

The Hamlets' Voice

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

Issue 14

Welcome to the August edition of your local parish newsletter

..... As the new editor of The Hamlets' Voice, my thanks go to Celia Woolley for her dedication in editing the newsletter over the last year. Many thanks also to Lucy Crawford for her encouragement at our recent meeting and to Frank Squire who I know has been a frequent contributor to the newsletter. His local knowledge is proving invaluable.

Together Frank and I plan to produce features which we hope will be of interest to you all. We are also asking you, the residents of our parish, for feedback on the articles produced and how this newsletter can be developed further. So please contact us with events, news, articles etc you feel will be of interest. Remember the newsletter is produced three times each year, (May, August and December) so send dates for events in plenty of time.

Frank lives in Staploe and I in Honeydon, so it would even the numbers if a resident from Duloe, Begwary and/or Bushmead also contributed regularly to the newsletter. It doesn't have to be time consuming or onerous. We would just like to discuss your ideas about what is important to your village.

Ok so you just need to know how to contact us. Email and phone number are on the very last page. [Julie Hunn](#)

Dates for Your Diary

27th September 2014. **Gransden Show**. Further details www.gransdenshow.co.uk.

4th October 2014. **Harvest Supper**, Duloe Village Hall 6:30pm for 7pm start. £5:00 adults & £2:00 for children, (typically junior school age & below). Local posters and flyers giving further details on how to book will be sent out near the date.

Please send your important dates for the next December edition in plenty of time.

.....

Antisocial Behaviour

Woodhouse Lane, Duloe.

Angela Williamson, Antisocial Behaviour Coordinator, Bedford Borough Council and Paul Jones, Police Community Support Officer, Bedfordshire Police, attended recent Parish Council meeting to discuss the above concerns and measures available to tackle antisocial behaviours.

It appears at the time of the meeting on 20th May 2014, very little antisocial behaviour was actually being reported to the police and Angela urged residents to call 101 and report suspicious activity to Bedfordshire police.

The following letter has since been sent to local residents:

Bedford Borough Community Safety Partnership have received a number of reports in respect of nuisance vehicles visiting and parking at the end of Woodhouse Lane, Duloe. Reports indicate that the vehicles may be involved in a range of anti social behaviour, which may be drug and alcohol related.

It is acknowledged that the occupants/owners of the vehicles do not live locally to Staploe or Duloe. We are actively working with Staploe & Duloe Parish Council to put actions in place to try and deter this behaviour and identify those persons responsible.

In order for us to assess the number of residents affected by these problems, I would urge you to report any incidents you witness, or that personally affect you, to Bedfordshire Police on 101.

I have also enclosed a copy of our ASB leaflet, which provides useful information and contact numbers for your perusal.

Do not hesitate to contact me on the number below if you wish to discuss this matter.

Yours sincerely

Angela Williamson

Anti Social Behaviour Co-ordinator

Bedford Borough Council 01234 276037

angela.williamson@bedford.gov.uk

I contacted Angela for an update for this newsletter and Angela was happy to inform me of the following:

- Temporary CCTV has been installed and already been successful in providing evidence to the police.
 - Plain clothes police officers have been making random checks on the area.
 - Signage to highlight the area is being patrolled regularly, and should be available and in place soon.
-

Parish Council News

Dogs on Duloe Playing Field.

In response to concerns from local residents about dog fouling and loose dogs damaging gardens and upsetting livestock the Parish Council are consulting on the possibility of introducing a "Dogs on Lead" order to cover the whole of the playing field. The playing field, verges and footpaths are already covered by the Fouling of Land by Dogs Order. This order makes it an offence to fail to pick up your dog's faeces forthwith on land to which the orders apply.

If implemented the dogs on lead order would mean that dogs must be kept on a lead of a maximum length of 6 feet long (1.8m), on Duloe Playing Field. Failure to comply with this order would be an offence for which you may be prosecuted.

If prosecuted, you may be fined up to £1000:00, and receive a criminal record upon conviction. Alternatively you may be given the opportunity to pay a fixed penalty of £80:00, reduced to £50:00 if paid in 7 days. Failure to pay the fixed penalty notice will result in prosecution. Please be aware that there are special exemptions for persons registered as blind or to persons who rely on trained assistance dogs.

If you would like to comment on this either in support or against the idea please contact the Parish Clerk.

Open Forum.

It has been agreed that there will be an open forum at every Parish Council meeting in future in order for the public to bring any matters to the attention of the Council or to express their opinions. The Council will not debate the issue during the open forum but will take the comments into consideration when debating the matter at the relevant point in the agenda. For matters raised which are not on the agenda the Chairman will either give a brief response if no further debate is required or explain how the Parish Council will respond eg. by letter at a later date or by adding the issue to the agenda for a future meeting. Concerns can also be raised with the Clerk or any Parish Councillor at least a week in advance of the meeting and, if appropriate, the matter will be added to the agenda.

Meetings are held in Duloe Village Hall at 7:30pm.

Dates are as follows:

16th September 2014

11th November 2014

For further details: contact Parish Clerk Lucy Crawford of Victoria Cottage, 33, Staploe, St. Neots, Cambs. PE19 5JA. Telephone 01480 471 526 E-mail: lucy_crawford@hotmail.com

Keep up to date with parish news, events, parish council minutes and more on the parish website – just type Staploe Parish in your search engine and it will come up.

.....

Community Speed Watch



The leaflet features a blurred image of a road with a speed limit sign. The Bedford Borough Council logo is in the top right corner. The title 'Community Speed Watch' is in large, stylized white letters on a purple background. Below the title, there is text explaining the scheme's purpose and how it works, along with contact information.

BEDFORD BOROUGH COUNCIL

Community Speed Watch

Speeding is one of the factors that most affects the quality of life in communities around Bedford Borough.

It can be a factor in road traffic collisions and impacts on the day-to-day lives of people in the community.

Community Speed Watch is a part of a wider national initiative to involve local residents in speed reduction through education and enforcement activity in their community. Co-ordinated by Bedford Borough Council in partnership with Bedfordshire Police and Neighbourhood Watch, the scheme itself will be run by your local community policing team and volunteers.

Once registered volunteers receive training to use Speed Indicator Devices (SID and Speedbox), managing conflict and basic first aid.

To find out more or to fill in a registration form;

Telephone: 01234 276037

Email: communitysafety@bedford.gov.uk

Visit: www.bedford.gov.uk/volunteering

YOUR SPEED
m p h

Some residents in Duloe have expressed interest in the Community Speed Watch volunteer scheme. Emma Whitfield Community Safety Support Officer, with Bedford Borough Council provided the attached leaflet about how this scheme operates.

If there are sufficient people interested, training could be organised for the volunteers by the local PCSO who would then help set up events and deliver the equipment (SID machines). A minimum of 3 people are required to run individual events and the planning is led by them.

If you are interested in finding out more please telephone: 01234 276037 or email: communitysafety@bedford.gov.uk.

Hamlets Summer Afternoon.

The summer afternoon held on Sunday 13th July was well attended.

Parishioners played rounders and supplied cakes for a competition which were then sampled by appreciative parishioners.

The parish Council would like to thank Geradine Meola, Emma Thompson and Jane Thomson for their hard work in organizing it and to the Bygraves for acting as first aiders. The tea was followed by a meeting to discuss rebuilding Duloe Village Hall.

Bassmead Wedding Venue

By Richard Squire

Some may know the Rickety Barn has been hosting wedding receptions for quite a while now. The very first was my cousin Hannah who was married at St Marys and had her reception here in 1998; it was a fun family affair in the barn decorated with sunflowers. The facilities were limited: we had a porta loo and a small tent for the caterers.

But the seed of an idea was planted. Not long after that I was approached by a lady running a wedding website who confidently told me I was going to run a wedding business. Being a farmer I was a little surprised to be told this, but before long she had advertised us on the internet and couples began visiting with a view to having a wedding reception party and drinks on the lawn in front of the Manor house.

The idea grew, proper loos were put in and one winter's day I saw the kitchen tent lifted up by a storm and blown through the farmyard so a porta cabin was purchased to be the kitchen and finally a marquee to seat 140 people for the Wedding Breakfast was installed in the pole barn beside the Rickety Barn.



Everything tickled along very well until April 2011 when the lovely lady with the website popped by and said “Marquees are so last year! Show me around the farm yard”. So we wandered about through the tired tin and brick utilitarian farm barns and beside the dilapidated Victorian moat barn with doorways too small and rooms too narrow for modern farming. Another seed was sown and a bigger idea grew to create a destination wedding venue whilst restoring and utilising the underused older buildings, creating new buildings in sympathy with their historic surroundings and enhancing the setting of the Manor house.

There are two and half acres inside the medieval moat which is a Scheduled Monument. English Heritage and Bedford's Conservation Officer viewed the site and agreed it was a feasible project from a conservation point of view.

Full archaeological surveys were undertaken, and a medieval cobbled farmyard was found and excavated by archaeologists. All the work was done in conjunction with bat ecologists as six bats had been found to be living in the old barn and around the yard. Special raised tiles have been fitted in some of the roofs and bat boxes erected in the wood close by to keep the bats happy during the building work and in the future.

The Rickety barn had some renovation work done. The pole barn which was right beside it was demolished to leave it as a totally detached building. The courtyard between the Rickety Barn and the Bridge barn has been paved to reflect the fact that it is an old farmyard.



The Moat barn was restored using traditional building methods such as lime mortar and reclaimed roof tiles. We kept some exposed walls and timber trusses ensuring a sensitive conversion into the present-day, and a new purpose, as bar area and store, office, toilets, honeymoon cottage and bridal boudoir (a room for the Bride to arrive early and do her hair, check her dress and relax with bridesmaids and friends before the ceremony).

The Bridge barn is a green oak framed sling brace barn and has been built with one steep sided pitched roof to reflect the existing steep roof pitches on the farm buildings. It also combines a side aisle echoing the aisle in the Rickety barn. This makes the Bridge Barn very beautiful with interesting beam work and very versatile for guest numbers.

Appletree Cottage outside the moat has been converted into bed and breakfast accommodation and so makes the venue much more attractive to families coming from outside the area.

From the original idea in 2011, it took 3 years to complete and the first wedding took place successfully at the end of June.

The Duloe Dovecote

By Frank Squire

For the last seventy years or so I have travelled fairly frequently along the road from Staploe to Duloe. At the beginning of Duloe you come to the road known as The Butts, that narrow bit of road up a slight incline between tall hedges where you hope you will not meet any oncoming traffic. As you drive up the gentle slope your eyes will be drawn to a squarish redbrick building sticking up on the skyline ahead of you. I must have seen this building hundreds of times and over the years I have watched it decay. First a few gaps appeared in the tiles; then more tiles missing; then whole patches of tiles gone exposing the roof timbers; and then the roof timbers stood bare and tile-less and finally the tiles and timbers all gone leaving a brick structure like a big red box dark against the sky.

I learned that this structure was an ancient dovecote at which point it was over to Mr Wikipedia who told me that dovecotes were probably introduced into England by the Normans who built them from timber, stone or brick, sometimes housing as many as 2000 pigeons, each pair of pigeons being provided with a nesting box known as a boulin or pigeon hole. Pigeons were an important part of the mediaeval diet because until the introduction in the eighteenth century of root crops for feeding to livestock in the winter, pigeons were the only winter source of protein. In four weeks a newly hatched pigeon will reach the size of an adult. At this stage the infant pigeon, known as a squab, is unable to fly and is therefore easy to catch. Ten pairs of pigeons could produce as many as 8 squabs a month for the dinner table. Talk about factory farming!

Pigeons then as now were a bit of a pest, consuming valuable crops and leaving droppings, so the existence of dovecotes was regulated by law which meant in practice that they tended to be associated with large estates and so ownership of a loft conferred status on the landowner. As well as the squabs, pigeon dung was valuable for use as fertilizer and, because of the nitrogen content, in the manufacture of gunpowder. It was also used in the tanning of leather and the flavouring of beer. Thank you for that, Mr Wikipedia!

There were several dovecotes in this area including one at Bassmead, until recently complete with nesting boxes, located on the first floor of one of the ancient barns. This has now been converted into the bridal suite for the Bassmead Manor wedding venue. (Opportunities for billing and cooing jokes here but don't mention the squabs!)

While I was observing the slow decay of the Duloe dovecote, an Italian farmer and his family were toiling away on their little farm in the village of Alife set in the foothills 50 kilometres or so inland from Naples. The farmer produced tobacco, barley, silage, sweet corn, grapes for wine and olive oil. The farmer also had a wife and ten children to support and there was insufficient work on the farm or nearby to provide a living for all ten of them as they came of age. At the same time there was a shortage of farm workers in England and the British government sent agents to Italy to recruit



workers.



This recruiting drive came to the attention of one of the farmer's sons, Michele (pronounced Mikaela) Meola who came to England looking for work. He was introduced to a local farmer, Freddie Bath, (yes, the same Freddie Bath who provided work and accommodation for ex-prisoner of war, Gunther Gerrard, of these parts).

Michele Meola wanted work and somewhere to live. Freddie Bath wanted a farmworker and owned an unoccupied farm cottage situated on his White House farm at Begwary and so Michele ended up living in a tied farm cottage in Begwary where he lived with his family of four children, one of whom was Angelo Emilio Meola, known as Milly, the present owner of 49 Woodhouse Lane together with the Duloe dovecote. Instead of going to work on the land, Milly had trained as a plasterer and dry liner. Milly is one of those people for whom every challenge is an opportunity and for whom the glass is always half full rather than half empty and every empty glass is there for the filling. Milly, (or Mr Sunshine as I think of him), eventually went into business on his own and has prospered. Milly had been living in Bedford with his family for twenty years but three years ago 49 Woodhouse Lane came onto the market. Milly wanted to return to live in the area where he had grown up so he decided to buy the property complete with its dilapidated dovecote.

During the last three years Milly has sorted out his house, extended his kitchen, converted his garage, laid out his garden and added to his orchard. Milly has always intended to repair the dovecote and is now in consultation with the planning department. However there is a stumbling block. Milly knows from his experience in the construction industry that a building without a purpose eventually falls into a state of disrepair. According to Mr Wikipedia (not him again!), the Romans sometimes converted dovecotes into repositories for the ashes of the cremated dead, the pigeon holes making ideal storage compartments for the ashes but I cannot see this idea going down well with Milly or with the people of Duloe. I am sure any suggestions for the future use of the dovecote will be gratefully received and I am confident that once Milly has identified a suitable purpose for the Duloe dovecote, the serious building work will begin.

.....

Duloe and Staploe Village Hall.

Duloe Village Hall can seat about 80 people.

Hire rates are £7 / hour. To book telephone: 07768 303373.

Current regular activities being held at Village Hall.

Callanetics Classes: Saturday Mornings 9.45-10.45 am

Monday Evenings 7.30- 8.30 pm.

First 2 classes are free, normal price £6.00. Please contact Caroline to book.

Email: cc@callanetics.co Mobile: 07787 447930.

Duloe Village Hall Rebuilding Project Questionnaire Results.

21 questionnaires were returned out of 100 distributed.

17 would like a village hall in the future (81%), 1 possibly, 1 no and 2 unanswered.

Respondents used the hall on average 2.4 times per year.

12 respondents (57%) said they would use it more if it was a better hall, 1 possibly, 7 no (33%) and 1 unanswered.

Particularly popular items:

Kitchen (9), car parking (8), insulation (7), canopy and decking (7).

Less popular items:

Second kitchen (4 stated they thought it was excessive).

Bar/meeting room (4 said unnecessary or would prefer a bigger hall).

13 respondents (62%) said they would accept an increase on their council tax, 1 possibly, 5 no (24%) and 1 unanswered.

3 respondents said they would be interested in running activities in the hall.

14 respondents (67%) said they would be interested in helping run fund raising activities or make a donation.

Most popular activities people would like to attend:

Pilates x 3

Children's clubs x 3

Exercise classes x 4

Craft group/fair x 4

Yoga x 2

Sports x 2

Badminton x 2.

.....

Village Agent

Teresa Moon

In the Classified section of The Hamlet's Voice you may have notice a reference to the above "Agent", if you haven't had any need to contact Teresa you probably, like Frank and myself recently discovered, have no idea who this person is. I was tasked with making contact with Teresa to discuss her role so we could share this information. [Julie](#).



Is life sometimes a struggle? Our own Village Agent is here to help.

Did you know that we have a dedicated Village Agent, Teresa Moon, who is here to help you? Her services are always **free of charge**, and she will phone or visit you at home. She is here to help you access the services and support you might need. For example:

Do you need help **filling in forms**?

Perhaps you need advice about **benefits & allowances**, such as Pension Credit & Attendance Allowance?

Would you like a free **home safety check** by Bedfordshire's Bobby Van?

Are you a **carer** in need of support?

Do you need home adaptations to help keep your **independence**?

Do you want information about community **transport** & other community services.

These are just examples. Any help you need – please just ask!

"Just Ask" Village Agents are a free service, funded by Bedford Borough Council through the Bedfordshire Rural Communities Charity (BRCC). They are here to help you when you don't really know where to turn. If you need help or advice about anything at all, or know someone else who does, just call: **Freephone 0800 039 1234** (Be ready to leave your contact details and I will call you back. This phone is not manned.)

.....

Wheels In Motion

Bedfordshire Rural communities Charity (BRCC) are launching a new lottery funded community transport scheme in our area in September 2014. It use volunteer drivers and is aimed at those over 65 and disabled people that are living in rural parts of Bedford Borough, and facing transport barriers.

About the scheme:

- Wheels in motion, collects passengers from their door and takes them to their requested destination.
- Journeys can be for any reason from shopping to visiting friends, to medical appointments.
- The scheme gives great flexibility and individuals or groups can request journeys.
- The scheme has a number of project owned vehicles that are especially adapted for those with mobility problems.
- Wheels in motion can complete journeys which cross the borders of Bedford Borough (conditions apply).
- Every driver is checked by the Disclosure and Barring Service.(DBS).

The booking line is 01234 345558 and will be open from September 2014.

Volunteer Car Drivers Needed in Bedfordshire Villages.

Do you have some time you would be willing to spare, to help older/disabled people in rural areas to get to the doctor, dentist, or shops?

Would you like to help people in your village who don't have family or friends to help them with essential journeys?

How Does the Scheme Work?

The Wheels in Motion project is a new community transport scheme that aims to increase the wellbeing and quality of life of older and disabled people living in rural Bedford. It has lottery funding and is administered by the Bedfordshire Rural Communities Charity (BRCC).

- ***You can decide what times you are available***
- ***All journeys are pre-booked through a central BRCC office***
- ***You will be paid expenses for journeys and parking***
- ***You will receive training and support***

Additional information

- Applicants will be required to undertake a DBS (CRB) check and to provide MOT/ insurance information and documentation as required
- Volunteers must have access to a reliable and safe vehicle
- Drivers must be over 21 and have held a full license for more than 2 years

For an application form or more information, contact Amy Baker – Community Transport Development Officer on 01234 345558 or email amyb@bedsrcc.org.uk

Classified Ads

THE WOODFIELD PHYSIOTHERAPY CENTRE

- 01234 378996
- www.woodfieldphysio.co.uk

PADDIE PAWS

- Professional Dog Grooming
- Qualified and Quality Service
- Call Jayne Pavely 07833 594670

STEVE SMITH

- Gardening Services, Staploe
- 07908 857706

ANDREW BRIGHTMAN

- Tree Surgeon, Duloe
- 07970546293

TERESA MOON

- 'Just Ask' Village Agents Scheme
- 01234 771418

MEADOWCRAFT

- Upholstery, furniture restoration, wood finishing & door stripping
- 01480 215705
- www.meadowcraft.co.uk

SIMON GREEN MOTORSPORT

- For all servicing, MOT preparation, Tyres, Exhaust's and Automotive repairs - 10% discount for all readers.
- Specialists in full car rebuilds and restorations - contact for details.
- Tel: 01234 378838 Mobile: 07771 392993
- Email: simon@simongreenmotorsport.com.

Honeydon Road Closure

29th September to 7th November 2014

There will be a road closure in Honeydon from Yew Tree Cottage to the triangle (near Chestnuts Farm and the bus shelter) from Monday 29th September to Friday 7th November for culvert strengthening.

For further details please see parish website.

Issue 14

Editor

Sub Editor

Email

Phone

Summer 2014

Julie Hunn

Frank Squire

hamletsvoice@outlook.com

01234 378130

.....