

ANSTEY, BRENT PELHAM & MEESDEN NEWSLETTER

February / March 2021

Diary of Events

Date	Event
	<p><i>Given the current restrictions, people are understandably reluctant to plan ahead. For short-notice announcements, as and when they appear, please check your village WhatsApp / Facebook group or similar.</i></p> <p><i>Let's hope that, when the next edition appears, there'll be plenty to look forward to!</i></p>

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Please send your own news to:

Jackie Godfrey on 01763 848732 or rjmo2@btinternet.com (for Anstey)
Martin Hugi brentpelhamnewsletter@protonmail.com (for Brent Pelham).

Meesden material for the time being direct to the editor.

And, for last minute material, direct to the editor.

The next deadline for copy is 15th March

GENERAL NEWS

The baton passes on..

As many of you will know, Jane Garvey bowed out of Radio 4's Woman's Hour in December, after 13 years of presenting the show. At about the same time, and just as memorably (at least for folk in these parts), John and Patricia Hamilton bowed out after 13 years as editors of this publication. I'm sure that all of you who read this newsletter will wish to join me in expressing a huge vote of thanks for their splendid stewardship throughout that period. It now falls to me to try, as best I can, to continue their good work – though it helps to know that John and Patricia are just across the road, should I need them!



*'My heart leaps up when I behold
A rainbow in the sky'*

Wordsworth

The rainbow – a universal symbol of hope, and of better times to come. A symbol much in evidence throughout 2020, and with good reason. This rainbow was snapped on a walk about Anstey (the school is just 'off screen' to the left), on a day when the rainclouds suddenly lifted and everything seemed possible.

Here's hoping for good news and better times as we move through 2021.

GOOD GARDENING! *Seasonal tips from Wendy Hillier*

Welcome to my first gardening column 2021 for the village newsletter.

During the past year my garden has given me something positive to focus on, and I hope you will find the following ideas both useful and interesting. I hope to be able to give you tips on things to do in your garden and plants you may want to buy this year.

If you have not yet bought your seeds for this year it is not too late. There are lots of online companies and the garden centres are still open. For on online try:

thompson-morgan.com sarahraven.com organiccatalogue.com

You can still get seed potatoes from these companies.

Now is a good time to divide clumps of snowdrops. Dig up the clumps, separate into clusters of 3 or 4 bulbs and replant.

February is a good time to sow chilli seeds. 'Hungarian Hot Wax' is a quick and very heavy producing chilli for our cooler climate.

On a dry day, cut back perennials. Cut down any dead stems from last autumn. Cut them off as close to the base as you can, without damaging emerging buds or young foliage.

Once you have had a clear-up in the garden it is a good time put on a mulch. Ideally the mulch should be about 5cms thick. Over the years I have used alpaca manure. As we have alpacas in Anstey you do not have to venture far to buy it! Contact Penny Wylie at info@yewtreealpacas.co.uk or ring 01763 848257 (see advert right).

Finally, I would like to recommend 2 plants that would flower in your garden in February and March:



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Pulmonaria 'Sissinghurst'. Perennial, white flowers in spring. Plant in light shade. Height 30cms, spread 30cm.



An evergreen shrub - Daphne bholua 'Jaqueline Postill'. Small, slow-growing upright shrub, good fragrance, pink and white flowers. Plant in full sun or part shade. Height 2m, spread 1.5m.



Happy gardening! Wendy Hillier.

THE HUNDRED PARISHES SOCIETY

www.hundredparishes.org.uk

Our area has a good number of so-called “Hertfordshire puddingstones”. However, I am not convinced that Hertfordshire has any real justification for claiming the puddingstone, because examples can be found on both sides of the Essex / Hertfordshire county boundary. I recently acquired a copy of “Puddingstone Walks in Essex”, a neat little book that describes walking routes which in total pass more than twenty puddingstones or groups of puddingstones in the Essex part of the Hundred Parishes.

A puddingstone is a conglomerate of many small, rounded and colourful pebbles that appear to have been cemented together. Geologists explain that they were formed around 50 million years ago and were deposited in this area by a retreating glacier, possibly only 10,000 years ago at the end of the last Ice Age.



Some puddingstones lay where they were deposited, whilst others have been moved to more convenient locations and sometimes put to good use. Brent Pelham (left) and Arkesden have incorporated them into their war memorials. Others are visible in Arkesden in the stream of Wicken Water beside the bridge. Stones have been used as building material within walls in Much Hadham and Wendens Ambo, in Great Hallingbury’s church tower and in St Helen’s Chapel at Wicken Bonhunt.

In Standon (right) the stone is proudly displayed, whilst a large puddingstone in Newport seems to have been unceremoniously abandoned beside the approach road to the station. Others stand in Tilty churchyard, by the pump at Ugley Green, in Saffron Walden Museum’s grounds, by the Shell House in Hatfield Forest and beside the Yew Tree pub in Manuden.



No doubt there are many more – I would be pleased to hear of any that I have missed! Please email me at hundredparishes@btinternet.com, if possible with a photo.

Ken McDonald, Secretary.

CENSUS 2021

Households across East Hertfordshire will soon be asked to take part in Census 2021. The census is a once-in-a-decade survey that gives us the most accurate estimate of all the people and households in England and Wales. It has been carried out every decade since 1801, with the exception of 1941. It will be the first run predominantly online, with households receiving a letter with a unique access code, allowing them to complete the questionnaire on their computers, 'phones or tablets.

"A successful census will ensure everyone from local government to charities can put services and funding in the places where they are most needed," Iain Bell, deputy national statistician at the Office for National Statistics, said.

"This could mean things like doctors' surgeries, schools and new transport routes. That's why it is so important everyone takes part and we have made it easier for people to do so online on any device, with help and paper questionnaires for those that need them."

Census day will be on **March 21st**, but households across the country will receive letters with online codes allowing them to take part from early March. The census will include questions about your sex, age, work, health, education, household size and ethnicity. And, for the first time, there will be a question asking people whether they have served in the armed forces, as well as voluntary questions for those aged 16 and over on sexual orientation and gender identity.

Results will be available within 12 months, although personal records will be locked away for 100 years, kept safe for future generations.

For more information, visit census.gov.uk.

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ANSTEY NEWS

www.ansteyvillage.co.uk

CHRISTMAS CAROLS

Well this year of course, church carol services and large group gatherings to sing carols in a barn or the pub were out of the question. So the Reverend James Sawyer decided instead to “take the carols to the people”, and in Anstey that took the form of carol singing on 16th December at 7 pm outside The Blind Fiddler - this was permissible under government guidelines. A group of a dozen or so of us gathered - standing at a social distance from each other of course - to sing (unaccompanied, just like in the olden days!) some favourite carols for about half an hour. Several people came along to listen, a mum and a son came out of the pub to join us and a mother and child passing in a car stopped to listen for several minutes. Meanwhile, Barry and Emma very generously provided delicious mulled wine and mince pies for “the workers”!

The highlight of the evening - and actually a highlight of the whole of this most strange and different of Christmases - was when a smaller group of us moved along to the front garden of the Elford family to sing to Billy, who loves Christmas but had been having to stay inside this year. The family joined in with all the carols.

Telepathically, Billy and the Rector were wearing identical Christmas elf jumpers!

Alison Cossor



The Anstey Plant Ladies are already preparing their produce for sale again this Spring. Given the current situation it is expected to follow the same pattern as last year, with sales tables outside our garden gates and donations requested, which will be gladly put towards the NHS staff fund once more, as a wee small token of our gratitude.

As the weather improves and we can actually get on the ground, if there are any excess plants from your own garden you would like to include just label them up, drop them outside Woodside Cottage garden gate and they will be included.

Jan Pledger

WHAT'S IN A NAME?

The Historic Areas of Anstey

With the introduction of digital mapping and Google maps, concern has been raised that names of local lanes and settlements are being lost. Not least my own house, Little Thatch, whose address has strangely changed from Cheapside, where it has been for over 300 years, to Mill Lane. On Google maps there is no reference to Daws End, The Knoll, Paynes End, Puttocks End or Snow End – yet Anstey is made up mainly of ‘Ends,’ consisting of small groups of houses. At the Open Parish Council Meeting of 2019 it was agreed that signs would be erected to maintain the identity of these historic areas in Anstey. Most are now in position.

Paynes End could be named after the Payne mentioned in the Domesday Book, who held half a hide of land in Anstey (a rather loose area between 20 and 60 acres) and where resided four smallholders, four cottagers and one slave. The spelling has been corrupted over the years to Paines End and Pains End, as now appears on signposts.

Snow End may have been the village centre, as according to the 1881 census there were three grocers shops there, one being run by the miller, (a windmill was still in existence there then) and also a public house – The Windmill. In 1891 there were still three shops, the last one being at what is now Roding House and which survived until the very early 1970's. More latterly there was a filling station in Snow End (where

Brambles is now situated) which continued trading into the mid 1960s.

Cheapside, which means market place, was so named because it was the custom for stalls to be set up along this lane for a two day annual St Swithun's Fair held on the 15th & 16th July. This fair was reintroduced in 1979, the first one being held at High Hall Farm along Cheapside.

The grassy triangle in the centre of the village was called The Knoll and is where the village pump and well were situated. The pump was still in use up to the early 1940s.

The community of Daws End or Dawes End consisted of a small cluster of thatched cottages with its own pub, The Bell. Puttocks End, sometimes known as Puddocks End, is still waiting for its sign to be erected.

A new 'End' in Anstey was named in the 1980s, with the conversion of a large potato barn and adjoining stables into nine dwellings to the rear of Anstey church and very appropriately called St George's End. Before conversion, the barn hosted a 398th Bomber Group memorial dance, where many US veterans and local residents dressed in 1940's attire and danced to live war-time music.

With only Google Maps to refer to, Snow End would never have been identified as a suitably frosty location to photograph the scantily clad Page 3 girl of the Daily Express during a very cold snap in January 1985. She was later seen having a warming drink in the Chequers, now delightfully renamed The Blind Fiddler. Perhaps this is a rather controversial reason for keeping the local village names alive!

Gus Goymour, Little Thatch, Cheapside.

A big thank you to Gus, who not only researched this topic but also made and mounted the new signs in their various locations. (Ed)



DRIVERS BEWARE!

Flooding at Silkmead Farm on the B1368 continues to be an issue, despite repeated appeals to Herts Highways by Anstey Parish Council. Please report any issues by using the following link:

<https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/services/highways-roads-and-pavements/report-a-problem/report-a-highway-fault/what-type-of-fault-are-you-reporting.aspx>

ANSTEY DEFIBRILLATOR. A reminder that the Anstey defibrillator is located outside The Blind Fiddler, just to the left of the entrance porch. The code to open the cabinet is **3456**

A MESSAGE FROM ANSTEY CHAPEL

Happy New Year? Are those words getting a little caught in your throat? We often welcome the New Year as the beginning of something new – we leave the troubles of the old year behind and step across the threshold into the opportunities that await us.....Yet this year, more than perhaps any other, we are painfully aware that we are carrying the baggage of 2020 with us into 2021. The year gone by has left an indelible mark on each of our lives, impacted us in ways we could never have imagined.

The Coronavirus has disrupted our families, our homes, our work places and our places of worship. But we can reflect on the things that 2020 may have taught us; to cherish each moment of life and not take it for granted, to spend time with loved ones, to expect the unexpected, and to overcome and keep going despite being faced with extraordinary odds.

Well, however you feel about the road ahead as we step into 2021, Anstey Chapel would like to wish you a 'Hopeful New Year'!

There are many people looking to this year with the 'hope' that the vaccine will be distributed widely and quickly. The 'hope' that life will regain some normality and the 'hope' that the after-effects of the past year will not be too much of a burden on us. And so it is with a hopeful heart that we stand alongside to help and encourage one another in the months to come.

We would like to offer our time and experience to anyone who would like to chat to ease worry or pain. To 'get things off their chest' or simply just to talk to help see a clearer way

forward. Obviously, at this specific time, it would need to be by telephone.

However disappointing it was for us to cancel our carols by candlelight, our Christmas service and now all Sunday services until further notice, (to help keep our congregation safer), **the chapel is still open** during daylight hours for private prayers, solitude and the opportunity to just sit and have peace. Please observe the displayed guidelines when attending.

If you would like us to pray with or for you at any time please give Lynn-Marie or myself a call: home phone 01763 849256, Ian's mobile 07765585355.

Remember, "Where there is no hope in the future, there is no power in the present". – John Maxwell. In other words, to be able to remain strong now, never give up your hope for the future.

My hope and trust are in God - where is yours?
May God bless you and your loved-ones.

Rev. Ian Palmer
Anstey Chapel



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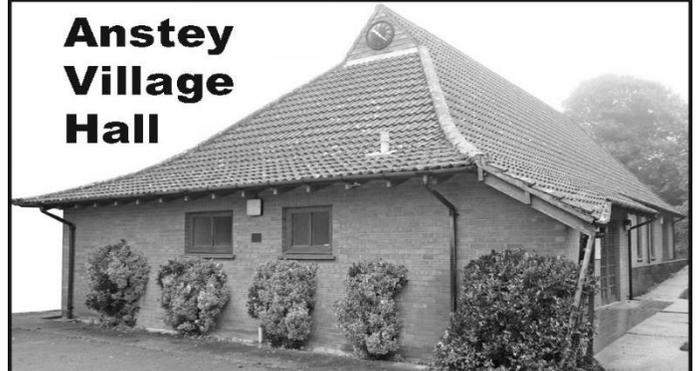
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With acknowledgements: Private Eye



*"You'll have to excuse your mother –
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With acknowledgements: The Telegraph



*'I know you're excited, but
the sooner you go to sleep,
the sooner it will be bin day'*

MATT

BRENT PELHAM NEWS

www.brentpelham-meesden-pc.org

Presented by Martin Hügi

A FESTIVE VILLAGE CHRISTMAS

Despite the current lockdown conditions there was a great community Christmas spirit that came together that helped lift the flagging spirits and light up the village. Numbered advent windows were decorated for all to see, with a WhatsApp group set up to help co-ordinate. Thanks to the 23 volunteer houses and for the exceptional effort that was put in by all, it was great fun.



[Brent Pelham Christmas website](http://www.brentpelham-meesden-pc.org)

"What a wonderful achievement and experience the Village Advent has been. We set out to countdown to Christmas together but achieved so much more!

We shared something to look forward to every day, together at such a challenging time. We have created new friendships and caught up with friends we haven't been able to spend time with during 2020.

We hope you have enjoyed watching our Village Advent unfold. Thank you for all your support. A special thanks to all the households that took part. You are all awesome!" – Katey Hügi

All the windows can be seen again on the [Brent Pelham Christmas website](http://www.brentpelham-meesden-pc.org).

A special thanks to the children in the village who created such lovely Christmas pictures that were displayed in the village hall windows for the advent window 24.

A village Christmas tree

As there was no Christmas Fair this year a Christmas tree was put up outside of the village hall and decorated slowly in the run up to Christmas by villagers adding their own baubles and decorations.

This was a great success and brought a lot of Christmas cheer at a time when we could not spend time with friends and family this Christmas. Thank you for all who contributed. Perhaps a new village tradition?



Even a Christmas dragon turned up!



Santa seen?

Some thought they might have seen Santa on Christmas Eve as he visited the village...



Community WhatsApp Group

As the village advent WhatsApp group came to a close it generated a desire for a community WhatsApp group to be set up to be able to share news, information, and informal chat.

It has already proved to be very useful and an excellent way to get local information and questions answered quickly. It is open to anyone living in the village and is administered by Hazel Norris. Please get in contact with her to be added to the group at hazelnorris@icloud.com

As it is public space, please can members add their full name to their WhatsApp profiles so everyone can see who's who.

Chimney Fire

There was a chimney fire in the village not long after the New Year; it took about 24 minutes for a fire engine to arrive from the time of call. This is not at all a criticism; they did a great job and thanks go out to the Hertfordshire Fire & Rescue service. It is only mentioned for information, as obviously because of our rural location there may inevitably be a wait before help arrives should it be needed.

On this occasion the crew came from Bishops Stortford, as the Buntingford pump was unavailable.

It is always best to make a 999 call straight away to get whatever emergency service required mobilised. This will happen as the first details are taken, the system will automatically know where the call is coming from. The nearest crews are often alerted before the call is even finished.

Also, a reminder to regularly check smoke alarms and have at least one on every level in your home.

More information from [Hertfordshire Fire and Rescue](#). In normal, non-pandemic times, a home fire safety visit can be arranged.

Parish Council Meeting Notice

The next meeting of the Parish Council will be on Thursday, 21st January at 7.30pm. Current Covid restrictions means that it will be held via Zoom. Details of how to access this, and the Agenda, can be found at [Brent Pelham Meesden Parish Council Website](#)

If reading this after the date, minutes can be found of the meeting, and previous meetings at the same web address.

Brent Pelham Hall Open Gardens – 5th & 6th June - Save the Date!

We are hoping to have Open Gardens again next summer and look forward to welcoming lots of visitors. Save the date 5th & 6th June 2021 from 2pm - 5pm.

Pilates continues on Zoom

Pilates continues on Zoom, at 7pm Monday night, for 40 minutes. 6pm on Thursday night. The cost is £3.50 a session if anyone is interested please email Becky at rebecca.ashman@hotmail.co.uk or Hazel at hazelnorris@icloud.com or telephone 777316.

Email addresses

Of course, if you are receiving this by email you will, unless someone has forwarded it on, have registered your email address to receive this as a digital copy. Please do check with neighbours, if and when you see them, that they are aware of the newsletter being digital for the time being. If they are not and they would still like to receive it they can email

brentpelhamnewsletter@protonmail.com and it will be sent on and future digital editions.

If you are aware that a neighbour does not have an email please consider printing them a copy, whilst checking with them first, maintaining social distancing and taking hygiene precautions whilst printing and delivering. Thank you.

For the benefit of those new to the village and as general reminders:

Brent Pelham Facebook page

If you are a Facebook user then don't forget to like the Brent Pelham Facebook page to keep up to date with upcoming events & local news.

Fraser Murray sends out emails to the village with general news, these are useful for getting out urgent news, reminders and information quickly. To add your name to his distribution list, or if your email has changed, then send a blank email to frasermurray@me.com with your name and address in the header.

Facebook page "The Pelhams"

Fran Bell from Lower Cottages, Brent Pelham, has just started a Facebook page called **The Pelhams**. It's about collecting stories and anecdotes about the area and it would be great to see people joining and hopefully contributing pictures or posts.

Village hall internet - The WiFi network is BP-Village-Hall and the password is shonk5moat. It's free to use for basic respectful use, and for those 'your-internet-is-down' emergencies. For prolonged heavy use a small, or large, donation would be very welcome, simply post through the letter box at the Village Hall with an explanatory note.

Village defibrillator - As a reminder the village defibrillator is located near the village hall and post box opposite the church. The access code for the box is **C159X**.

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Chris Whitty and Patrick Vallance, the Early Years



With acknowledgements: Private Eye

MEESDEN NEWS

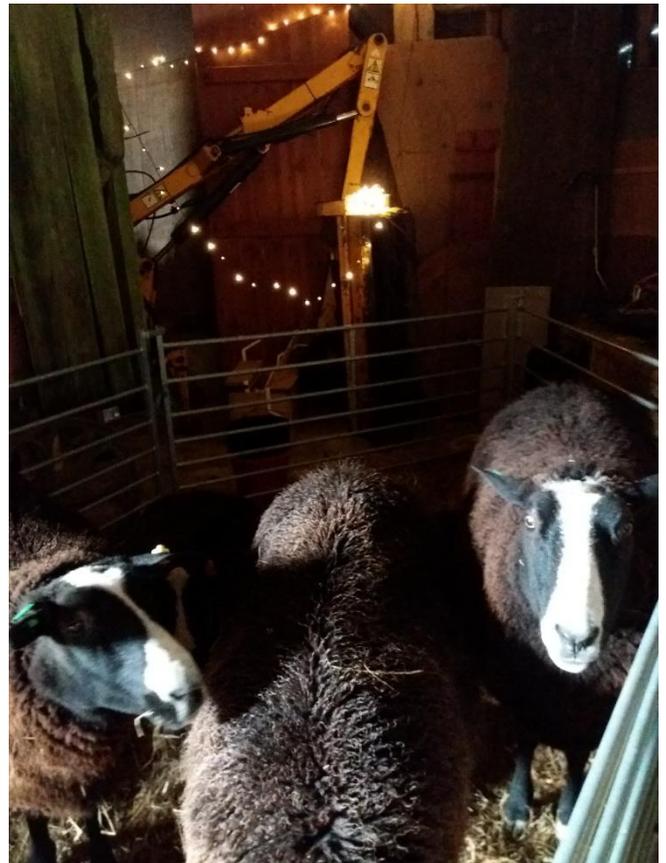
www.brentpelham-meesden-pc.org

Like everywhere locally, life in Meesden was... tranquil, in cold, dark and difficult December. However, thanks to Jen West and the village hall team, the village was enlivened by artistic presentations of Carols or Christmas songs outside folks' houses. On Tuesday the 22nd socially distanced mulled wine was served outside the village hall and we were able to chat (at a distance!) and dispel for a while some of the pervading gloom. Folk then wandered through the village admiring the various creations, and Cathy Dimsdale generously provided prizes for everyone who took part. I think it was appreciated by all who came and gave us a much-needed reminder of village community life, which has inevitably been quenched somewhat last year.



On Christmas Eve, James Sawyer led a crib service (which included live sheep!) in Wilfrid and Cathy's barn, where the nativity scene was set up in a partially restored shepherd's hut. Fliiss provided music for us and, despite masks, we managed to

sing some carols. The barn was a great setting and, for many of us, the service marked the beginning of the Christmas celebrations.



Many thanks to all who enabled these events to happen! We look forward hopefully to a better year in 2021!

Mike West

MEESDEN COMMUNITY GARDEN

Thank you again to everyone that bought fruit or veg from outside our Village Hall. The total amount raised in 2020 and donated to the NHS was £242. With the addition of the Gift Aid scheme the total is £290.

Sadly, there is no fruit or veg at this time of year, but a bag of logs can still be purchased in exchange for a donation in aid of the Village Hall and the return of the net bag where possible please.

As soon a weather permits, we will re-stock the raised bed with flowers for the summer.

Ken Newstead

MEESDEN VILLAGE HALL

Whilst we cannot congregate in communal areas at this time, the Meesden Village Hall Committee look forward to the time when we can welcome you all back in. If you would like to see any specific activities in the Hall when the restrictions permit, please post your ideas to the Meesden Village website:

<https://meesdenvillage.wordpress.com/>

We would love to hear from you.

VILLAGE WATER SUPPLY

Affinity Water have yet to complete their promised improvements to our water supply, but we have been assured by the Affinity Executive Relations Team that they are still on-course to complete the upgrades by March 2021 as per the original deadline.

Ken Newstead

NIGHT PRAYER FROM MEESDEN

As you know, the short monthly Night Prayer time in the village hall has had to stop, and it is unclear when we will be able to meet again there. However, I am hoping to take Night Prayer by Zoom over the next few months as an alternative, though I am aware that folk who haven't got a computer will not be able to join. For any who have not been to Night Prayer in the village hall, it is a quiet, simple service at the end of the day lasting 25-30 minutes, when we can lay aside the business of the day and spend some time in God's presence. The first one will be on Wednesday 27th Jan starting at 8.30pm and will be on every last Wednesday of the month thereafter.

If you would like to join, please email me at: mikewest181@hotmail.com I will send you a Zoom invite nearer the time, which you should be able to click on to join. I will open the meeting at 8.20 if anyone wants to chat beforehand, but Night prayer will be begin at 8.30pm. I hope you can make it.

Mike West

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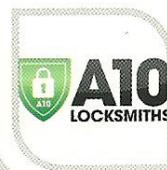
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