

THE ANSTEY, BRENT PELHAM & MEESDEN NEWSLETTER

June - July 2025

Diary of upcoming events

Date	Event
Sun 8 th June	Brent Pelham Hall 'Open Gardens,' 1-4pm (see page 9).
Wed 11 th June	Anstey Chapel 'Coffee & Cakes,' 10.30-midday (page 5).
Wed 11 th June	Service to commemorate the 25 th anniversary of the installation of the memorial window, Anstey Church, 6pm (page 4).
Sat 14 th June	Meesden Barn Dance, 7pm (page 11).
Sat 21 st June	Meesden Hall garden opening, 11-4pm (page p11).
Tue 24 th June	Quiz Night at The Black Horse, Brent Pelham (page 9).
Fri 27 th June	Anstey 'pop-up' Film & Social Club, Anstey Village Hall. Doors open 7.30, film starts at 8pm (page 5).
Wed 30 th June	Quiz Night at The Blind Fiddler, Anstey – 7.00 for 7.30 start. Teams are advised to call the Blind Fiddler in advance, to book a table.
Wed 9 th July	Anstey Chapel 'Coffee & Cakes,' 10.30-midday (page 5).
Sat 12 th July	Brent Pelham Village Picnic (page 9).
Sun 13 th July	Anstey Fair! 1-5pm in the Church, and the fields behind (page 4).
Mon 14 th July	Anstey Parish Council meeting, 7.30pm in the Village Hall.
Tue 22 nd July	Quiz Night at The Black Horse, Brent Pelham (page 9).

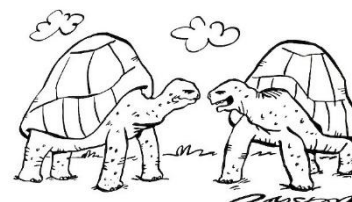
Editor: David Oxley, 2 Castle Cottages, Anstey SG9 0BW / oxleydj@yahoo.co.uk / 07802 733398

Please send your local news to:

Jackie Godfrey on 01763 848732 or rjmo2@btinternet.com (Anstey)

Shirley Lacy – Shirley.lacy10@gmail.com (Brent Pelham)

Mike West - mikewest181@hotmail.com (Meesden)



"Apparently, TV wildlife presenters can live as long as 99 years"

*With acknowledgements:
Private Eye.*

Welcome to another edition of the Newsletter, with local news and stories from across the three villages. All households should receive a printed copy of the newsletter, delivered to your door, for you to browse at your leisure – though there's also a digital version available as well (via email), which may include extra articles that were too long or too late for the printed edition.

A digital archive of back issues can be found on the Anstey Village website: www.ansteyvillage.co.uk
The Newsletter is printed by Sharpe Print, Buntingford – 01763 273296 / sales@sharpeprint.co.uk

Deadline for the next edition: **THURSDAY 10TH JULY**

GOOD GARDENING

Topical tips for June & July

At this time of year the ornamental borders will soon be at their peak, and there will be plenty of early summer vegetables to harvest. There will still be a few jobs for you to do in the garden, and here are some suggestions to keep you busy.

- ❖ Deciduous shrubs that flower in late winter, spring or early summer need annual pruning to encourage strong, healthy shoots and improve flowering. Shrubs such as Forsythia, Philadelphus and Weigelia can be pruned now.
- ❖ Garden weeds can be controlled without using chemicals, so if they are becoming a problem in part of your garden try hoeing, hand weeding, repeat cutting or smothering. Non-chemical methods aren't just planet-friendly, they are safer to use around children and pets too.
- ❖ Water is a precious resource and supplies in the UK are under pressure from the effect of climate change, population increase and the need to protect the environment. Water in the morning or evening if you can, never in the heat of the day. It's good to remember, plants will use more water if more water is made available to them, so you can allow them to dry out a little between watering as they do not need to be wet all the time.
- ❖ Most garden plants benefit from dead heading, but leave those that produce decorative or bird friendly seeds and fruits, and those you want to collect seed from. It's best to dead-head flowering plants regularly, whatever the season, so remove flowers as soon as they begin to fade.
- ❖ Salvia is a great planting companion for roses because of its range of colours and long flowering period. Plus, the sulphur in the salvia's scent profile means that, when they warm up, they release a natural fungicide. Under planting with salvia helps keep roses mildew and blackspot free organically.

Here are some planting ideas to brighten your garden in June and July >>

Salvia nemorosa caradonna



A compact, upright perennial with purple / blue flowers and crinkled green foliage. Flowers from summer through to autumn. Height and spread 0.1 to 0.5m. Likes sun or part shade, and moist, well-drained soil.

Can be divided in spring or take semi ripe cuttings in summer. Pairs nicely with roses.

David Austin rose - Harlow Carr

A mid pink shrub rose, flowers freely from early summer to autumn. Old rose fragrance. Excellent bushy habit with upright vigorous growth. Height and spread 90cms. Grow in sun/part shade, in moist, well-drained soil. Dead head regularly and feed during the growing season with a rose fertilizer.



Why not visit Hyde Hall RHS gardens near Chelmsford during the summer to see their rose gardens?

Don't forget that you can purchase a range of plants, including perennials, annuals and vegetable plants from outside Little Thatch, Woodside Cottage and 2 Dawes Cottage, Anstey. All donations go to Anstey church and the Ukraine Crisis.

Happy gardening! Wendy Hillier.

THE BENEFICE 'GOOD NEIGHBOURS' SCHEME

A reminder that local volunteers are available to drive you and help you, should you require it. If you need a lift to a hospital, or a doctor's surgery, or help with the shopping or with other tasks, just give us a ring on **01763 848536**. Please try to give advance notice, as same-day trips are rarely possible.

Patricia Hamilton

COOKERY CORNER

Roasted Spring Veg with Watercress Dip

Try roasting your spring vegetables and make a peppery dip to accompany them!

Ingredients

1 shallot
400g watercress
25g butter
100g ricotta
1 lemon
Tabasco sauce
150ml whipping cream
300g asparagus
300g baby spring carrots
1 small bunch of radishes
300g new potatoes
2tbsp olive oil

Method

1. Chop the shallot and wash the watercress.
2. Melt the butter in large frying pan and the shallot and sauté for 10 mins, until soft.
3. Add watercress and cook for 5 mins, until watercress is wilted but bright green.
4. Tip mixture into a sieve and press down to remove as much liquid as possible.
5. Return to the pan and stir in the ricotta and a squeeze of lemon. Season with salt and pepper and a dash of Tabasco.
6. Blitz the mixture in a food processor and transfer to a bowl.
7. Whip the cream until stiff and fold into watercress mixture. Leave in the fridge.
8. Preheat oven to 180°C/gas mark 4.
9. Click off woody ends of asparagus, trim the carrots and radishes, cut the potatoes into wedges.
10. Toss all the veg with oil and squeeze of lemon juice and season. Place on a baking tray and cook for 45 minutes or until ready.
11. Remove the roasted veg from the tray and serve with the dip.

Elaine Wyld - Sumptuous Soups and Vintage Cakes
Tel: 01763 289 738 / m. 07501 495 940
Facebook – Sumptuous Soups and Vintage Cakes

Anstey Owlets



is a small, friendly pre-school within Anstey First School where children from 2 years of age (who don't have to be out of nappies) enjoy child-initiated, free-flow play in a lovely rural setting.

We offer a wide range of activities with an emphasis on outdoor learning, including sessions in our Woodland School with our dedicated, level-3 trained staff. Shared social time with our Nursery children ensures a smooth transition to Nursery class in our Montessori-led Foundation Unit



**For information about
Owlets Pre-school
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**BE THE BEST YOU
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BIN COLLECTION CHANGES COMING IN AUGUST

Information from East Herts District Council

In August, a new bin collection service will start. This service will enable you to recycle more. As part of this new service, you will be provided with some additional bins, some of your existing bins will change use and we will also be introducing a weekly food waste collection.

Your bin collection days may change, and we will confirm if this is the case nearer the time. Stickers will also be provided to label your bins, to make this transition easier.

For more information, go to
www.eastherts.gov.uk/bins-waste-and-recycling/bin-collection-changes

NB - There is also more detailed information available with the digital version of this Newsletter.

COME TO ANSTEY FAIR 2025!

WHEN: Sunday 13th July 1pm to 5pm. Entry £3; children free. All proceeds go to village organisations.

WHERE: The field behind Anstey Church, and in the Church. Access through Moatside [free parking] or through the Churchyard.

WHAT: Attractions for all the family:

- Live Music
- BBQ/Bar/Lunches/Teas/Ice Creams
- Dog Show
- Range of stalls: crafts, produce, good-as-new clothes, plants.....
- Children's Games
- Tombola
- Raffle
- Morris Dancing (tbc)
- Bell Ringing Taster Sessions
- Miniature Steam Train Rides

HOW (you can help):

Donate bottles/toiletries/new gifts and toys for the Tombola. Please contact Kate Oxley on 07745 471037 / 01763 848584 / oxleykn@yahoo.co.uk for collection or leave at 2 Castle Cottages, Anstey SG9 0BW

Donate good-as-new clothes. Please contact Mandy Parker on 07786 070983 / 01763 848275, or Kay Walton on 07512 102208. Clothes can be collected, or left at Bandons Farm, Anstey SG9 0BS.

Volunteer to help on the day, or with setting up. Please contact Juliette Hodson on 07967 030929 or andrew.juliette@btinternet.com

WE LOOK FORWARD TO SEEING YOU!

Kate Oxley

VILLAGE HALL QUIZ NIGHT – 29TH MARCH

Many thanks to all those who came along to the annual village quiz night, and to our quizmaster Edward Burton. It was a keenly contested event, which went all the way to a tie-break! It also managed to raise over £1000 for the Village Hall funds.

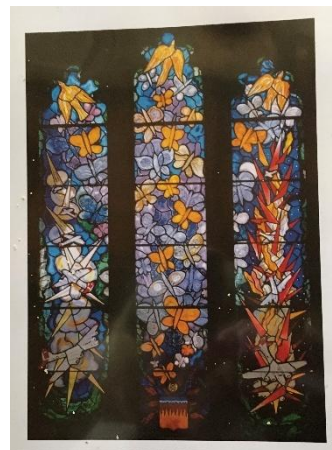
VILLAGE LITTER PICK – 29TH MARCH

Thanks also to those who kindly volunteered to help with the Saturday morning Litter Pick. We managed to collect over 30 bin bags of rubbish from around the village, mainly from the verges and ditches, which the District Council then took away.



WEDNESDAY 11th JUNE 6 PM IN ANSTEY CHURCH

A service to commemorate the 25th Anniversary of the installation of the memorial stained glass window, designed by Patrick and John Reyntiens and unveiled by the Duke of Gloucester at a special service on the same date in 2000. The window is in memory of those from the USAF 398th Bomber Group, stationed at Nuthampstead, who lost their lives in World War II.



All are warmly welcomed to the service and to stay for refreshments afterwards.

Ali Cossor

SPORT & EXERCISE CLASSES AT THE VILLAGE HALL

A reminder that we currently run three classes at the village hall:

Table Tennis: Wednesdays 9.30 – 10.30 am [£3]

Carpet Bowls: Wednesdays 7.00 - 9.00 pm [£2.50]

Yoga: Thursdays 9.30 – 10.30 am [£6]

Beginners are always welcome, and the first 'taster' session is free. Thereafter, it's 'pay as you go.' For more details, email:

oxleydj@yahoo.co.uk (table tennis)

janpled@gmail.com (carpet bowls)

oxleykn@yahoo.co.uk (yoga)



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www.ansteyvillage.co.uk/hall

You are always welcome to hire the Hall, for £12 per hour, or £8 per hour for Anstey residents.

ANSTEY 'POP-UP' FILM & SOCIAL CLUB

On Friday 25th April we showed 'Conclave' (which proved to be highly topical!) and on Friday 23rd May 'Back to Black.' Our next film will be shown on **Friday 27th June**, before we take our customary summer break. All members should receive an email in advance, with full details of the next film to be shown - please check your Junk or Spam folder if you can't seem to find it!

Please note that, owing to increased costs, membership fees have risen to £15 per annum, which allows free entry to up to 9 films throughout the year - still very good value, as I'm sure you'll agree. New members can always join on the night, or contact colingsmith@gmail.com in advance. Guests are always welcome, £4 per show.

NB If you change your email address, please email colingsmith@gmail.com with your new one, so that we can update the Film Club mailing list.

ANSTEY CHAPEL NEWS AND UPDATE

A reminder to everyone in Anstey and the surrounding villages that our Chapel cakes & coffee is a lovely get-together on the second Wednesday of each month. The next dates are **Wed 11th June** and **Wed 9th July**, 10.30 to midday. This a chance to chat, make new friends and enjoy home-made cakes and coffee / tea (no charge) in a lovely, peaceful environment. All ages welcome, arrive anytime 10.30 onwards.

We celebrated Easter with a Sunday morning service at the Chapel on Easter Day. It was lovely to see new friends from Anstey Village, and our Hertford Baptist friends also travelled to Anstey to celebrate with us.

June services will be held on Sunday mornings: June 1st, 8th, 22nd and 29th, all at 10.30am. everyone is very welcome.

If you'd like to know more details, or would just like a chat, please do call our Anstey Chapel contacts: Stephen Wylie (07979 537689) or David Tweedale (07970 963666).

Penny Wylie

ANSTEY PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting and the Parish Council meeting, both held on Mon 12th May, can be found on the village website at www.ansteyvillage.co.uk.

The next meeting of the Parish Council will be on **Mon 14th July at 7.30 pm** in the Village Hall. All parishioners are welcome to attend.

DEFIBRILLATOR

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**.

If you're dealing with a cardiac arrest, and administering CPR, there's a WhatsApp group which members can use, to ask for someone to fetch the defibrillator. Another member of the group will then offer to deliver it. If you wish to join the group (which currently has 26 members) please WhatsApp the Editor.

There is also a defibrillator at Anstey School, available to the public from 8 till 5 during term time. It's located in the school office.

CONGRATULATIONS!

Congratulations to Betty Withers at Chapel Cottage, who recently celebrated her 100th birthday. What an amazing achievement - many happy returns!

Jackie Godfrey

KEEP IN TOUCH - ANSTEY SOCIAL MEDIA

ANSTEYLINK village email group:

ansteylink@gaggle.email The group is managed by Sarah Cruise – contact cruise.s@icloud.com

FACEBOOK: Anstey and Meesden Community Group.

The administrator is Gemma Jacobs.

Unless otherwise acknowledged, the Anstey News section is written by the Editor.



Alpacas & Afternoon Tea

You can enjoy afternoon or cream teas with the Yew Tree alpacas on selected dates throughout the Summer.

Enjoy lovely the lovely countryside views from Yew Tree Cottage, Anstey with the alpacas grazing close by. The Yew Tree shop and Yarn Barn will be open for a some retail therapy or for buying that last minute present.

On the dates below you can book a homemade afternoon or cream tea from 2pm

Sat 24th May

Sat 14th June

Sat 21st June

Fri 4th July

Sat 19th July

Fri 8th August

Sat 16th August

Sat 23rd August

See online to book

www.yewtreealpacas.co.uk or call us on 01763 848257

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BRENT PELHAM NEWS

www.brentpelham-meesden-pc.org
Compiled and presented by Shirley Lacy

VE DAY 80 celebrations, 11TH May

As part of the VE 80 celebrations, Brent Pelham had their own "street party" on the village green. It was a bright, warm sunny afternoon with over 70 people from the village who enjoyed sandwiches, cake, beer, and wine.



Thank you to all of you who helped, attended and made it a fun day.

Decia and Hazel



Ted Barclay spoke about Churchill's motivation and inspiration for the nation and reminded us of part of Churchill's Blood, Toil, Tears and Sweat speech. "You ask, what is our policy? It is to wage war, by sea, land

and air, with all our might and with all the strength that God can give us; to wage war against a monstrous tyranny, never surpassed in the dark, lamentable catalogue of human crime." It was very inspiring.

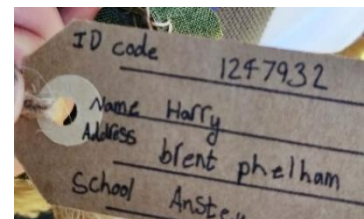


James Sawyer brought special guest Betty Withers, a 100-year-old WWII veteran. Betty served as a WREN in the second world war. She was a Royal Navy cook on the

South coast in the lead-up to the D-Day invasion. On 8 May she was a guest at Westminster Abbey, to mark the 80th anniversary of Victory in Europe Day. She met King Charles and several members of the Royal family and she was on TV. As a war widow she stayed in the London Victory Services Club and went to the VE Day 80: The Party celebration at the Royal Albert Hall.



This is Jasper and his Teddy, Harry. Great costume, well done Jasper.



This is Dave Parnell who was born in 1962. He was 6 years old when he went to the Bay of Biscay in France and started his collection of war memorabilia. He has great stories. Thank you for coming, Dave.



Sarah, our quiz master, and Dave, our well-dressed barman.



Black Horse Update

Renovation works on the upstairs of the building are complete. The Black Horse has opened as AirBnB rooms and welcomes visitors. **Booking Link:**
<https://blackhorsebrentpelham.co.uk/reservation>

Join quizmaster Dave Bromage for a fun brain workout at the Black Horse pub every month - with the chance to win a £50 pub voucher. Recent rounds have included Historical Body Parts, Mr Men Music and Anagram Karenina, so come along and join the fun! Booking advised, maximum of 6 people per team, £3 per person. See dates below.

UPCOMING VILLAGE EVENTS

Open Garden, Brent Pelham Hall – 8 June 1-4pm

Please come and join us for Open Garden on Sunday June 8th 1-4pm.

There is a map showing routes around the garden, taking in the formal and walled gardens, orchard, tower, the lakes and parkland. We will be serving tea, coffee and delicious cakes in the Estate Office and on the lawn if it's warm and sunny.

Proceeds are for NGS charities and for Brent Pelham projects. See you there!



Village Picnic – 12 July. By the lakes at Brent Pelham Hall. Time and other details will be sent via WhatsApp: Village People.

Country Fair - 17th August.

Harvest Festival - 28th September.

Village Hall Quiz - 4 October.

Christmas Fair - Saturday 29th November.

Black Horse Quiz nights. Hosted by Dave Bromage. Enjoy a fun mental workout. £3 per person. Maximum of 6 in a team. Dates: Tuesday 22nd May 27; Tuesday 24th June; Tuesday July 22; Tuesday August 19

SOCIAL MEDIA

Facebook pages: **The Pelhams** or [Brent Pelham Village Community Group](#).

The Brent Pelham community WhatsApp group is administered by James (07904 019572) and Miro (07812 174646). Fraser Murray administers village emails. To add/change your name on his distribution list, send a blank email to frasermurray@me.com with your name and address in the header. To join the Brent Pelham birds WhatsApp group, message Dave Bromage on 07545 252191.

The Village Hall WiFi network is BP-Village-Hall and the password is shonk5moat.

Brent Pelham Village Hall

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MEESDEN NEWS

www.brentpelham-meesden-pc.org
Compiled and presented by Mike West

Sadly, the most important piece of news recently is hearing of the death of John Robinson, one of Meesden's oldest and finest residents. John was a delight to talk with, as he reminisced about the old days in the village (of which he had an encyclopaedic knowledge) and life in general. Before he became ill, he would be out walking each day, and always had time to give to anyone who had time to spend. For many years, John's walking along the road through the village was one of the constants of Meesden life. He is greatly missed.



John Robinson 1931 – 2025

John and Lily's daughter, Julie, has given this warm account of her father:

"John was born at

The Fox pub in Meesden (now Fox Lodge) in 1931, moving to Rose Cottages when he was 5 yrs old. As a child John remembered that none of the houses had running water, so they had to fetch water from a standpipe on the village green. He went to school in the village hall, then later in Brent Pelham village Hall. During the war there was an American Air base at Nuthampsted airdrome, and John would often walk up there to watch the planes come and go. His mum would send him up there with eggs from their chickens to sell to the airman, and that is how he befriended some of the airmen, some of whom would be invited back to the family home by his mother Emily for tea. Years later, when the 398th squadron and their families returned, John would rekindle some of those friendships, even meeting up with one of two of them when he and his wife Lily holidayed in America.

John joined the Royal Navy at the age of 18, spending time in Malta, Cyprus and Japan during the course of his 7 years of service. He saw active service in the Korean War and in the Suez Crisis.

John met his future wife Lily, who was born in Anstey, in the late 1950s, and they were married in Anstey Church in 1960. They set up home at No 5 Rose cottages Meesden, and in 1965 their daughter Julie was born. John worked for J Sainsburys at their Buntingford depot for almost 30 years, retiring in 1995.

John was a keen gardener, with a huge vegetable patch that took up most of the garden. In his retiring years he also did gardening for other local residents, as well as keeping the common ground near Meesden Parish room clean and tidy. He also enjoyed assisting the local pheasant shoot, where he was a beater.

Ultimately John was never more content than when he was out walking around Meesden and the local area, chatting to other residents and enjoying the peace and tranquility of the countryside.

John was diagnosed with Parkinson's in 2023 and as his health declined Lily looked after John, until he eventually moved to Margaret House in Barley in Feb 2024, where he passed away on 6th April this year.

Lily and Julie would like to express their thanks to everybody who has supported them since John passed and are so very grateful for the lovely messages they have received."

Bill and Teresa Bartlett share their impressions of the village: "We are relatively new to Meesden, and Mike popped by and asked if we could write a few words as to how we are settling in. We wanted to say a big thank you to everyone in the village for making us feel so welcome. We are fully settled in now, and really enjoying such a peaceful village. It's hard to tear us away from the conservatory, watching the deer and the birds go by, but we are enjoying getting out walking our dog Spud and taking the grandchildren to see the many fairy trees and dens! We look forward to our first summer in the village."

MEESDEN'S NATURE RESERVE

The recent dry spell in April was interrupted by a short period of heavy rain, much needed by crops in the fields, not to mention our gardens! Since then, it has been generally dry with some warm spells, all of which has encouraged rapid growth of grass and other plants. As usual, the nature reserve, is showing its cyclical emergence of wild flowers. At the time of writing, the cowslips are past their best, but cow

parsley is just coming out, and buttercups, bugles and milkmaids look magnificent.



Foreground: Bugles & Cowslips



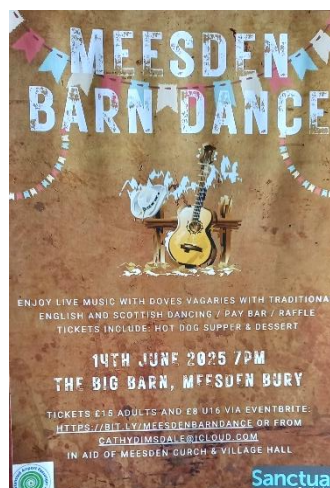
Milkmaid

Milkmaids, also known as Cuckoo flower, (so called because it flowers roughly when cuckoos first return to the UK), Our Lady's Smock, and May Flower, are the county flower of Cheshire. Its young leaves have a rather peppery taste, and can be used as a substitute for cress in sandwiches and salads. If you're passing the nature reserve, or St Mary's Church, have a look at these lovely flowers, and don't miss the stunning display of forget-me-nots beside the village hall.

Staying with a botanical theme, Andrew and Elaine McNeil write: "Summer arrived with intense heat that lasted for a week. Unfortunately, that is our great British weather; so unpredictable, but it keeps us gardeners on our toes. During that time, the blossom was looking beautiful, bees were busy pollinating flowers and getting their nectar fix, and the joyful sound of birds could be heard. It did wonders for our well-being. Our plant sales at our roadside gate



started well; most are home grown, and with over 20 different varieties to choose from, hopefully you will find one or two for your garden. Remember, when you buy, you are contributing to the upkeep of St Mary's Church and NHS charities, particularly those for cancer treatment. So, happy gardening, be kind to yourself and others."



There are not one but two great social occasions coming up in Meesden!

THE MEESDEN BARN DANCE, 14th June, 7pm (generously sponsored by Sanctuary).

Please come along to enjoy an evening of dancing and fun, to be held in the Big Barn at Meesden Bury; a cultural experience not to be missed! There will be a bar and raffle, so bring some cash!

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Tickets are available from either: Eventbrite, (<https://bit.ly/meesdenbardance>) or Cathy Dimsdale (cathydimsdale@icloud.com)

MEESDEN HALL GARDEN OPENING, JUNE 21st 11AM – 4PM

Ashton and Tilly Clanfield and family are kindly opening their garden at Meesden Hall to raise funds for St Mary's Church. Tilly writes, "There will be refreshments: tea, coffee and cakes. We will also have a plant sale. Dogs are welcome, and we have lots of parking in the top field. You'll be able to walk round the garden through the ponds, up to the house and into the orchards, vegetable garden and up to the church, hopefully in the sunshine! Entry £10 pp, children are free."

Other news from Ken Newsted:

Meesden Village WhatsApp - Our local WhatsApp group has proved very useful these past few weeks. If you haven't already joined, you only need to message 07726 460108 and ask to be added to the group. It can help you become reunited with lost property and prove a life-saver should you ever seek urgent help from a neighbour.

Meesden Village Green - We still need volunteers to help support our rota for mowing the grass with our ride-on mower. We split the mowing season (March to October) into eight months, and would like to have two people that can help each month. We currently have some months with only one volunteer, so we are looking for a couple more people to help out. If you can possibly help, please contact Ken Newstead by email clerk@brentpelham-meesden-pc.org or calling or messaging 07726 460108. Thank you.

Village Hall Flower Bed - As well as the usual display of flowers behind the Village Hall, we are growing some green beans, carrots, peas, onions and lettuce, (birds and bugs permitting, and with the kind help of Robin and Polly at Ivy Cottages who have supplied some netting). If you should see some veg that appears ready for the plate, please feel free to help yourself (whilst saving some for others of course).

St Mary's Meesden church services:

8th June, Pentecost, Holy Communion, 9:30am with coffee / tea afterwards.

22nd June, Service of Light, 5pm – our informal evening service, followed by drinks and nibbles.

Everyone is most welcome to these services. 😊



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