

THE ANSTEY, BRENT PELHAM & MEESDEN NEWSLETTER

August - September 2025

Diary of upcoming events

Date	Event
Wed 13 th Aug	Anstey Chapel Coffee & Cakes, 10.30am – midday.
Sun 17 th Aug	Herts & Essex Country Fair, Brent Pelham, 10.30am (see page 9).
Thu 28 th Aug	'Thursdays @ 3' anniversary celebration, Meesden Village Hall, 3.00pm.
Mon 8 th Sep	Anstey Parish Council, Anstey Village Hall, 7.30pm.
Wed 10 th Sep	Anstey Chapel Coffee & Cakes, 10.30am – midday.
Fri 12 th Sep	Anstey 'pop-up' Film & Social Club, Anstey Village Hall. Doors open 7.30pm, film starts at 8.00.
Sat 13 th Sep	Sponsored Bike 'n' Hike – see page 3.
Sat 13 th Sep	Fundraising Folk Concert in Anstey Church, 7.30pm (see page 4).
Sun 28 th Sep	Brent Pelham Harvest Festival.

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)

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

**If you would prefer not to receive a printed copy of the Newsletter, and rely solely on the emailed digital version (where available), please let the volunteer who delivers your copy know. Alternatively, contact the Editor.*

Deadline for the next edition: **WEDNESDAY 10TH SEPTEMBER**



GOOD GARDENING

Garden Tips and Ideas for August and September.

Although August is the last official month of the summer it can also be the perfect time to enjoy your garden while it's still at its best. Here are some jobs you can do to keep the garden in tip-top condition throughout August and into September.

- ❖ Dead-head flowering plants regularly to extend their flowering period. Pinch off the faded blooms or snip back to the first leaf below the flower for a neater finish.
- ❖ Thoroughly soak drought-stressed plants and shrubs, especially newly-planted ones. Use grey, recycled or stored rain water where possible.
- ❖ Prune lavender once flowering is over to maintain a compact, bushy shape, but avoid cutting into old wood.
- ❖ Pinch out the tops of outside tomatoes as further flowers are unlikely to produce fruits that have time to ripen.
- ❖ Towards the end of September is a good time to plant new perennials, as the soil is still warm but the moisture levels are increasing. The garden centres should still have a good range of plants for you to choose from.

Here are some planting ideas to brighten your garden in August and September-

Aster x frikartii 'Monch'

A lovely blue flower with good mildew resistance. Flowers from July to October. A perennial plant that likes moist but well-drained soil. Height 60cms, spread 45cms. Plant in full sun and deadhead throughout the growing season.

It can be cut down after flowering, or leave standing over winter for the wildlife, as the seed heads are loved by the birds.



Agastache aurantiaca 'Morello'



A deep pink agastache perennial plant which soon forms a nice clump in the border. Flowers from July to October. Likes well-drained soil. Height 75cms, spread 45cms, plant in full sun. Deadhead throughout the season to

encourage more flowers. Plant can be divided in the spring.

Why not find time to visit other open gardens or nurseries in your area to see what else is in flower at this time of year? Nurseries and specialist bulb catalogues will also be getting their spring bulb selection in now, so you can start planning for next year!

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 any 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

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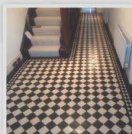
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ANSTEY NEWS

www.ansteyvillage.co.uk

AND A JOLLY GOOD TIME WAS HAD BY ALL!

Sunday 13th July. The sun shone and the crowds flocked in. Anstey Fair was back again, with another splendid afternoon of fun & games, tempting stalls, live music and lots of scrumptious food and drink to enjoy!



Thanks go to the Fair Committee (and other helpers on the day), who worked so hard to make it a success, and a special thanks to our 'dynamic duo' Tim Bradshaw and

Juliette Hodson, who led the team so capably. Well done!



More details about the monies raised will appear in the next edition.

FUNDRAISING CONCERT IN ANSTEY CHURCH SATURDAY 13 SEPTEMBER 7.30 PM

We are delighted to announce a return visit from Thursday's Band, Kelly and Woolley, and The John Meed Quartet.



Bringing you a fine selection of folk-inspired, mainly original songs, featuring vocals, guitars, bass, keyboard, fiddle, viola and mandolin.

With bar, light refreshments and raffle.

Tickets £7, available in advance from Alison Cossor [alicossor@gmail.com / 01763 848479 / 07715 277438] or on the door.

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 13th Aug** and **Wed 10th Sep**, 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.

The Chapel's Aug and Sep services will be held at 10.30 am on the following Sundays:

Aug 3rd, 10th, 24th and 31st

Sep 7th, 14th and 28th

Everyone is very welcome.

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

COMINGS AND GOINGS

We sadly say farewell to Nick and Sue Kirkpatrick, who have gone to live in Ely. Nick and Sue have lived in the village for over 40 years, always helping out when needed. I do hope they are enjoying life in Ely.

Meanwhile, Maddy, Tim and their children have moved into Broadview, Nick and Sue's old house.

And a very warm welcome to Ben, Hayley and their two children, who have moved into Maddy's old house at 8 Lincoln Hill. Hope everyone is settling into their new homes!

On a less pleasant note, a resident of Lincoln Hill has contacted me about the theft of certain garden ornaments from her front garden, some of which had special sentimental value. She has asked that people be vigilant.

Jackie Godfrey

SAVE THE DATE!

We're planning another 'Beat the Blues' music evening in the Village Hall, on **Sat 29th Nov**. Full details in the next edition.

SPORT & EXERCISE CLASSES AT THE VILLAGE HALL

We now run **four** weekly classes at the village hall, following the introduction of Tai Chi in July. The weekly schedule now looks as follows:

Tai Chi: Mondays 2.00 – 3.00 pm [£3]

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

Carpet Bowls: Wednesdays 7.00 - 9.00 pm [£3]

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:

djkellett@btinternet.com (Tai Chi)

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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. Contact Ruth Hart, details above.

ANSTEY 'POP-UP' FILM & SOCIAL CLUB

Unfortunately, due to technical issues, we were unable to show our scheduled film on Friday 27th June. However, we'll be up and running after the summer break, with films on the following dates:
Friday 12th Sep / Friday 10th Oct / Friday 14th Nov.

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!

Membership is £15 per annum, which allows free entry to up to 9 films throughout the year. 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 PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on Mon 14th July can be found on the village website at www.ansteyvillage.co.uk.

The next meeting of the Parish Council will be on **Mon 8th Sep 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 25 members) please text the Editor on 07802 733398.

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.

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.



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CHANGING OF THE GUARD AT ANSTEY SCHOOL

The Anstey School community – children, staff, parents and governors – is very sad to be saying goodbye to Mrs Amy Myers, who has been our highly regarded headteacher for ten years.



Mrs Myers has been an inspiring, empathetic and creative headteacher, who led the school through two very successful OFSTED inspections, as well as all the disruption of Covid. She and her team have created a nurturing environment where children reach high academic standards and become confident and happy learners.

Mrs Myers will be much missed, but the school community is very happy that the new headteacher from September will be Mr Richard McKelvey, who has been a well-respected and popular senior teacher at Anstey School for six years. We are confident that under his stewardship the school will continue to thrive, and wish him every luck in his new role.



Meanwhile, Anstey School pupils have had an exciting action-packed term. The Nursery and Reception class's trip to the zoo was a roaring success.....

...while the older children had the opportunity to try out musical instruments, and to visit the Fitzwilliam Museum in Cambridge, as part of a whole school arts project, 'Colour and Sound.'



Kate Oxley, Anstey School Governor.

Anstey Owlets



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

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 Fri 8th August
 Sat 16th August
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 Sat 13th September
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BRENT PELHAM NEWS

www.brentpelham-meesden-pc.org

Compiled and presented by Shirley Lacy

Firstly, congratulations to Rebecca and George Stephens on the birth of their daughter Grace.

PLANT SALE



We were lucky to have a sunny day for the plant sale on 31st May. A big thank you to all those who donated plants, cakes etc. and to all the volunteers who helped make the day a

success. A special mention goes to 6-year-old Emma Franklin, who grew a variety of vegetables and plants and had her own stall. She donated £34. We raised £700 towards the upkeep of the village hall.

Thanks also to the various stall holders who came: AmberBees with their honey and candles; Lorna and Emily, who showed off their different styles of cards and graphics; Keith with his delicious chilli sauces; and Buntingford Brewery, Four Acres Estates and Cambridge Wine Merchants, who all did tastings, which resulted in a very convivial atmosphere... despite East Herts closing one of the roads into Brent Pelham on the day! Thank you all - it was much appreciated.

Hazel and Decia

BRENT PELHAM VILLAGE HALL AND AGM, 4th JUNE

At the Village Hall AGM on 4th June four committee members retired, for a variety of reasons, and as the newly elected chairman I would like to thank them. All these people have contributed enormously to running the village hall and organising village events, which help to make Brent Pelham a very special village.

Beth Featherstone has been the driving force behind the village hall for over quarter of a century,

organising hall bookings, maintenance, cooking, and keeping everything straight. Beth will continue taking hall bookings. Fraser Murray has been on the committee for fifteen years, most recently as Chairman and Treasurer and has been chief in charge.

Hazel Norris and Decia Lane are relatively more recent additions, and they have organised lots of very successful events, most recently the VE day lunch, providing an opportunity for all villagers to get together and have fun. They have established the annual Christmas Fair as a fantastic start to the festive season each year, and have kindly offered to help again this year as part of handing over to the ongoing committee members.

Many thanks to all the retiring members for all their hard work. James Kurjak-Clague has been appointed treasurer, and Rebecca Stephens was elected as a new committee member to join other committee members: Erica Debnam and Jackie Pitt. We are looking for people to join the committee who are happy to help organise events and run the village hall. Please contact Sue or James or another committee member if you would like more information.

Sue Barclay

NATIONAL GARDEN SCHEME (NGS), 8TH JUNE

About 3000 UK gardens open annually for the National Garden Scheme (NGS). We opened Brent Pelham Hall a few years ago after my mother received wonderful end-of-life care from the Marie Curie Foundation in her own home. NGS enables 66,000 more people in the UK get Marie Curie hospice care. Many other charities are helped too.

When confronted with the idea of an Open Garden, our new head gardener Eric was reluctant to show off our weeds to a swarm of enthusiastic horticulturalists! We persuaded him that, with gardening, it's all about the journey, not the destination - maybe the punters would like to see that we struggle? We finally opened on Sunday 8th June, to catch the best of the roses.



We had really delicious Simmons cakes along with wonderful gluten free / dairy free offerings from Hazel, Decia and Helen. Many thanks to all of our helpers.

Mike parked a couple of old cars outside the front door - an Austen Healey, an old Camper Van and a seriously eccentric bag of bits called a Fraser Nash. It was a real hit. David and Hazel added to the excitement with their beautiful old e-type Jag.

We were proud to welcome 319 fee-paying people to our garden, plus loads of children who came in free. One of the nicest memories is lots of youngsters running around and doing the lake and wild flower walks - lovely. All the gate proceeds go to NGS and the Tea Shop proceeds stay with a village cause, if we choose. We donated a terrific £2484 to NGS and the Tea shop made £523. Thanks to so many of our lovely friends and neighbours for coming. If you'd like to join Mike's informal vintage car show next time, get in touch! Alexandraicarrell@gmail.com

Alex and Mike Carrell

BLACK HORSE – MISS JONES

Some of our Brent Pelham community had a wonderful Saturday afternoon on 28th June in The Black Horse's garden, listening to Miss Jones singing songs from



WW11

era. It was a great get together. Thank you, Dawn and Co, for organising it. The food and drinks were great.

Even Kate (Hinch) made it over with one leg in plaster and the other bandaged - well done Kate!



UPCOMING VILLAGE EVENTS

Country Fair - 17th August, see below.

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. Next dates: 19 Aug. 16 Sep. 14 Oct.

HERTS & ESSEX COUNTRY FAIR – THE PARK, BRENT PELHAM SG9 0AT – 17th AUG, GATES OPEN 10:30

This fair provides an entertaining and varied day out for all the family. Heavy Horse classes commence at 10.30 am. The beautiful Heavy Horses will be a

highlight, with a range of classes for these incredible working breeds. The Main Ring starts at 11am.

The Main Ring events will feature The Honourable Artillery Company Light Cavalry demonstration, as well as a variety of displays including falconry, gun dogs, dog behaviour, foxhounds, bassets, beagles and a traditional parade of vintage tractors.

Dogs are welcome at the show. Dogs and their owners will be able to enter the Family Dog Show - there is always a class for every dog and their owner. There will also be a working dog class for those traditional breeds. Also, your dogs' skills can be tested in the Gun Dog Scurry or in the dog obedience competition.

Our commentator will be local Countryman Steve Reynolds of Hamels Park, Buntingford. He will encourage spectators to try traditional games, such as egg throwing and the tug of war challenge. There will be many trade stands and displays, traditional games and a funfair for children. A range of refreshments will be available, including village teas, bar and a food hall area.

This year we are proud to support St Mary the Virgin Church, Brent Pelham, Essex & Herts Air Ambulance, Khandel Light and other local charities. For further details see [The Herts and Essex Country Fair - Home | Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/thehertsandessexcountryfair/)

BRENT PELHAM & MEESDEN PARISH COUNCIL

The Parish Council is looking for a person who lives in Brent Pelham to join the Parish Council. <https://www.brentpelham-meesden-pc.org/>

Our Six Parish Councillors (three from Brent Pelham and three from Meesden) meet just four evenings per year to review issues such as village maintenance, planning applications, highway issues etc. Would you like to join the team? It is a voluntary role, but it does give you the satisfaction of directing the money that the County Council provides for resolving local issues to where it is most needed.

Meetings take place alternately in Brent Pelham and Meesden Village Halls. It is open to any British citizen over the age of 18 and resident in the parish, and you need no specific skills for the position. Access to the internet and email is an advantage, as is a desire to help the community.

Please send an email to clerk@brentpelham-meesden-pc.org if this is of interest to you. Thanks, Ken Newsted.

SOCIAL MEDIA

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

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MEESDEN NEWS

www.brentpelham-meesden-pc.org

Compiled and presented by Mike West

Having just had two heatwaves close together, the prolonged rain earlier in the year seems only a vague memory, or was it even just my hazy imagination! Pond water levels throughout the village are now greatly reduced, and in some cases, (like the pond behind the nature reserve) it's completely absent. The recent very warm weather, however, has induced an almost synchronous appearance of a great number of butterflies, which should support greater numbers of birds like swallows, martins, wrens, sparrows and others, as well as frogs and toads.



Great white butterfly on an orchid and a Gatekeeper on brambles

In the nature reserve, orchids are now past their best, but areas of lady's bedstraw are out in all their glory.



Lady's bedstraw

Historically, the dried plant was used as stuffing material for mattresses, especially used for women about to give birth, as it was believed it would ensure a comfortable and easy delivery (!), hence its name. In the past, it has been used to treat a plethora of medical conditions, but with uncertain efficacy!

Andrew and Elaine (Alma Cottage) write: "Wow! what a heatwave this summer turned out to be. It pleased some but not all, particularly if you had to work. We found it difficult keeping all our potted plants watered and in tip top condition to sell at our gate, but managed to take a good selection to Meesden Hall for their open garden, which was a great success. Our natural ponds are nearly dry, so unless we have rain shortly the wildlife will suffer. We keep our birth baths topped up and put containers around the garden for them. A delight to watch was our sixteen new ducklings, from two mothers, becoming bigger each day. However, while we still had water, we were



treated to an aerial display of swifts swooping down and skimming the water to drink – very magical! Another good sign is the huge amount of ladybird larvae which on becoming ladybirds will eat the greenfly that are on our roses. Nature is such a wonderful thing, and we must do all we can to protect it.

There is still time to buy from a good selection of homegrown plants to fill a gap in your garden or give as a gift. Profits go to our village church and charities.



MEESDEN BARN DANCE

Ken Newsted writes, "Thanks to everyone's incredible support for the Meesden Barn Dance on June 14th; the event was amazing.



It was a sell-out event, with tickets being sold through Eventbrite, and with the help of sponsorship from Stansted airport community fund and Sanctuary Lettings, together with generous raffle prizes from the Blind Fiddler pub and Poppy's Barn Tea Room, the event



made a profit of £1,792.10, which will be shared between the Village Hall and the Church.

The Barn itself was spectacular, thanks to all the preparation work put in by the support team; Andy, Jo, Trevor, Fiona, and the Dimsdale family, who cleared out all the farm equipment and provided the beautiful lighting. The ceilidh band, Dove's Vagaries, provided the music for the event, which got everyone on their feet as soon as they started. The very yummy food was superb, thanks to the catering team Annabel, Cathy and others. The bar staff Justin, Steve, Danielle and Oli did an exceptional job keeping the drinks flowing all evening. Thanks of course also go to everyone that attended and helped make this such a marvellous event."

The weekend after the barn dance, Ashton and Tilly Clanfield held an open gardens at Meesden Hall in which people were welcome to look around their gardens, enjoy refreshments and take the opportunity to buy some of Elaine and Andrew's plants. It was very warm, but by the end of the day £900 had been raised for support of St Mary's Meesden, of which a little under a third came from the plant sales. On behalf of the church, very many thanks to Ashton and Tilly and Elaine and Andrew for their generous support.

Evening light over the fields at Meesden



... an end-of-day benediction on the land.

Surely, we live in a beautiful part of the world!

THURSDAYS @ 3 - 2ND ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION

Thursday at 3, our coffee / tea afternoon, will have been running for 2 years come August, and has met each week, apart from a short break over Christmas. Everyone is welcome, and it's free, so if you're not busy, come along and meet others from the village. We hope to celebrate our 2nd anniversary on **Thursday, August 28th at 3pm** and would like to invite everyone, but particularly anyone who has previously been, even if only once. If you would like to come, please could you email me (mikewest181@hotmail.com), so I can make sure we have sufficient cake!

St Mary's Meesden church services

22 nd July	Benefice Holy Communion 10.00am
10 th August	Family Service 9:30am
24 th August	Service of Light, 5pm

Everyone is most welcome to these services. 😊

PAVLOVA WITH EXOTIC FRUITS

Pavlova meringue can be made a few weeks in advance and the filling added on the day you would like to eat it!

Ingredients

4 egg whites
8oz caster sugar
1 tsp vinegar
1 tsp vanilla essence
2 tsp cornflour
300ml double cream
3 tbsp Malibu liqueur
1-2 slices pineapple
1 medium mango, peeled,
1 papaya, peeled, deseeded, stoned and sliced
1 passion fruit, halved and sliced

Method

1. Preheat oven 130°C, Gas mark 1-2. Line a baking tray with parchment paper and mark out a 23cm (9") circle.
2. Place the egg whites in a bowl using an electric mixer whisk on high for approx. 2-3 mins, until stiff. Add a large spoonful of sugar and whisk on max speed for approx. 2 mins. Continue adding spoonfuls of sugar, whisking after each addition until all the sugar has been added.
3. Using a metal spoon fold in the vinegar, vanilla essence and cornflour until well blended.
4. Spoon onto parchment paper creating a swirled and peaked effect.
5. Bake for 1hr 15 mins. Turn off the oven and leave to cool completely in the oven.
6. Place the pavlova on a plate, discarding the paper. Whisk the double cream and Malibu and spoon into the pavlova, top with fruit and spoon over passion fruit seeds.
7. Keep refrigerated until ready to serve.

Elaine Wyld - Sumptuous Soups and Vintage Cakes

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