

The Hamlets' Voice

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

Issue 18 – February 2016

Welcome to the Spring edition of your local parish newsletter



Christmas bake-off at the Village Hall



Bulb planting in the sunshine



Celebrating the Three Hamlets

There was a fine turn-out of families and friends at the parish's Christmas event. Congratulations to Tess for winning the baking competition with her delicious après ski mince pies, and to Emily (top left, at far right) for a super-chocolatey Rudolph! Well done also to runners-up Cordelia, and Hannah (forth from left).

New stickers celebrating the Hamlets and designed by Emma (left, at right) will soon appear on the Duloe, Staploe and Honeydon village signs.

We're beginning to see signs of spring already; thanks to Tess for donating and planting bulbs in Duloe, and to Nigel (above right) for donating and planting bulbs around Staploe. If you feel like joining a team and getting involved in some village improvements yourself, there's more about how you could help brighten up the hamlets on page 11.



THURSDAY 21ST APRIL

COME ALONG AND JOIN IN THE FUN AT MOUNT PLEASANT, DULOE, FROM 19.30

19.30	WARM MULLED APPLE JUICE
20:00	BEACON /BONFIRE LIT
20:00	HOT DOGS
21:00	FINISH

Staploe, Duloe & Honeydon Parish Council are lighting a Beacon at Mount Pleasant, Duloe on Thursday 21st April at 19.30 to celebrate the Queen's 90th Birthday.

Free entry. Hot dogs available for £1.

We recommend that participants park on the grass verge by Duloe Village Hall and walk west along Woodhouse Lane passing the hall on their left.

When you reach the right hand bend in Woodhouse Lane leave the lane and walk straight on, past the wooden posts and the dog bin along the footpath.

Mount Pleasant is a small clearing to the left of the footpath about 300m along it.

Parish Council News

The A1

Our parish is represented on the A1 East of England Strategic Road Study Stakeholder Reference Group by Madeline Russell of Bedfordshire Association of Town and Parish Councils. She prepared an excellent report on the first Stakeholder meeting in September which can be viewed on our website and in the folder in the Hamlets Exchange. She also attended the Parish Council meeting in January to discuss our concerns and will be reporting back on the next Stakeholder meeting early in February. Meanwhile we are meeting with our MP Alistair Burt in early February to discuss residents' concerns about any plans to construct a new motorway through the parish.

Traveller Site, Upper Staploe

There has been no sign of the owners of the site for over a year and the conditions of the enforcement notice - i.e. removal of sewage treatment plant, gas tanks, hard standing, and restoration of the land to its former condition - have not been met. The Parish Council are in regular contact with the Borough Council to request that action be taken to restore the site to its former condition. A report is due shortly on the options available to the Borough Council given that they have been unable to contact the owners.



Speeding in Duloe

We are looking for more volunteers to join the speedwatch team. We have three trained volunteers but would really like more volunteers to enable us to carry out more speed checks.

Community Speed Watch (CSW) is a locally driven initiative where active members of the community join together with the support of the Police to monitor speeds of vehicles using speed detection devices. Vehicles exceeding the speed limit are referred to the Police with the aim of educating drivers to reduce their speeds.

Volunteers receive appropriate training, and are supported by neighbourhood policing team (NPT) staff. If you are interested in joining the team please contact Lucy Crawford, Parish Clerk.

The Highways Department are planning to introduce a "pinch point" minor change in the road layout to address the speeding problems in Duloe.

Planters

The Parish Council would like to thank Tom Wootton for his generous donation from the Ward Fund. This enabled us to purchase three planters and a hedge trimmer. Two planters were for Duloe, to draw attention to the new gate feature emphasising the entry into a 30mph zone, and one for Honeydon.



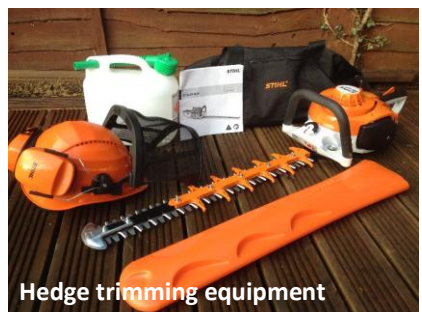
Duloe planter



Maggie and Jane

We are grateful to Alan and Maureen Potts, Reg Slater and Jackie Perera of Duloe for agreeing to plant and maintain the planters in Duloe, and to Maggie Turner and Jane Thomson (pictured left) and Keith Turner for agreeing to maintain and plant the one in Honeydon. In addition, Keith Turner's company Waterways Pet & Aquatics Ltd at Milton Ernest Garden Centre kindly donated plants and compost for the Honeydon planter.

The hedge trimmer will be used by Howard Purser and the Community Payback team to cut hedges around Duloe playing field and Duloe Common (the grass area around the noticeboard).



Hedge trimming equipment

Duloe Common

The Parish Council registered the area around the village sign by the noticeboard in Duloe as a common in 1975. Subsequent to this, Bedfordshire Housing Association built the houses and flats adjacent to the green and the Parish Council had a long battle in the 1990's to reinstate the area as a grassy common with a "grasscrete" hard track providing access to 33 and 31, Duloe.



Part of 33, Duloe's garden was negotiated to enable a driveway to be made for number 31. In addition a fence and posts were erected blocking vehicular access across the rest of the Common and a sign was erected stating "No Vehicular Access".

Over the years the posts, fence and sign have rotted away and the Parish Council will be reinstating these in the coming months.

Bedfordshire Rural Communities Charity (BRCC) Launches New LEADER Rural Funding Programmes in our area

Match-funded grants of £10K to £80K are available for projects that create jobs and grow the local rural economy. If you have an idea for a project or require more information about eligibility and the application process, please visit the Local Action Group pages on the BRCC website (www.bedsrcc.org.uk), or contact Ian Campbell, Rural Development Facilitator at ianc@bedsrcc.org.uk or on 01234 832612.

Mini Soccer Squad

Staploe and Duloe Football Club are looking for a manager / coach (ideally both) to set up and recruit a mini soccer squad ready for the August 2016/17 season. They will offer the successful candidate the required FA courses to ensure necessary qualifications are gained and are in place in advance of the new season. The candidate will then advertise and recruit their mini soccer squad of players aged 7 & 8 years old for the forthcoming season.

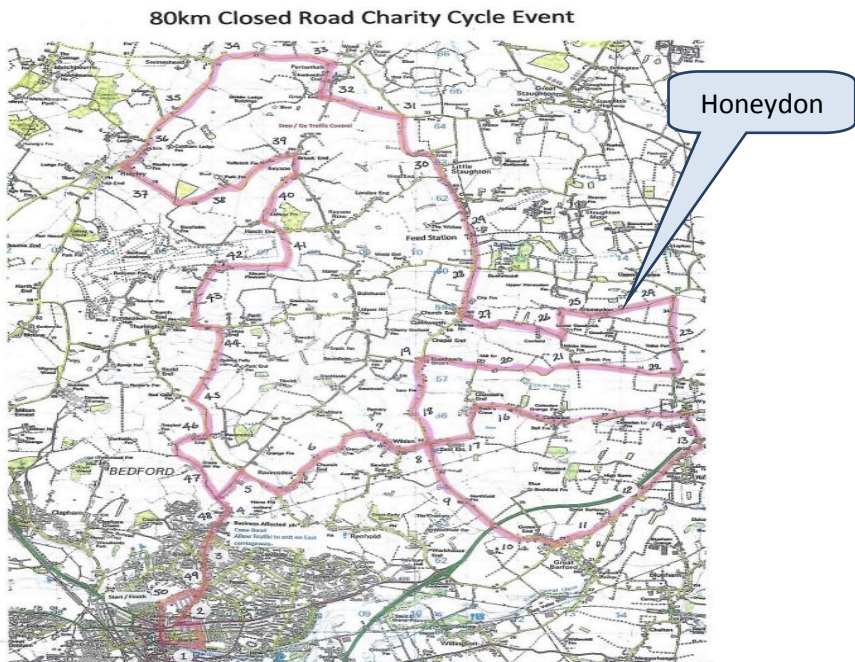
The club is based on Duloe playing field. Interested parties are asked to contact Colin Bower: 07786 625 397 colin.bower@ntlworld.com or Barry Cathrall: 07707 301 640, b.cathrall@ntlworld.com

Please note this mini soccer squad would replace the older team which left the club this season so *there would be no increase in numbers and traffic relative to last year.*

Bedford 80 Cycle Race Affecting Honeydon, June 2017

The Rotary Club of Bedford Park is organising a cycle race to raise money for local charities as well as promote cycling, Bedford & the villages of North Bedfordshire. The event is hoping to attract 2500 cyclists and the organisers are proposing to close the roads involved. The provisional date is Sunday, 11th June 2017 and a map of the route is shown below. The proposal is to close the roads for all but emergency vehicles all around Honeydon (miles 19-27 shown on the map) from 7.00am until 10:30am. The Parish Council have raised some concerns about this and are consulting with the organisers to ensure parishioner's views are represented and the organisers take them into account. The consultation for the cycle race closes at the end of April 2016. Concerns, objections or messages of support should be addressed to the Chief Constable of Bedfordshire Police via

Gregory.Horsford@bedfordshire.ppn.police.uk and copied to lucy_crawford@hotmail.com and Graham@bedford80.com.



Street Lighting – tell us what you think

Our street lights are now more than 20 years old and the Parish Council have been building up funds to replace them with more energy efficient lights in the coming years. We have £2250 for this purpose currently and plan to add £750 per year to this replacement fund. It is estimated that it would cost approximately £10 - £13 000 to replace the lights.

Alternatively, Bedford Borough Council might consider replacing them for us and we would pay them the equivalent of the electricity saved each year. This would allow us to reduce the precept and would therefore mean a reduction in Council Tax of about £5 per year per household. However, Bedford Borough Council would then own the lights and would require us to switch them off for part of the night e.g. mid-night to 4am. If the Parish Council replaced them ourselves we would continue to own the lights and would be able to save money on our electricity and maintenance bill therefore reducing the precept in the longer term. We might also consider switching the lights off for part of the night but we would have the option to change this if residents were not happy. Last time we suggested switching the lights off for part of the night two residents expressed their concern that crime rates might increase. We would be interested to hear more views from residents about whether you would prefer to:

1. reduce the precept by letting Bedford Borough Council replace the lights and move to part night (if they choose to replace them for us)
2. keep the flexibility of owning the lights but try moving to part night to save electricity
3. keep them on all night thereby saving less money but potentially deterring more crime.

Please let the Parish Clerk, Lucy Crawford, know what you think.

Minutes of Parish Council Meetings and other local information

These are uploaded to the Parish Website regularly (search Staploe Parish Council) and a notification put on Facebook but for those with no internet access they can also be viewed in a folder kept in the Hamlets Exchange red phone box in Staploe.

Parish Council Meeting Dates

15th March 2016: Annual Parish Meeting at 7pm followed by shorter Parish Council Meeting.

The Annual Parish Meeting is not a Parish Council meeting but is an opportunity for parishioners to discuss matters of concern to them and for groups operating in the community to report on their year. It is chaired by the Chairman of the Parish Council.

Parish Council meetings:

- 17th May 2016 Parish Council AGM.
- 19th July 2016
- 20th September 2016
- 15th November 2016

Keep in Contact

The Parish Council would like to be able to communicate with more residents by e-mail. We are aware that many residents are not aware of what is on the noticeboards, and most do not access the parish website or Facebook page regularly. Therefore, in order to inform parishioners of social events, important meetings e.g. about the A1 or solar farm proposals, it would be helpful to have e-mail addresses. These will be kept confidential, will not be passed on to any other organisation and all e-mails will be sent by blind copy so people cannot see other people's e-mail addresses. If we do not already have your e-mail address please send an e-mail to Lucy Crawford.

CONTACT DETAILS

Parish Clerk

Lucy Crawford
33 Staploe
St Neots
PE19 5JA

Email: lucy_crawford@hotmail.com

Tel: 01480 471526

Parish Website

www.staploeduloeahoneydonparishcouncil.bedsparishes.gov.uk

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Thank you

You may notice - on the back page - that *The Hamlets' Voice* has had a change of editors.
Thank you to Julie Hunn for her good works as editor of previous issues.

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Duloe and Staploe Village Hall

The Village Hall can seat around 80 people. Hire: £7 per hour. To book, call: 07768 303373.

Current regular activities

- Mondays 7:30-8:30pm Callanetics and Barre Concept - core strengthening exercise classes. Tel: 07787 447930 | www.corefit.co | Email: me@corefit.co

Village Hall Committee

The Village Hall Committee will meet on Tuesday 23rd Feb at 7pm. Everyone is welcome to attend the meeting; no need to pre-book.

Open Gardens 2016

Gardens in Staploe will be open for charity on the 11th and 12th June, from 1-5pm.

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Staploe Stirrings

Having lived in Staploe for over thirty years, I thought a few of you might be interested in one or two anecdotes from my time here. I am not a local person, being a Lancastrian in both senses of the word. My late husband, John, was a 'ampshire boy and my daughter, Beverley, was a Staploe-nian. 'Was' because she lives in Australia these days.

During these years, I – and sometimes Beverley – have walked, ridden horses, bicycles, walked dogs and driven round all the paths, bridleways and roads many, many times. In winter, summer, daylight and dark. What surprises me is that rarely do you see others on these paths. So what I am going to mention are three odd experiences, which occurred during my wanderings.

The most recent was about four years ago.

On my way back from The Spinney – the small plantation near the site of Woodhouse Farm – I noticed three people 'toiling', as if walking into the wind. They were just approaching the path junction near what was known as Fisher's Pond (where the path from Staploe joins the path from Basmead). I looked for a few



seconds in case they had wildish dogs. Then as I looked again, they started to turn up towards Basmead. As I watched them, I seemed to lose track of them. The odd thing was their heavy-looking clothes. I should explain: this was a bright, sunny, summer evening. I carried on walking back towards Staploe, which brought me back to where I had last seen them. I never managed to spot them again. They might have turned back down towards Staploe, but I was never really sure that they could have picked up enough speed to evade being seen again. Not sure what they were!?

The second and third incidents both involved horse riding. Again, The Spinney was where my daughter and I were riding past when, for no obvious reason, Beverley rode her pony in a loop across the path and back. I asked her was she ok? Her reply can still make me think: "Didn't you see them?" she said.

"See what?"

"Those two people."

"I've not seen anyone."

Beverley definitely saw two men standing there in dark, hooded clothes. I saw no one! Not sure about that; I don't believe in ghosts/spirits. But she did see something.



The third incident involved me alone. Well, there was a horse too. I was riding along another track just the other side of the county boundary, on my own horse, about twelve years ago. As we were trotting along I – and my horse – became aware of the sound of a much faster horse coming up behind us. I glanced about for a space to move over. Just as I reached a slightly wider part of the path, the noise

swept past us, no horse to be seen. The noise faded slowly away into the distance in front. And no, there were no hedges or bushes at the sides. Not only that, this was an overgrown grass track, with no chance of loud, clacking hoof beats, which is what I heard. Later research revealed this track to be on or close to an old Roman roadway.

Which brings this story to a theory, put forward (in a book) by a friend of my mother's, that 'ghosts' or spirits are traceable to ex-Roman activity. I am not convinced.

Does anyone reading this have similar tales? I'm sure you must!

Margaret Smith

Clean for the Queen / Tidy Team

Clean for The Queen is a campaign to clear up Britain in time for Her Majesty the Queen's 90th birthday, which will be officially celebrated in June 2016. The Parish Council would like to support the campaign by organising a team 'litter pick' around the parish, and is hoping to obtain litter picking equipment, bags, gloves etc from Bedford Borough Council.



**CLEAN FOR
THE QUEEN**

Anyone can take part – the more the merrier! Meet at Duloe Village Hall at 2:00pm on Saturday, 5th March.

Additionally, two residents in Duloe and two in Staploe have offered to volunteer to do tidying up jobs in the parish e.g. painting benches or railings, planting bulbs etc. We are keen to recruit extra volunteers for these kinds of activities before we make arrangements. If you are interested in helping out as part of a team, please contact the Parish Clerk, Lucy Crawford.

David Graham Bates

1942 – 2015

David Bates, formerly of Lower Goodwick Farm, Begwary, died on 1st August 2015. David came from a well-known local farming family and his father, Rowland – who lived at Roxton – farmed land at Wyboston and Begwary as well as Roxton. David was the nephew of Noel Bates, formerly of Falls Farm, Staploe.

David attended Bedford School and from there he went to Kesteven Farm Institute for one year before returning to work with his father in the family farming business. David became a member of the Young Farmers Club where he met Vivien, the daughter of the local police superintendent. Vivien and David were married in 1965.

David took over the management of the business from his father and so successful was he that local farmer Clement Spencer-Thomas of Honeydon invited David to manage his own farm, which David did for the next forty years.

David has always been a keen football supporter and faithfully attended Luton Town matches. Recently he transferred his allegiance to Norwich where he and Vivien became regular supporters. As well as his interest in football, David was also an expert with the shotgun and a keen shot.

In 2014, David was diagnosed with cancer and after a long battle he died at home. David leaves his widow Vivien and their three sons: Richard, a barrister; Alex, who runs the family farm and Edward, a lecturer in human rights law at Leicester University.

There was a private cremation at Bedford Crematorium on 18th August immediately followed by a memorial service at St Mary's Church, Eaton Socon. Richard Banks, in a fine eulogy, addressed a packed church, paying tribute to David's skills as a farmer and describing David as a devoted family man proud of his three sons and six grandchildren; a tough negotiator but one who, once agreement had been reached, always kept his side of the bargain.

Frank Squire

Günther Gerhard Gerold

1922 – 2015

Günther, formerly of Staploe, died on 20th October 2015 aged 93. At the time of his death he was living at Lillibet House, Bedford, a care home for people suffering from dementia.

Günther was brought up in Vogelsang, a small German town situated not far from Germany's eastern border with Poland, His father was a successful builder and sometime burgomeister and chief fire officer who lived with his family in a fine detached house.

At the age of 14, like millions of young Germans, Günther joined the Hitler Youth and on leaving school he became an apprentice bricklayer. In 1939 Günther was conscripted into the German army and shortly afterwards was drafted into the elite Waffen SS eventually attaining the rank of corporal in the Panzer Division.



In 1941, Hitler declared war on former ally, Russia, and Günther's regiment fought its way to within a few miles of Moscow. Eventually the tide of war turned and the German army was forced to retreat. Günther once told me that he had travelled on foot all the way back to Germany from Moscow with the vengeful Russian army in pursuit. Reaching the River Elbe, the Russians close behind, Günther crossed the river and surrendered to the Americans on the other side.

Günther remained in captivity for several years eventually ending up in a prisoner of war camp not far from St Neots. One day, local farmer Freddie Bath turned up at the camp asking the camp commander for a bricklayer to work on his house at Crosshall. Günther volunteered and went to Crosshall where he worked for Freddie Bath, living in a gipsy caravan in the grounds of Crosshall Manor. Günther and Freddie became good friends and drinking companions.

Because he had been in the Waffen SS, Günther dared not return to his home town, at that time in East Germany and controlled by the Russians, so the fine family home was abandoned. Günther settled in England where he worked as a bricklayer, married a German girl, Edith Kaddatz, whom he met in St Neots and eventually came to live in Staploe with his family. He is survived by his daughter, Susanne and son, Günther Steven, a popular local character and still living in Staploe. Susanne has three children and lives in St Neots where she works as a charge-hand in a local factory.

Frank Squire

Staploe Bread Oven



The bread oven now

The Staploe bread oven is one relic of the past that is easily visible, but resembles a strangely shaped brick shed (see picture, left). It is situated between the houses on the south side of the road near the entrance to Fisher's Lane. These bread ovens were a common sight in old villages in this area of Bedfordshire / Huntingdonshire. Many of them have now gone from the landscape, taking with them the memory of an older, more pastoral era.

This particular example appears reasonably intact - at least on the outside. However, some years ago, a previous occupant of number 50 saw fit to take out the oven and sell it - without the other villagers realising. The roof tiles were stopped from going on a similar journey by quick-thinking local intervention. In other respects, the internal area is still in reasonable condition, and is utilised as a shed by the two households on either side.

The most recent memory of the building's use was in the 1960s, as a small baker's shop. The man who ran it would also cook the local people's loaves for a small fee - one or two old pennies. This harks back to its original use: local housewives would bring a batch of loaves to be baked. It was a facility provided by a local landowner - in this case, the occupier of Falls Farm.

One interesting anecdote came to me from Violet Farrer, who lived for much of her life at number 46. Apparently, after each summer harvest, the villagers were allowed to glean the fields. The spilt wheat grains would be collected, taken to the little mill in Duloe, then used to make loaves. Then the villagers, including those from Duloe, would be able to have their own bread loaves baked in the Staploe Bread Oven.

As I am writing this article, I am aware how strange this all might seem to the younger readers. Maybe it might make people aware of the history all around us.

Margaret Smith



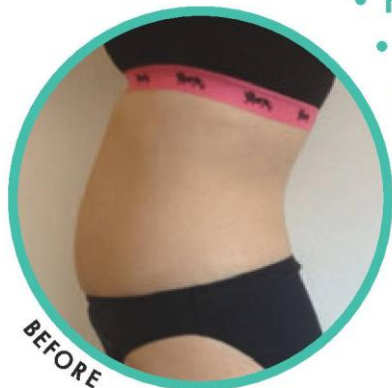
The bread oven circa 1900



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AFTER

Class Timetable

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Thursday 7.30-8.30pm & Saturday 11am-12pm Fit4Purpose Studio, Brampton Park Golf Club, Brampton

Caroline: ☎ 07787 447 930

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