/HOUSE: to extend an existing garage to accommodate a living room, bedroom, WC and bathroom, refused on the grounds that it would constitute a new dwelling in the countryside.