

The Hamlets' Voice

***Staploe, Duloe, Honeydon, Upper Staploe,
Bushmead and Begwary***

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Cover photo: Miles Thompson

Issue 27 – September 2019



Harvest supper

Duloe and Staploe Village Hall invites you to the Harvest Supper which will be held on Saturday 5th October, 6:30 pm, at Colmworth Village Hall.

It is a chance to enjoy cottage pie, apple crumble and meet your neighbours. Bring a drink. Adults £7.50 and Children £4. To book tickets e-mail lcrawford@staploepc.org.uk or call Mark or Lucy Crawford on 01480 471 526 / 07779 237 947

Community Speedwatch

Firstly, the Parish Council would like to thank Emilio Meola of Duloe for donating a second mobile speed indicator sign to the parish. We are confident that this will help reduce the number of speeding vehicles in our hamlets.



We are resurrecting the Community Speedwatch scheme and using the data from the mobile speed indicator device to determine when the peak speeding times are. The mobile speed indicator is a great deterrent but Community Speedwatch gathers number plates and enables the police to send out letters and attend with a speed gun to catch persistent offenders.

The scheme is supported by Bedfordshire Police and Bedfordshire Fire and Rescue Service. Community Speed Watch can be set up in any part of the parish governed by a 30 or 40 miles per hour speed limit.

Community Speed Watch seeks to promote safer driving by educating rather than prosecuting individuals. Data collected by Community Speed Watch groups will be passed to Bedfordshire Police who may undertake speed checks and result in drivers being prosecuted.

Community Speed Watch requires a group of at least two trained volunteers to operate. Those registered as volunteers are offered a training course by Bedfordshire Police. The course covers the use of the equipment, training in conflict resolution and an option for basic first aid. The course can be arranged at various locations around the County; our volunteers normally go to Kempston. The training comprises three modules - if all the modules are taken, it will last for approximately six hours.

To run a Community Speed Watch session, the group first arranges to take delivery of the equipment from the Police and then notifies Police Headquarters prior to the commencement of the session. The volunteers then run the session noting the date, time, colour, make, model

and registration number of any vehicles exceeding the speed limit. The results are forwarded to the Police who arrange for the registered keeper of the vehicle(s) to receive written notice, informing them that the vehicle was detected exceeding the speed limit, and giving the location, date and time. Persistent speeders receive a second letter, and on the third occasion, can expect further action to be taken by the police.

If you are interested in volunteering, please contact the Clerk lcrawford@staploepc.org.uk 01480 471 526 for further information.

Antisocial behaviour in Woodhouse Lane

There has been a large increase in the amount of antisocial behaviour in Woodhouse Lane, Duloe. If you see anything suspicious, we recommend you call 101 or report it online at: <https://www.bedfordshire.police.uk/information-and-services/Contact/Contact>

You can also e-mail Kerry.Jones5324@Bedfordshire.pnn.police.uk but please do make sure you report it using 101 or the online service above as well. Please copy the Parish Clerk as we are trying to build up a log of incidents. We are conscious that people can get abusive when approached so please just note as much as you can eg. descriptions of the number plates and cars where possible and a reason why the behaviour was suspicious.

Broadband

Just a reminder that if you are in Duloe or Staploe on an 01480 number you should be able to receive in excess of 12mbps as the cabinet in Duloe was upgraded in 2017 and a new cabinet was installed in Staploe in 2018. If you are in Honeydon you are due to receive fibre to the premises soon. It was due to be in March and then June, then there was a delay because they had to fell a tree.

Openreach completed their second project at the end of June having met their contractual target. However, a number of structures remained unfinished including the one due to serve Honeydon. Bedford Borough Council have agreed with Openreach that they will extend the project in order to complete the outstanding structures and although they are waiting for all the paperwork to go through governance before they can share completion dates, work is continuing in the background and essential civil engineering work is being progressed. We are still hoping it will materialise this year but it is very frustrating for all our Honeydon residents.

Those in Upper Staploe or Staploe on 01234 numbers are not due to receive any improvements to their broadband. However, there may be some money left over from the second project. Bedford Borough Council will know more about this in the next few months. If Upper Staploe are not included then there are a couple of options.

1. The universal service obligation – this means customers can request a 10mb connection (but there is no obligation to provide it)
<https://www.ofcom.org.uk/phones-telecoms-and-internet/advice-for-consumers/broadband-usage-need-to-know>
2. The rural gigabyte voucher scheme <https://gigabitvoucher.culture.gov.uk/rural/>

If you would be prepared to act as a coordinator / champion for improving broadband and researching the options in Upper Staploe please do contact the Parish Council via the Parish Clerk.

Playing field

Some of you may have noticed that the Playing Field in Duloe has been cut less frequently this season and the grass is getting quite long. The grass used to be cut by Duloe and Staploe Football Club in return for free use of the pitches. However, they left in 2018 and the Parish Council took on the responsibility for cutting the field. We requested 10 cuts between April and November at a cost of £1,140 including weed and moss control. However, with the high rainfall earlier this year, the grass grew quite fast. The Parish Council are keen to save as much as possible towards rebuilding the Village Hall and therefore we would prefer not to increase spending on the playing field when it is rarely used for sport. However, we would welcome your feedback.



Fox

The fox is an amazing creature having survived over the centuries in spite of every man's hand being turned against it. Foxes, the rural foxes not the flabby, mottled urban foxes, have been hunted with hounds, shot, poisoned, gassed and trapped yet still they survive, slinking almost invisible in the shadows, among the woodland trees and hedgerows and in the long grass. The fox is an ambush predator waiting for its prey to come close and then jumping up and pouncing.

A few years ago I used to keep two chickens which I kept in a chicken house on the lawn. Their house had a small run but we liked to let them out during the day so that they could roam all over the garden. One afternoon as usual I released the chickens and settled into my armchair in the sitting-room with a book. Suddenly from outside there erupted a cacophony of caterwauling. I rushed into the garden and there on the lawn was one chicken, neck stretched upward, wings outstretched and fluttering, head held high, beak



wide open and crowing and caterwauling at the top of its voice. A few yards away was a small young fox with my other chicken clenched in its jaws; not sufficiently clenched however because one wing was free from those needle-sharp teeth and was frantically beating the fox about its head.

I charged at the fox which immediately dropped the chicken and ran off. I picked up the chicken which appeared uninjured and placed it gently in its chicken house with some clean straw. I looked in vain for the other chicken but it was nowhere to be seen. I returned to my armchair and contemplated how to get a replacement chicken, chickens being gregarious it is cruel to keep one on its own. Before long I returned to my book. An hour or so later I heard a rustling sound behind me and there sitting behind me on the storage heater (not switched on, it being summer) was the missing chicken. It must have rushed into the house while I was seeing the fox off. I picked it up and placed it with its partner. There followed gentle clucking *as they greeted each other after their ordeal.*



Hunt meet at Falls Farm, early 1980s

Before fox-hunting was made illegal, the meeting of the fox hounds was an important social event at which the local landowner on whose land the hunt met would pass round plates of hot sausages and glasses of port. There is nothing like the sight of the hunt in full cry and I got to know the ways of the fox in these parts and occasionally would position myself where I thought the fox would pass. On one such occasion I was waiting by a brook. The brook separated two fields both of which sloped down towards it. In front of me sloping up for two or three hundred metres was a field of young winter wheat. From the other end of the field out of my sight at the top of the hill I could hear a hullabaloo which meant that the hounds had picked up the scent of a fox, had given chase and had then lost the scent. I could hear the barking of hounds, men shouting, the laughter of women, the hunting horn, the crack of the huntsmen's whips as they tried to control the hounds which had become unruly and frustrated by the loss of their quarry.

As I waited I saw not far from me coming down the hill the fox in a wheelie track in the young wheat. It was clearly exhausted; it crept slowly along, slithering on its belly to keep low, mostly hidden by the green blades of the wheat. I kept still as the fox emerged from the wheat and made its way warily to a bridge over the brook. Having crossed the bridge the fox straightened its legs and looked back towards the sound of the commotion which was still going on at the top of the hill behind it. Then it trotted away up the opposite hill, jaunty and triumphant.

Frank Squire

HGVs in Honeydon

A number of residents have expressed concern about HGVs being unable to negotiate the bend at Dairy Farm / East and West Cottage in Honeydon leading up towards Begwary. HGVs have been reported reversing several times to get round, mounting the steep bank and tilting the whole vehicle or shedding part of their load. We are gathering evidence to see whether a restriction (except for access) may be required. If you notice any problems and are able to report dates, times, vehicle descriptions or any photographic / dashcam evidence then please let the Parish Clerk know.

Road names in Staploe

Earlier this year, we asked for parishioners to provide feedback on preferred road names. The preference was for the main roads in Duloe and Staploe to remain unnamed.

Many of you will be aware that the Borough Council made a mistake and named the whole of Staploe 'Gypsy Lane' instead of naming only the section from just west of Bassmead to Bushmead Road. The Borough Council has now informed the Parish Council that they must have a road descriptor, so the roads in Staploe and Duloe cannot remain unnamed.

The Parish Council have asked whether it is possible for the main roads in each village to be named simply "Staploe" and "Duloe" respectively. We await the Borough Council's response.

First Aid

The Parish Council have applied for a grant to purchase a defibrillator, to be located in Honeydon. The defibrillator can be operated by any member of the public. It will need to be inspected on a monthly basis, but this is a simple task. If anyone can offer to inspect it on behalf of the parish council, please inform the Parish Clerk.

We will also need a qualified electrician to fit the defibrillator. If anyone in the parish would be able to do this for us at a reduced rate we would be enormously grateful. Again, please contact the Parish Clerk.

We would also like to know if there are any qualified first aiders or first responders in the parish.

An interview with Arthur Rose, aged 86

12th September 2019

Arthur's mother was Mabel Rose. She was born Mabel Larkins and was one of 8 children to be born to the family. Seven were born in what was then a thatched cottage but which was rebuilt as 1, Brookside, Staploe and later renamed to 42, Staploe. Heather (the youngest) was born in the new house.



Arthur, Mabel (holding Edith) and Jack Larkins. Jack was father of England cricketer Wayne Larkins.

Mabel described these thatched cottages to Arthur as not really being fit for human habitation. 1, Brookside was rebuilt in the 1930's but in later years Arthur helped knock down many of the other thatched cottages before they were rebuilt.

Mabel was the eldest of the children, followed by Edie, Lil, Jean (who died), Jack, Roy, Art and Heather.



Mabel's mother Hilda Larkins (nee Elliott) holding Heather with two of Mabel's other siblings Lil and Roy outside their new council house 1, Brookside in 1933.

Mabel's sister Jean sadly drowned trying to save a friend at the lock in Eaton Socon.

After leaving the Eastern Counties Methodist School in Eaton Socon, Mabel went into domestic service in Bedford and later St Neots. In 1933, she married Sidney Harold Rose and went to live at Great Barford where he worked as a cowman on Mr Brown's farm. By 1934 they had moved with their son, Arthur, to what was then No 9 - but is now No 39 - Staploe. They lodged here with Mabel's grandfather Arthur Elliott and later moved to No 54 in the '50s, where Arthur still lives. It was just a few doors from where Mabel had grown up at No 42. Nigel Cutts (Arthur's younger cousin and son of Heather) still lives at number 42 today.

With the outbreak of war, Mabel became a Landgirl, working on the farms of Noel Bates, Ted Beesley and Spencer Thomas.

Mabel wrote a short summary of her memories of the village (which she said should be spelled Staplow but the spelling was changed when Falls Farm was built) as it was when she was young (reproduced below). She gave this to Humphrey Chetwynd-Talbot, who wrote an obituary for the seventh edition of the Hamlets Exchange.

THIS IS HOW STAPLOW WAS
WHEN I WAS BORN, 1915

AKKOTMENTS, PUB, SHOP, WHERE, SOLD
EVERTHING, GOSPEL, HALL, FARM, TO
FETCH, BUTTER, AND MILK. FEAST
SCHOOL, EASTERN, COUNTRY, SCHOOL
HOUSE, FOR, BAKING, BREAD, CRICKET
AT, BASMEAD, 1 SHILLING, FOR
TRIP, IN, AIRPLANE, AT 11, ONE DOWN.
WATER, FROM, BROOK, USING, PUMP
BLACKSMITH, SHOP, SWEET, SHOP,
PONY AND CART, FOR, HIRE, MEETING
JONGREN, WITH, ORGAN, AND HYMNS
I THINK, THEY, WERE, MORMONS
GARDEN, PARTIES WITH, DANCES
ON LAWN, WE WERE, IN, THE MIDDLE
OF, IT, PUBS, WE, HAD, A, LARGE, FEAST
THOSE, DAYS, THERE, WAS, BENEFITS
YOU, HAD, TO, WORK, OR, GO, TO
WORKHOUSE, WHICH, THEY, SAID
WAS, DREADFULL.

I AM, 93, NOW 2008
THAT, WAS, STAPLOW, 1915.

Arthur kindly elaborated on some of these brief notes:

The allotments were located to the east of the village alongside a track which no longer exists. They were used by the inhabitants of the village who all held a document with a seal of King George IV.

The Three Horseshoes pub was in the village and there were three others nearby (Tally Ho at Upper Staploe, the Anchor in Duloe and Two Brewers on the Bushmead Road). Mabel remembered clog dancing as a girl in what is now the dining room of the Three Horseshoes.

The shop which “sold everything” Arthur believes must have been on the site of Firbeck opposite the entrance to Falls Farm because this was the only house large enough to hold a shop – it was a tall house and all the other cottages were very small.

The Gospel Hall was an active Methodist chapel and Arthur remembers that the whole hamlet used to attend.

They used to fetch butter and milk from Falls Farm.

The feast she mentions was originally a large feast but Arthur remembers it as a fun fair with swings and games which was held on the grass verge between Falls Farm and 42, Staploe. He remembers an occasion when his father and friend Nip Lambert took a ride in a gondola boat swing designed to swing through 180°. They managed to swing it through 360°; round and round with the gondola owner crying “Never again”!

There was a school in the village, which Arthur’s mother attended when she was very young, but it closed and Arthur remembers the village school as a ruin in the field just west of Old Farm Cottage. After it closed, the children attended the Eastern Counties Methodist School in Eaton Socon.

There was a baking oven. Arthur explained that it was not a bread oven which would have been dome-shaped with the fire to one side. It was a rectangular “box shape” with the fire underneath.

The 1-shilling trips in an aeroplane were arranged by the Spencer Thomas family (of Upper Honeydon Farm). Aeroplanes were a huge novelty and attraction in the 1920s so they arranged short trips for 1 shilling -taking off and landing from a field just north of the Bushmead Road between Duke’s Spinney and the entrance to Upper Honeydon Farm.

The water came from the brook using the pump at the Blacksmiths Shop and this was protected from the animals by a fence.



The Blacksmiths Shop was on the site of what is now 43 – on the corner of Fishers Lane - and the pump is still there. The blacksmith (Billy Beasley) lived at Victoria Cottage which is opposite the entrance to Falls Farm. He used to allow Arthur to work the huge bellows in the shop which had a handle made from a large cow's horn.

The Mormon meetings on the green with the organ and hymns were held on Fishers Green which is marked on the map below.

The garden parties with dances on the lawn were held up at Bassmead.

Gypsy Lane is so named because Bassmead Manor used to employ Romany gypsies to work on the farm.

He says that most of the local men did not work on farms in the village but they would often go to Jersey to work the potato fields and many also went to London to do construction work at either Wembley or Wimbledon (he can't remember which).

Arthur has many memories of the village during WWII which I will share in a later newsletter. After school he became a horse boy working on the farms and then did his national service working as a driver and clearing mines and other unexploded ordinance. He was posted to Kenya for a time during the Mau Mau uprising in the 1950's acting as a guard to protect farms. He had considerable sympathy for the Mau Mau cause. He told me that many of the Mau Mau had fought for the British during the war and yet their land had been taken from them. He said he would have defended his land in their shoes.

After that there were no more horses on farms and so he worked for Mr Bates (of Falls Farm) as a tractor driver on a small Ferguson tractor. He also helped with demolition and building work for Mr Bates in the village before going to work for Bovis Homes.

He is often to be seen wearing his hat and braces and walking with a stick in the village. He began by being reluctant to be interviewed but later said that he had been trained by the intelligence services to answer only with name, rank and number but he had given more away than he intended. However, a photo was apparently one step too far and I wasn't permitted this!

Lucy Crawford

Orange sack collection points: change of procedure

Bedford Borough Council have been monitoring the number of orange sacks being delivered to collection points, as well as the use of orange sacks across the Borough. It has been noted that some residents have been putting orange sacks inside their orange bin rather than placing recycling into the bin loose. In addition, it has become clear that the number of sacks requested by some collection points has become unsustainable.

Bedford Borough Council Policy states that occasional excess recycling can be placed out in orange sacks next to the orange lidded bin.

The current usage of orange sacks is not financially sustainable. Therefore, the Parish Clerk has been asked to explain that one roll of orange recycling sacks only should be issued per residential address, per visit. It is therefore no longer permitted to place a stock of sacks in locations that are not staffed for residents to help themselves (as we have previously done at Christmas).

Recycling sacks are provided by the Council to residents to provide occasional extra recycling capacity. Recycling should always be placed into the orange lidded bin loose (not in sacks); orange sacks should only be used for occasional extra recycling once the recycling bin is full. It is much harder for Bedford Borough Council's contractor, and therefore more costly for the Council, to recycle items placed in sacks.

Residents with regular excess recycling may be eligible for a larger recycling bin or have the option to buy extra recycling bins through our website;
<https://www.bedford.gov.uk/requestbins>.

Rolls of orange recycling sacks are available for collection from Top End Stores in Little Staughton.

Village Hall Update

The Village Hall Working Group met on 11th September and have requested that the Village Hall Committee be reinstated. Plans for a new hall have been prepared and are being considered by the Committee.

Parish website to change

The current free website, provided by Cambridge Open Systems to all Parish Councils in Bedfordshire, will no longer be available from March 2020. Many Bedfordshire parishes including Staploe are looking for a new website provider and will need to migrate existing web content to the new site. If anyone in the parish has experience of managing websites and can offer advice, help or recommendations please let the Parish Clerk know.



Keep in touch with Parish News

CURRENT WEBSITE <https://www.staploeduloehoneydonparishcouncil.bedsparishes.gov.uk>

EMAIL The Parish Council send out regular news updates by email. If you would like to receive these, please e-mail the Parish Clerk.

FACEBOOK Search Facebook for 'Staploe Parish Council'. There is also a community Facebook group where parishioners can post: www.facebook.com/groups/325908041268638/

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