

THE ANSTEY, BRENT PELHAM & MEESDEN NEWSLETTER

October - November 2024

Diary of upcoming events

Date	Event
Sun 29 th Sep	Harvest Festival Brent Pelham, 11am followed by a Harvest Lunch in Brent Pelham Village Hall.
Sun 29 th Sep	Harvest Festival at Meesden in Manor Farm Barn, 4pm followed by tea.
Sun 6 th Oct	Harvest Festival at Anstey, 11.30am followed by lunch in Anstey Village Hall.
Tue 15 th Oct	Quiz Night at The Black Horse, Brent Pelham.
Sat 19 th Oct	Quiz Night in aid of Church funds, Anstey Village Hall – 7.00pm for 7.30 start.
Fri 25 th Oct	Anstey 'pop-up' Film & Social Club – doors open 7.30pm, film starts at 8.00.
Sat 26 th Oct	Brent Pelham village clean-up – meet 10.30am at the Village Hall.
Mon 11 th Nov	Anstey Parish Council meeting – 7.30pm in the Village Hall.
Tue 12 th Nov	Quiz Night at The Black Horse, Brent Pelham.
Fri 29 th Nov	Anstey 'pop-up' Film & Social Club – doors open 7.30pm, film starts at 8.00.
Sat 30 th Nov	Brent Pelham Christmas Fair – 11.00am till 3.00pm.

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 an online 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



A group of wandering minstrels, spotted in Anstey Church (see page 4).

DEADLINE FOR THE NEXT EDITION:

SUNDAY 10TH NOVEMBER

GOOD GARDENING

Topical tips and ideas for October and November

Autumn is officially here in all its golden glory. The nights are drawing in and we may soon see the first frost. However, to get your garden into shape for next year, here are a few jobs you can still do on those sunny days.

- ❖ Brighten up shady bits of your garden with spring-flowering, shade-tolerant bulbs. Go for snowdrops for January and February, followed by anemone blanda 'White Splendour' and narcissi (such as the native 'N. Pseudonarcissis') for March and April, finishing with English bluebells for April and May.
- ❖ Prune tall summer-flowering shrubs, such as buddleia, to about half their height in order to prevent damage by winter winds and to tidy their appearance.
- ❖ Cover any productive salad plants with cloches to protect them from frosts. If your greenhouse is empty, plant up some winter salad and rocket for an early spring harvest to make good use of the space.
- ❖ Apply glue bands or grease bands to the trunks of fruit trees, to prevent wingless female winter moths climbing the trunks and laying their eggs in the branches.
- ❖ Plant the last of your autumn bulbs, e.g. tulips. Best to plant these late October, early November. Don't forget to put some in pots as well as in the garden.

Here are two plant ideas to add to your garden in October and November:

Liriope muscari

An autumn flowering evergreen that looks good planted beneath trees and shrubs. It has spires of purple flowers from August to November. It will thrive in light shade and well-drained soil. Height 30cms, spread 45cms. Divide after flowering in spring.



Euphorbia x pasteurii.



The leaves on this plant are evergreen but will become tinged with red in autumn. Honey-scented summer flowers are a bonus. Grow in full sun, in well-drained soil. Height and spread 1.5m. Drought resistant.

NOTE- wear gloves when pruning as the milky sap can irritate the skin.

I recently went on a morning's course at Mentley Lavender Farm, to make a willow plant support for the garden. The tutor, Judi, runs a variety of courses locally, ranging from baskets to different plant supports. Her contact details are judi.evans.baskets@gmail.com. If you contact her she can tell you all about the courses she runs. Perhaps an idea for a Christmas gift for the keen gardener?

Happy gardening, Wendy Hillier.

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"Brian and Wendy are into synchronised strimming"

Sorry, I just couldn't resist it – Ed.
(with acknowledgements – Private Eye)

INTRODUCING OUR NEW MP



Hello, I am Chris Hinchliff MP, the recently elected Labour MP for the North East Herts Constituency, and this is a brief article to introduce myself.

It has been a busy few months during the election campaign, and more recently as a new MP.

During the election campaign I visited every parish in the constituency, including Anstey, Brent Pelham and Meesden, and I may have already met some of you.

I do understand the problems faced by rural areas, and the problems people face in their everyday lives. I worked for the Campaign for Rural England (CPRE) for over 4 years, and was Campaign Manager for the last two. I have been a Councillor for North Herts District Council for the last two years, representing Royston Palace ward.

I am very keen to engage with all my constituents across North East Herts, and to find out what concerns you have for our area and our future. I am still in the process of setting up my office team, therefore I do not have the full details of my surgeries across the constituency. However, I will ensure they are well publicised, including here in this newsletter.

I hope to write more about my priorities as your MP over the next few months and beyond. I will also give updates on my work as your local MP over the coming year.

I cannot finish without thanking Sir Oliver Heald for his dedicated service to our constituency for over 32 years.

My email is: chris.hinchliff.mp@parliament.uk

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.

John Hamilton

BRIDGE CLUB

For those who love bridge in all our villages in the area!

Bridge Club in The Blind Fiddler is now up and running, every Thursday at 2pm. Our hosts, Barry and Emma, very generously allow us to set up in the restaurant area, and we generally play for two hours. Tea and biscuits are provided, and there is a sub of £2 a session.

We know there are plenty of players around, and it's fun to get together once a week. *It is only as competitive as you want it to be!* If you would like to know more, ring Jan Pledger on 01763 848242, Patricia Hamilton on 01763 848536 or Chris Crookes on 01279 777345. We look forward to seeing you!

HARVEST NEWS – from Rev James Sawyer

The tradition I inherited was for there to be a celebration of harvest in each of the five churches in the benefice, all representing a different group of farms. I love how we also have the tradition of the harvest report from a local farmer, where we can learn so much about the challenges of food production and the joys of nature through the past year. For readers of this Newsletter, the festivals are as follows:

- Sunday 29th September - Harvest Festival at Brent Pelham, 11am followed by a Harvest Lunch in Brent Pelham Village Hall. Lunch tickets £10.
- Sunday 29th September - Harvest Festival at Meesden in Manor Farm Barn, 4pm followed by tea.
- Sunday 6th October - Harvest Festival at Anstey, 11.30am followed by lunch in Anstey Village Hall.

At all of our services we'll be collecting for the Bishop's Harvest appeal, which this year supports **Thrive: Nutrition and Sustainable Agriculture in Sri Lanka**. In partnership with The Leprosy Mission, the goal is to support a project in Sri Lanka which provides those affected by leprosy with the means to grow their own food and raise their standard of living. We will also be collecting tinned and dry produce for the local food bank and our own Parish Pantry facility in each church, for anyone who might need a little extra food to tide them over.

More information, plus all editions of Church News, can be found online at www.quintetchurches.com

ANSTEY NEWS

www.ansteyvillage.co.uk

FUNDRAISING FOLK CONCERT

There were some 50+ people at the folk concert at Anstey Church on Saturday 7th Sep. We were treated to a wonderful evening of fantastic acoustic music,



written and performed by very talented musicians – some of whom are pictured here. The lyrics for the songs

started at Paddington station and reached as far as Nepal, and the music was truly beautiful to listen to. Thanks especially go to Alison Cossor for inviting the musicians, and to everyone else who helped bring the evening together for our entertainment. Bravi!

Ann Grimsdale

QUIZ NIGHT - ANSTEY VILLAGE HALL

There will be a Quiz Night in Anstey Village Hall on October 19th, raising funds for Anstey Church. Edward Burton will be our Quiz master, with his customary mix of questions on all sorts of topics! Tickets are £10 per person, to include a ploughman's supper. If you would like to book a table (teams of up to 8 people), do email Ann Grimsdale agrimsdale@btinternet.com. Jenny Goymour goymour@hotmail.com. or Ali Cossor alicossor@gmail.co.

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 9.45 – 10.45 am £5

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)

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ANSTEY 'POP-UP' FILM & SOCIAL CLUB

On Friday 6th September we showed 'The Anatomy of a Fall,' which received an Oscar in 2023 for the Best Original Screenplay. Our next two films will be shown on Oct 25th and Nov 29th. All members should receive an email in advance, with full details of the films to be shown - please check your Junk / Spam folder if you can't seem to find it!

Membership is still just £12 per year (I know!), and allows free entry to up to 9 films. New members can always join on the night, or contact colingsmith@gmail.com in advance. Guests are welcome, £3 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 23rd Sep (rescheduled due to illness) can be found on the village website at www.ansteyvillage.co.uk. The next meeting of the Parish Council will be on Mon 11th Nov at 7.30 pm. All parishioners are welcome to attend.

Andrew Marchant - Chair

WELCOME!

A warm welcome to David and Caroline Metcalf, who have moved into Northey Lodge. We wish you many years of happiness in the village.

SOCIAL MEDIA

Ansteylink email group - ansteylink@gaggle.email
(please note new email address)

AnsteyLink 'connects local residents to share local information, list items for sale, free or loan, recommend local businesses, services and events, and anything else that may be useful to contact local residents about.' The group is managed by Sarah Cruise – cruise.s@icloud.com

Facebook: Anstey and Meesden Community Group is 'a community group for residents of Anstey and Meesden to share thoughts and a place for local businesses to advertise.' The administrator is Gemma Jacobs.

ANSTEY 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**.

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.

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CAN BE AT ANSTEY**

NEWS FROM ANSTEY CHAPEL – Penny Wylie

At the end of September we said a fond farewell to Ian and Lynn Marie Palmer at our September 22nd service, followed by a farewell lunch. Ian has been pastor at Anstey Chapel since November 2016, and his and Lynn Marie's commitment and dedication have been so much appreciated over this time. Ian has forged close links with Anstey School during his time here, and also with the Buntingford Food Bank.

Although Ian and Lynn Marie have now moved on, we will be continuing to worship at the chapel. We welcome all villagers in Anstey and the surrounding villages to join us for our Sunday worship, and/or come to our 'Chapel, Cakes and Coffee' on Wednesday mornings, once a month – next dates Wed 2nd Oct and Wed 13th Nov (both 10.30am).

Services are held on the 1st, 2nd and 4th Sundays of each month at 10.30am.

Chapel contacts are Stephen Wylie (Tel 07979 537689) and David Tweedale (Tel 07970963666)

NB a longer version of this article is available with the emailed edition of the Newsletter.

BRENT PELHAM NEWS

www.brentpelham-meesden-pc.org

Compiled and presented by Shirley Lacy

VILLAGE PICNIC, 21st July

Many thanks to James, Ted and Lizzy for organizing the Village Picnic in the meadow behind Beeches, and to everyone who came. It was wonderful to meet up (dogs too), with games, and it was great fun for all.



The tea tent was, as always, very popular and we made a record breaking profit this year. We would therefore like to thank all those who baked the wonderful cakes and pastries for us to sell on the day; and to thank those who gave up their time to make it so successful.

BRENT PELHAM TEA TENT, 18th August

The Herts & Essex Country fair was as busy as it has ever been.



The money raised at this event will go towards the updating of the equipment for the village hall and the general running expenses. A huge thank you goes out to all who supported the tea tent. We look forward to seeing you again next year.



The Village Hall Committee.

FURNEUX PELHAM SCHOOL LOG PLAY AREA

Many thanks to Major Barclay for donating sections of the large trunk and branches of a big tree from outside the village hall. With the children's help, the play area has been restocked and reimagined to make a fantastic area for play, exploration and imagination using natural materials. Please visit <https://www.furneuxp.herts.sch.uk/> or come and visit to see us in action!

BLACK HORSE

Emily White sold freshly baked sourdough bread and bakes in the pub garden on 7 September. It was a great success. Watch out for future dates.

The Black Horse is launching a new autumn menu for October. The most popular dishes remain and there are some exciting new additions, including a whole baked lemon sole with mouth-watering sides and dressing. The upper dining area has been refurbished and is now an elegant and more intimate place to dine. Changes are being made to the Saturday opening hours and the kitchen will no longer close in the afternoon, meaning that there will be a selection of menu choices offered throughout the day!

The team looks forward to sharing all of the exciting changes with you and to offering a warm and cosy atmosphere as the darker evenings start to draw in!

UPCOMING VILLAGE EVENTS

Black Horse pub quiz

The quiz offers a fun brain workout and a first prize of £50 every month. Booking is advisable, as it is a popular night. Next dates: Tuesday September 17, Tuesday October 15 and Tuesday November 12.

Sunday Sept. 29th Harvest Festival and lunch

A great chance to meet up with friends, family and neighbours for lunch and drinks. Please let Jackie Pitt know how many tickets you would like.



SATURDAY 26TH OCTOBER 2024 VILLAGE CLEAN UP

Meet at the village hall at 10:30am to tidy up the churchyard, the war memorial and outside the village hall. Followed by coffee and cakes for volunteers.

SATURDAY NOVEMBER 30TH CHRISTMAS FAIR



Do plan to visit the Brent Pelham Christmas Fair on Saturday 30th November (11am - 3pm) for 30 stalls of home-made, locally produced items including jewellery, Christmas decorations, sheepskin and wood- turned items, bags and jumpers, candles and honey, red hot chilli sauces and original gifts for all ages

SOCIAL MEDIA

The Brent Pelham community WhatsApp group (Village People) is administered by James (07904 019572) and Miro (07812 174646).

To join the Brent Pelham birds WhatsApp group, message Dave Bromage on 07545 252191.

To add/change your name to the village email distribution list, send a blank email to frasermurray@me.com with your name and address in the header.

Facebook pages: **The Pelhams** or **Brent Pelham Village Community Group**.

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MEESDEN NEWS

www.brentpelham-meesden-pc.org

Compiled and presented by Mike West

At last, we've had some warm weather, heralding a summer that we thought was never coming! The fields turned yellow, then golden, and were duly harvested. Now, many have been ploughed and tilled, exposing a carpet of brown earth. The yearly cycle progresses and is a delight to watch, made easier for us than for those in towns and cities by the immediacy of the countryside around us. Somehow the changes in the fields and hedgerows seem to epitomise the journey of our own lives.

The Nature Reserve also reflects the changing seasons, with a great display of flowers and berries. In particular, there is a magnificent area of devil's bit



scabious, alive with bees and butterflies. This curious name derives from its truncated roots which look as though they

have been bitten off. Folklore has it that the devil, annoyed with the medicinal properties of the plant (it was used for treating skin conditions), bit off its roots, but this clearly did not stop it flourishing!



Devil's bit scabious

There is an abundance of hawthorn berries and blackberries, the latter being both large and tasty,



probably due to the very wet spring and early summer.

Meadow crane's-bill, common fleabane, wild mint and ragwort are amongst the other flowers there at the moment, though the ragwort is past its best. Common fleabane was so named because it was erroneously thought that its smell repels fleas and other insects. Though lacking efficacy as an insect deterrent, it has, however, been used as a 'traditional medicine' in times past to treat fevers, coughs, rheumatism, diarrhoea and dysentery, and as a poultice, for treatment of wounds and burns. Sounds like a panacea for all ills (!), but one should probably hesitate before proceeding with self-medication!



Meadow crane's-bill



Common fleabane

Sticking with a botanical theme, Elaine and Andrew McNeil of Alma Cottage write:

"We were once again pleased to support Anstey fair at their new venue in July. With the help of friends, we managed to transport multiples of 30 different plants and arrange them under and around a gazebo that our neighbour kindly lent us.



We had such a jolly, social day, and managed to talk to friends we had not seen in a while. Thank-you to everyone who bought our home-grown plants and

as a result we were able to donate a few more hundreds of pounds to St Mary's Church, Meesden."

On behalf of the church community; Thank you so much Elaine and Andrew – a great effort!

ASH TREES IN THE VILLAGE

Probably everyone has noticed the serious condition of many of the ash trees. Several are completely dead, and many are very unhealthy, with only a sparsity of

leaves near their tops. Presumably, this is caused by Ash die-back, and unfortunately there is nothing much we can do about it, but over the next 5 years of so, we will lose many of them.

HARVEST: NOW AND THEN

Wilfrid Dimsdale reflects on how farming has changed over the years:

“The cutter bar of the gigantic combine starting work in a field of wheat is the start of a simple process ending in the crop arriving at its final destination, either boat or manufacturing facility, in good condition.

Fifty years ago, on a really good day, one could harvest 30 to 40 acres a day; twenty years before that, 20 acres; and 20 years before that even less. Labour 80 years ago: two hundredweight sacks stacked three high. Today, huge amounts thrown into the store, kept in good condition to be taken out up to eight months later.

Labour then: one to drive the binder, feed the horses, put the sheaves into stooks, load onto carts, make the stack, take out of the stack for thrashing, hire the thrashing drum, put the grain into sacks, store in a dry shed and then transport in the sacks to the eventual buyer - and of course, control rats and mice.

There was an exhibition at Nottingham University called Toil and Plenty which portrayed happy, fit young men and women working in the fields. At the end, photographs of the reality, bent and weary farm workers whose lives had been unremitting toil and not much in the way of plenty.”

WELCOME TO BILL AND THERESA BARTLET

With modifications to ‘Farthings’ virtually complete, Bill and Theresa and their little dog ‘Spud’ have now moved in. It has taken a lot of effort over many months, but the house looks fantastic! We hope you will be very happy being part of the Meesden village community.

A PLEA TO DOG OWNERS

Generally, dog owners in the village have been careful to clear up after their pets, but there have been occasions where dog poo has been missed. Recently, one of our residents inadvertently stepped in some on the village green and, unaware of this, then spread it inside the house, which was... unpleasant! Please

could all of us who own dogs remove any poo from places where people are likely to walk – it would be greatly appreciated.

THIRD GENERATION JOINS THE MEESDEN CHURCH TEAM!!

Lucy Hughes, baptised at Meesden twelve years ago, has joined the team to help keep Meesden Church sparkling! Her father was baptised here, and grandad was church warden for some 24 years. So super to have her generation willing and able to help in looking after this special family church.



VILLAGE HALL ENERGY USE

Ken Newstead has been informed by Octopus energy that their payment for imported electricity from the hall solar panels is to be reduced to 8p/kWh, which will have a significant effect on our running costs.

As mentioned in a previous newsletter, our total electricity cost last year was only £47! Unfortunately, it will be a lot higher this year, given that we pay for imported electricity at 25p/kWh, 3x what we are paid for electricity we generate!!

SERVICES AT ST MARY’S MEESDEN

September 29th Harvest Festival, 4.00pm in Annabel and Andy’s barn, followed by tea in the village hall.

October 13th and **November 10th** (Remembrance Sunday) 9:30am, Holy Communion

October 27th 5:00pm, Service of Light.

November 24th 5:00pm, Service of Healing and Wholeness.

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COOKERY CORNER

CHERRY CLAFOUTIS

This is a Swiss recipe, and most cherry trees in Switzerland are usually part of a mixed arable farm. A good proportion of cherries will be used to make Kirsch.

Ingredients

400g fresh cherries (pitted)
8 tbsp. Kirsch
300g brioche or white bread
(roughly 12 thick slices)
300ml milk
8 medium eggs
60g chopped almonds
60g chopped hazelnuts
60g caster sugar
1 level tsp ground cinnamon
40g flaked almonds
60g demerara sugar
Large knob of butter

Method

1. Soak the cherries in Kirsch overnight.
2. Grease a large baking dish and preheat oven to 180°C (gas mark 4). Leaving the crusts on the bread, cut into cubes approx. 2cm in size and place in a large bowl.
3. Put milk into a small pan and warm over low heat, then pour evenly over the cubed bread.
4. Beat the eggs together and add the almonds, hazelnuts, caster sugar, cinnamon, cherries with liquor and moistened bread. Mix together well and pour into the baking dish.
5. Sprinkle the top with the flaked almonds and demerara sugar, then dot the surface with butter.
6. Place in oven for approx. 30 mins, until nicely browned on the top.
7. Serve with pouring cream or crème fraîche.

ELAINE WYLD - Sumptuous Soups and Vintage Cakes
Tel: 01763 289 738 / m. 07501 495 940

Facebook – Sumptuous Soups and Vintage Cakes



Yew Tree Alpacas, Anstey

Early Bird Christmas Shop & Yew Tree café

Saturday 26th October

open from

10.30am - 4.30pm

Start your Christmas Present shopping with us!

- Alpaca socks – for all wearing occasions
- Locally hand knitted gloves, hats and scarves
- Alpaca yarns & knitting kits
- Alpaca gifts
- Alpaca Cuddly toys
- Stationery & home wares
- Alpaca pillows
- Home-made marmalades & chutneys

*Relax and enjoy coffee & home made cakes
whilst watching our alpaca mums & cria grazing*

10% off all alpaca goods on the day (excl pillows)*

For further info see our website or call.
www.yewtreealpacas.co.uk or call 01763 848257



Yew Tree Alpacas, Yew Tree Cottage, Anstey SG90DA
(on the road to Brent Pelham)
*At the shop, in person only

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**COPY DEADLINE FOR THE NEXT EDITION
(DEC 24 – JAN 25)**

SUNDAY 10TH NOVEMBER

ANSTEY CHAPEL NEWS

At the end of September we said a fond farewell to Ian and Lynn Marie Palmer at our September 22nd service, followed by a farewell lunch. Ian has been pastor at Anstey Chapel since November 2016, and his and Lynn Marie's commitment and dedication have been so much appreciated over this time. Ian has forged close links with Anstey School during this time, and also with the Buntingford Food Bank.

Anstey Chapel was originally built in 1902 (although worship prior to this had been in a wooden building adjacent to Little Thatch on Cheapside), and over the past 122 years it has been a beacon of Christian worship for those in Anstey and the surrounding villages.



Although Ian and Lynn Marie have now moved on, we will be continuing to worship at the chapel. We welcome all villagers in Anstey and the surrounding villages to join us for our Sunday worship, and/or come to our 'Chapel, Cakes and Coffee' on Wednesdays, once a month.

Services are held on the 1st, 2nd and 4th Sundays of each month at 10.30am - we miss the 3rd Sunday as this is the 11am St George's service, also in Anstey.

Do join us for our 'Chapel Cakes and Coffee' once a month. A great chance to chat, make new friends and enjoy home-made cakes and coffee/tea (no charge) in a lovely, peaceful environment. All ages welcome. Dates up to Christmas:

- Wed 2nd October from 10.30am
- Wed 13th November from 10.30am
- Wed 11th December from 10.30am

All very welcome to both services and coffee, ages 1 month upwards!

Watch out for our Christmas Service(s) in the next Newsletter

Chapel contacts are Stephen Wylie (Tel 07979 537689) & David Tweedale (Tel 07970963666)