



White Hart *Dare we hope?*

Hopes that the White Hart might be saved as a pub or restaurant have been raised and lowered over the last nine months, as rumours circulated the village. However Peter Brunsden of Brunsden Associates confirmed on 2nd March that (despite the For Sale sign still on site) a sale process is going through subject to contract.

An official notice (on Brunsden Associates letterheading) posted on the pub door some time ago states that:

By order of the mortgagees in possession we advise that an offer has been made for the above property in the sum of £500,000. Anyone wishing to increase this offer should notify the Estate Agents of their best and final offer to exchange of contracts.

And it seems that someone did, because Peter Brunsden also confirmed that the price is now £530,000.

He declined to identify the prospective buyer, but when asked if the White Hart would remain a pub, he replied guardedly "To the best of my knowledge, yes". It is however difficult to imagine that in this economic climate a speculative developer would pay more than half a million for a site without planning permission. We hope.

A sorry tale of decline

If you Google *White Hart Hamstead Marshall*, you will still find within the first few results a glowing review from the *Daily Telegraph* in 2001. However the era of the White Hart as a popular Italian restaurant ended with the Aromandos' retirement in the spring of 2004, when Camilla and Kevin Reilly became the new landlords. The White Hart reverted to more traditional-style pub, offering quizzes, real ale festivals, hog-roasts, a TV screen and dartboard, still alongside a varied menu of good home cooking, but the profile of the pub became more local, and reviews in national newspapers became a feature of the past. In the spring of 2009 Cam's Carvery was launched: a choice of roasts for a fiver, replacing the former specials and a-la-carte. This alas, was not to the taste of many former regulars, nor did it attract long-distance diners. Trade dwindled and hours became irregular. The pub closed in May 2010 and was repossessed towards the end of the year.

Monday painters

Chris Turner's Monday afternoon oil painting class at the village hall is enjoying a new lease of life since he took to running it himself at the end of last year. Newbury College, by whom it had previously been organised, backed out when numbers fell, but Chris took it on himself, and class numbers have recently doubled - now close to the maximum that can be accommodated.

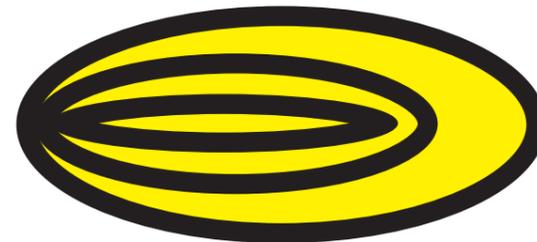
They meet from 1.30 until 4pm during term times, painting outside when the weather permits. Beginners can take a trial class with materials supplied if they wish. Contact Chris on 01488 658587 to find out more.



News stories from the *Hamstead Hornet* are posted and updated on www.hamsteadmarshall.net which also carries detailed information about the village.

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Hamstead Hornet



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Saturday 9th July – a date for your diary

From 11am until 10.00pm on Saturday 9th July Elm Farm will be hosting a village gala day that will include their own organic and local food festival, a craft fair, village fete and the now traditional parish party.

Much is still at the planning stage, but visitors on the day will be offered delicious fare from organic and other local suppliers: bread, cakes, meat, honey, chocolates and preserves are almost certain to be amongst the varied produce on offer. In tandem with the food fair Chris Allen is organising a craft event, for which he is now recruiting stall-holders and demonstrators. Crafts people working by traditional methods in wood, metal, ceramics, textiles and paper are welcome to apply.

In the paddock behind the yard there will be village fete events and children's activities. When the daytime programme draws to a close the parish party will begin, and Jon Phillips' band will entertain the evening visitors until 10pm. Drinks and food will of course be for sale throughout the day, and it is hoped that a hog roast or barbecue will be running in the evening.

Anyone who would like to take part in the event should contact Pam Bijack at Elm Farm on 01488 658298.

Easter market special

An extra Hamstead Marshall and Enborne Community Market will be held on Easter Saturday, 23 April, which is also St George's Day, at Elm Farm, between 10.30 and 15.30.

The market will feature all the usual stalls, s together with some extras. There will be games and an Easter bonnet competition for children, and a licensed bar. Hot food will be served.

Volunteers are being sought to help run the fete and car parking. Contact Sue Watts (01488 658932) re the former, and Robin Tandy (01488 658048) re the latter.

Technocafé launch

Are you secretly confused by bitmaps and blogs, fearful of Java and jpegs? If so, you can now relax, because help is on its way. St Mary's church is launching a village technocafé the first of which which will be held at Elm Farm from 10.30 until noon on Wednesday 9th March.

The idea is to offer basic (and free) computing help to local people. Perhaps you need to lay out a CV for a job application, or you might like to learn how to use a spreadsheet to manage some simple accounts. Maybe you never can remember how to attach a photo to an email. Even if you've never used a computer at all, this will be your chance to learn. At the Elm Farm technocafé you'll be taken gently in hand by a group of experienced local volunteers, in a friendly atmosphere where nobody baffles you with jargon or pours scorn on ignorance. And it is a café so of course you'll get a cup of coffee, too.

The scheme is the brainchild of the Rev Cathy Pynn, who has already set up regular technocafé sessions in Kintbury, West Woodhay and Inkpen. Experience suggests that although uptake may at first be slow, a substantial clientele builds up once word gets around.

Computing skills aren't just essential for negotiating the modern world; they can also enable you to have a great deal of fun. If you somehow missed the IT boat first time around, get down to Elm Farm on Wednesday 9th March.

What's on in the village 2011

10.30-noon Wed 9 Mar	Technocafé at Elm Farm free basic computing help	Cathy Pynn 01488 658243
19.30-21.30 Thu 10 Mar	Circle of Friends (ladies' group) in village hall talk on sugar craft	Sue Watts 01488 658932
10.00-13.00 Sat 12 Mar	Hamstead Marshall and Enborne Community Market in village hall - food, crafts, gifts etc	Sue 01488 658932 Lanie 01488 658168
20.00 Mon 21 Mar	Parish council meeting in village hall all welcome	Jo Wheeler (parish clerk) <pclerkoffice@aol.com>
10-12 Sat 26 Mar	St Mary's churchyard working party volunteers +equipment welcome	Robin Althaus 01635 524346
19.30 Thu 7 Apr	Circle of Friends (ladies' group) in village hall talk on orchids (tbc)	Sue Watts 01488 658932
10.00-13.00 Sat 9 Apr	Hamstead Marshall and Enborne Community Market in village hall - food, crafts, gifts etc	Sue 01488 658932 Lanie 01488 658168
10.30-15.30 Sat 23 Apr	Easter Saturday Community Market at Elm Farm	Lanie 01488 658168
19.30-21.30 Thu 5 May	Circle of Friends (ladies' group) belly dancing demonstration in village hall	Sue Watts 01488 658932
10.00-13.00 Sat 14 May	Hamstead Marshall and Enborne Community Market in village hall - food, crafts, gifts etc	Sue 01488 658932 Lanie 01488 658168
19.30 Mon 16 May	Annual parish assembly held jointly with village hall AGM in village hall	Jo Wheeler (parish clerk) <pclerkoffice@aol.com>
19.30 Thu 2 Jun	Circle of Friends (ladies' group) in village hall plant swap and general meeting	Sue Watts 01488 658932
Sat-Sun 4-5 Jun	West Woodhay Garden Show in aid of all the benefice churches and local charities	<www.westwoodhaygarden show.co.uk>
11.00-22.00 Sat 9 July	Food festival, village fete and parish party all day at Elm Farm	Pam Bijack at Elm Farm 01488 658298
20.00 Mon 18 July	Parish council meeting in village hall	Jo Wheeler (parish clerk) <pclerkoffice@aol.com>
<i>regular events</i>		
13.30-16.00 Mons termtime	oil painting classes for beginners & improvers	Chris Turner 01488 658587
weekdays termtime	Little Sunflowers nursery school	Teresa 01635 253201 Trudy 01635 255363

The 2011 West Woodhay Garden Show will be held on Saturday 4th and Sunday 5th June at West Woodhay House, from 10am until 6pm. Admission is £7 for adults (children under 15 free). Funds raised by the show are shared between the six local churches including St Mary's, and other local charities.

Plant donations are currently being sought: by Robin Althaus 01635 524346, Anna Bradstock 01488 66877 or Anthea Hunt 01488 668381.

Do you sell/supply/offer a service from within the village? If so, you may be eligible for free listing on <www.hamsteadmarshall.net/suppliers> and also to have your details included in the welcome pack given to new arrivals in the village. Send your details to <admin@hamsteadmarshall.net> or drop a business card into The Holding, RG20 0HW (Chapel Corner).

Planning applications

Two appeals allowed against local objection

The Planning Inspectorate has granted Patrick Early of Foxlee Farm, Holtwood, permission to build the replacement dwelling detailed in his planning application of last July.

Mr Early applied in 2009 for a replacement dwelling, and was turned down by West Berkshire Council in February 2010 on the grounds that the scale of the proposed building was disproportionate. The July 2011 application was, according to Mr Early, for a design modified to bring it within acceptable limits. It is not clear from the documents posted online why WBC failed to act on this second application.

In January 2011 the applicant went to appeal on grounds of non-determination by West Berks Council. Following a site visit the inspector allowed the appeal and granted permission for the dwelling, subject to various conditions regarding floor level, materials, landscaping and tree protection. These details must be approved by WBC before work can begin.

Hamstead Marshall parish council has consistently objected to Mr Early's applications on the grounds that his certificate of lawfulness (to reside on site) was granted in error. The inspector's report noted that it was not his remit to question the basis on which the original certificate of lawful development was granted.

In a separate case, also in Holtwood, Hamstead Growers and Fruiterers appealed against a WBC enforcement notice concerning a mobile home on land not so designated for that use.

Following a site visit on 25 January 2011 the planning inspector allowed Mr Webb's appeal in recognition that his expanding business of horse-breeding and livery stabling requires the site to be manned at all times. This permission is valid for three years.

From the documents filed online by WBC it would appear that Hamstead Marshall parish council raised no objection to this application, although Holtwood residents have long-standing misgivings about the traffic and lighting associated with increased activity on the Hamstead Growers site.

A separate enforcement notice requiring removal of a second manege and lighting at Hamstead Growers is currently being appealed in the High Court, having been dismissed by the Planning Inspectorate on first appeal.

Keith Webb took over Hamstead Growers in 2001, after which the popular fruit, vegetable and PYO business established by the Minett family dwindled, and has been gradually replaced by equine activities.

News in brief

St Mary's annual churchyard working party takes place from 10 until noon on Saturday 26th March. Helpers are welcome, and asked to bring their own tools. Refreshments will be offered afterwards by the churchwardens.

Fire engines were called twice to Ash Tree Corner during February: on the 1st to deal with a kitchen blaze, and again on the 26th for reasons unknown.

Inga Craven's Wednesday morning yoga class in the village hall is ending due to a drop in numbers. Little Sunflowers pre-school group is taking over the slot.

Sarah Ward's carol singers raised £200 for the Alzheimer's Society. It was the turn of Craven Hill and Ash Tree Grove to be serenaded last Christmas, after which the 17 singers were invited back to Gully Cottage for refreshments.

The parish clerk's email address has changed to <pclerkoffice@aol.com>.

Village houses on the market

No 43, also known as Harvest Cottage, is back on the market at £475,000 with Strutt and Parker.

Two properties in Hamstead Park have recently been offered to let:

☐ the three-bedroomed Octagon House is on the books of both Carter Jonas and a Marlborough agent, Birkmyre, at £1,600 pcm. The house is described as an elegant and well-proportioned house in a courtyard setting on a private estate.

☐ the five-bedroomed Dower House, advertised by Strutt and Parker at £4,000 pcm was described in late February as under offer. It no longer appears on the website.

(For White Hart details see back page.)