

Great Gaddesden Parish Newsletter

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Delivered to the villages of Great Gaddesden and Gaddesden Row and the hamlets of Bridens Camp, Water End, Noake Mill and St Margarets

www.greatgaddesdenparishnews.co.uk

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November 2024

From the Glamorous Assistant

Happy November everyone.

Did a victim of the wars live close to your house? Or even in your house?

We've done quite a bit of research on the fallen listed on the church memorial. Instead of reminding you of how and where they died, we've shown where they lived and their family. You will recognise some of the family names as still living in the area. Pinning it down to individual homes was difficult, but we have managed to find a few. My friend John Hill in Water End lives in number 6. This used to be number 7 as well and the home of victims in WW1 and WW2. The old workers cottages in GRow also feature quite a bit. WW1 research found people living in "The Barracks" in Great Gaddesden, possibly Water End. Any ideas where that is?

Good news. I won the church 100 club. To celebrate, I went on a long weekend to Sicily and managed to capture a gorgeous photo of the sunset behind Etna. So I thought I'd show you. Why? Because I can. Don't forget, you can too. We're happy to receive your photos, stories and letters. As long as they are fun, we'll stick them in. I was chatting with one of the contributors the other day who said she had been taking advice from some nerds on the subject. I explained that I wish I was a nerd at something. It struck me that most of our contributors are nerds or geeks and it's not a bad thing. If you have a speciality and want to share it, please do. I call Richard a computer geek. Not that he's clever at the subject, it's just that he needs to be poked every 15 minutes or he goes to sleep. Just kidding.

More good news is that the Tesco blue disc is progressing. Sadly, we are getting a kicking from a kids football team. I'm sure the coach is doing training sessions and getting the kids to run back and forth dropping a handful of discs in each time. See page 9.



The Red lion discount is still available for our readers. Check out page 10 for details. Not to be outdone, the lovely Martin is offering a discount in the Crown and Sceptre too. Page 32 for details

Live music. I do love live music. You can't go wrong. Even if it's karaoke standard, it's fun. The Church Concerts never fail to please. Check out page 38 for the next event. I went to a Blondie tribute band recently. Obviously, the audience were mainly of a certain age who remember the Atomic performer. At one point Blondie invited everyone to pogo dance like they did back in the day. Oh goodness. I was dreading hips being put out and replaced knees causing folk to fall over like the Coldstream Guards in a heat wave. Then I remembered that I was in Berko and BUPA probably provided the required joints and I need not worry.

Bad news. We made a few mistakes last month which I won't go into as I can't think of any excuse and I'm a bit embarrassed. Don't forget, we're two blokes in a shed. More Vague, than Vogue. Apologies for the folk we upset.

*Stay Great Gaddesden
John Lowrie*

Dear Friends,

The month of January is so named after the Roman god Janus, possessor of two faces: one looking back and the other forward. Janus was the god of beginnings and transitions and of course marks the turning of the year. Yet November is also very much a month of endings and transitions, because by the end of the month, our attention will have turned towards Christmas.

I don't know about you, but this time of year when Autumn is fading, but it's not quite winter, is the time I become aware of red poppies appearing on tv news presenter's lapels, well before I have started even to think about Remembrance. Also, programmes recorded at this time of year, are forever marked by those poppies frozen in time. For many, Remembrance means the 11th November and perhaps the nearest Sunday to the 11th, with the 2 minutes of silence, as we remember the war dead of all wars.

In the church however, the beginning of the month before Remembrance Sunday, is a very special time, as we invite all those who mourn the death of a friend or family member, to gather to remember them at the All Souls service. By the end of the month, we have reached the end of the church's year, so November for the church, is a bit like January, as it marks the ending and the beginning of the church year.

Whilst we give thanks for our own freedom through the sacrifice of others in the last century, it is also important to pray for peace now; because if we don't, then our remembrance is in vain. At the present time, our world is much affected by wars; in Ukraine, which is in danger of becoming

the forgotten war, as well as the escalating war in the Middle East. There are also the largely hidden wars in Sudan, Ethiopia and Myanmar, as well, various forms of civil war in Haiti, Honduras and Salvador.

But for what can we pray? How can we make our prayers meaningful and effective? I find this one of the hardest things, because we pray in faith, but can we expect God to just stop all wars?

How can that be, when we have freewill and because of the way creation works, change of attitude has to come from within ourselves?

The Litany in the Book of Common Prayer, said or sung in some churches during Lent, has a phrase about asking God to **turn hearts.**



That it may please thee to forgive our enemies, persecutors, and slanderers, and to turn their hearts,

We beseech thee to hear us, good Lord.

Even though that clause doesn't directly form my prayer, I do pray that the hearts of those set on violence, bloodshed and the destruction of life and property, who wish to instil fear into the hearts of the vulnerable and innocent, to destroy and dominate, whether leaders of nations, or those fighting, that they may have their hearts turned.

I wonder what your prayer might be this November as you look back and forward.

I am yours in Christ,

John.

Great Gaddesden

Parish Church Contacts

Our parishes have a Prayer Group and if you would like to be prayed for or know of someone who would appreciate a pastoral visit, please contact any of the Ministry Team:

Rev. John Russell (Vicar) 01442 214898

St. Johns 's Vicarage, Pipers Hill, Great Gaddesden HP1 3BY john_russell@live.co.uk

Associate Priest: Rev'd Miranda Seldon 07761 165871
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jo@mpconnell.co.uk

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01442 256556

peter_king@btinternet.com

100+ Club

Congratulations to John Lowrie winner of October draw with his no. 88

Join
RICHARD & John

Come and murder a pint while discussing the mysteries of the world at the Crown & Sceptre first Thursday of the month
7th November 8pm
- ITS JUST A DRINK!

The Thursday
MURDER
Club

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Gaddesden Row Church

I have long had ambivalence towards Remembrance Day/Sundays.

It is not that I don't respect those who died in wars, and those who lived with what they had seen and done. Maybe it is that I am a generation or two beyond WW2 (my parents born as the war ended). I can recognise the place of celebration when war ended, but that was not a personal experience. For me the two world wars were part of my history classes (and as I age find that what I lived though is now history to the children of 2024!). I want to honour the dead and the veterans; but sometimes the litany we have inherited feels like celebration of victory – singing 'I vow to thee my country' or 'O valiant heart'. And yes I am grateful that the Nazi regime was defeated, that so many people died to ensure this, and yet in school we covered the Wilfred Owen poem 'Dulce et decorum est, pro patria mori'. This WW1 poem about the horrors of trench warfare and the lie of the old Latin myth that roughly translated as 'it is sweet and right to die for one's country'.



War begins with leaders – and ends with the slaughter of the general populace. WW1 impacted every village and town in UK; WW2 likewise – if not guilted into signing up, conscription followed. And what of the armies they fought? How many young men of Germany, Italy, Japan were also conscripted. Cannon fodder they call them.

And now in 2024 – I write this as the world marks a year since Hamas attacked Israel, killing and taking hostage ordinary people. Then in the Israeli defence it is the ordinary Palestinians that are suffering. And with new acts of war between Israel and Hezbollah in Lebanon threatening to extend the conflict. All terrorism is wrong; all communities have a right to defend themselves – and yet.... When defence attacks the innocent then it acts as a recruiter for the next generation of terrorist. And those terrorists provoke more fight backs. The cycle of hate and fear goes on. Does this mean that a place like The Ukraine should just roll over in the face of the expansionist policies of Putin? No, I don't think that appeasement helps.

So, I come back around to where I started, confused feelings about this season – remembering the fallen; remembering the horrors they and those who returned faced is an important part of recalling the damage that war does. Yet there are times that it may be the only response left to tackle dictatorships. But still, my vow is not to my country; I grieve the ordinary people dragged into the politics of the powerful and forced to suffer; and see the cycle of hate and violence being passed into the next generation, again and again.

So yes I will stand and remember those who 'For your tomorrow, we gave our today'. But alongside the red poppy of blood shed, I will wear the white poppy that is a plea for finding other ways, and the need to break cycles of violence.

Rev Helen Roberts
Methodist minister
Revhelen2015@gmail.com

Tower Report

Autumn is such a beautiful time of year with all the ever-changing colours of foliage, and although the wet weather restricts outdoor activities, I love walking the wonderful fields and woods around us, and am constantly struck by the changing beauty of our environment and the kaleidoscope of Autumn colours everywhere.

Everyone in Great Gaddesden tower was delighted to receive an invitation to join Jonathan Humbert and the ringers at St Alban's Abbey on the 27th September when they opened up their Tuesday practice night to us. Climbing the 211 steps at night, walking along the very narrow walkways to the tower and looking down into the nave and the rose window was exhilarating. We numbered 26 including the St Albans ringers, ringers from Flamstead and ourselves, but we fitted very easily in the large and very impressive ringing chamber, with its ancient beams, old peal boards and wonderful atmosphere.

In 2010 the Abbey bells were replaced as the old bells had deteriorated over the years, they were no longer in tune and were difficult to ring and the bell frame needed extensive work. So a massive restoration project was undertaken and the new ring of 13 bells was installed on 2 levels at the top of the tower. The new

bells were 'out of bounds' to us, but we did go up to the bell chamber where 8 of the old bells are in a new steel frame and now provide static chime bells for both the carillon and the clock.

We all enjoyed ringing the new bells, it was the first experience of ringing on 12 for some of us Great Gaddesden ringers and a rare treat for others and we were warmly hosted by the St Albans band, who also treated us to splendid party night nibbles afterwards!!

Having missed out on a lot of ringing over the summer, I now find that my brain and my body are not synchronising in the way they did!! - and this is definitely affecting my bell-ringing. As with any sport or exercise activity, or playing an instrument of any kind - frequent repetition and practice improves the memory, accuracy and ultimate enjoyment of the experience. Bell ringing is no different - the muscles need to be in reasonable shape to have the strength and control to move the bells as needed, the brain needs to be engaged (methods have to be memorised as you can't read a written plan while you are



Walkway to Tower



View westward from the walkway



Lower level of the new bells



Is it

...a rabble of ringers? ...a ragbag of ringers? ...a roost of ringers?
Feel free to invent your own !!

moving several cwt of bell metal around!), concentration is essential to be aware of where and what each member of the band is doing, in order to be able to respond to the conductor's instructions immediately and appropriately

I realise that when you ring regularly, you take most of these skills for granted. But

after even a short space of time, they become a bit rusty, and I clearly need to polish up my skills and my ringing

.... My Autumn Resolution!

Sue Collyer



We are approaching the time when the nights drawing in and the skies light up with firework displays which lots of us love watching. Halloween, the 5th of November and of course New Year's Eve are occasions to celebrate and have lots of fun. But, do you know who invented fireworks and when?

Yes, fireworks originate from China. In around 600-900 AD a Chinese alchemist mixed potassium nitrate, sulphur and charcoal to create gunpowder. Gunpowder as we know was used for the Gunpowder Plot to blowup the Houses of Parliament.

In the second century B.C. the Chinese poured the mixture into bamboo sticks or paper tubes and created the first man-made fireworks. In China it was believed that natural firecrackers would ward off evil spirits.

Below you will find some information about the history of fireworks :

In the Song dynasty fireworks were used at many festivities and were available for purchase from market vendors all over China.

In Europe fireworks were produced by the 14th century, but only became popular in the 17th century.

In the United Kingdom we have the first documentation of fireworks being used at the wedding of King Henry VII and Elizabeth of York in 1486, the marriage marked the union the Yorkist and Lancastrian families, bringing peace after



years of dynastic war, a suitable occasion for a pyrotechnic party.

Although fireworks were probably used in the UK from the late 13th century they didn't become popular until at least 200 years later when Queen Elizabeth I reigned. The Queen created the highly respected position of the Royal Fire Master. The Bard also loved fireworks and referred to fireworks in some of his plays. For example Shakespeare refers to fireworks in ' Lover's Labours Lost '.

We use the expression "damp squib" to describe a disappointing event which is not as exciting or impressive as expected but a squib is literally a miniature explosive device. The largest ever firework display consisted of 810,904 fireworks. The display took place in the Philippines in 2016 and lasted for 1 hour, 1 minute and 32.35 seconds but sadly it poured with rain the whole way through.

So when it is time for you to enjoy an explosive evening wrap up warm, buckle up but where ever you are please spare a thought for our wildlife, thanks.

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We told you last month of the fantastic news that Tesco are helping us out with their blue disc scheme. Basically, as you leave the shop you can pick up a blue disc and place it in your favourite charity box and then at the end, Tesco count it all up and give cash to the relevant group. The group that come top with the most discs gets £1,500, second £1,000 and third £500.

We're up against a youth football team from Hemel and a pre school. Thank goodness there are no kittens or puppies to compete against! The footy team is quite a big club with lots of kids

involved and to be honest, they are winning at the moment. So we need ALL our lovely readers to grab a disc and put it in our box at Tesco. **Every little disc helps!** (See what I did there)

We DO need the support/cash 😊

Along with Jarman Park there are Tesco Express stores at :-

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- Barnacres HP3 8AP

But unfortunately **not** Berkhamsted as it's in a different region.

St. John the Baptist, Great Gaddesden 100 Club

Thank you for supporting the 100 Club in 2024

Your support for the 100 Club in 2024 has been invaluable. For the first time we sold more than 100 tickets, and many winners donated their winnings straight back to the fund enabling us to raise well in excess of £1000 towards the regular upkeep of the church.

Will you continue to help us in 2025?

The **subscription for one ticket**, to be entered in the 12 monthly draws from January to December 2025, **costs £15**

There is one cash prize of **£35** to be won every month and the **first draw in the 2025 season** will be at the **beginning of January 2025**

If you would like to help us raise money in this way please use the form below

**St. John the Baptist, Great Gaddesden
100 Club**

I would like to buy.....ticket/s (€15 per ticket)

Name.....

Address.....

Tel:..... email:

I enclose cash/cheque for €.....

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OR

I have made a Bank Transfer for €..... Please use the reference '100 Club'

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Birthdays in November and

We try to keep an up to date list of birthdays.

If anyone wants to add names to our list or knows of people who have moved away and could perhaps have their names removed please contact The Editor.

richard@richardcollis.com

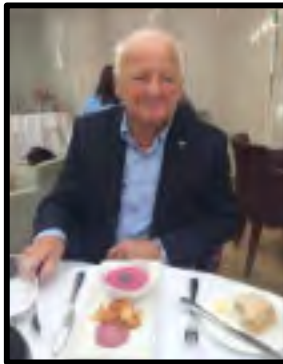
Names are normally removed when the person becomes 18, but we can include 'special' birthdays for any age.

November

Primrose Gerrad	8 th	5
Dexter Johnson	15 th	14
George Lenaghan	16 th	8
Hannah Bennett	20 th	17
Ollie Allsopp	25 th	16

December

Jack Green	16 th	17
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Heartfelt thanks for the many messages of condolence.

It is difficult to come to terms with, but we are feeling the love of all who knew him.

Gloria, Melania & Viktoria Kish

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Gaddesden Row
JMI School

Gaddesden Row JMI School

A busy first half term has almost ended at Gaddesden Row. The final week we celebrated Black History Week. The theme this year is

'Exploring Narratives' and the children have been looking at different texts to support their writing and discussion. The whole-class text used was 'Granny came here on the Empire Windrush' written by Patrice Lawrence and Camilla Sucre.

We arranged for the Cats Protection League to visit the school to raise awareness for this important charity and for the volunteers to talk to each class about the work they do. The children asked lots of interesting questions to find out more.

We were blessed with some sunny days this half term, allowing our PE sessions so host Hockey games outside.



The children in Reception and Year 1 have been treated to a tea party as the children have been reading the book 'The Tiger That Came To Tea.' First, we had a drink. Next, we had pizza and some crisps. Then, we had a cake. The children wrote a recount of their fabulous afternoon.

Our PTA organised a Halloween film club, where the children stayed after school to watch a film with their friends, have snacks, and a fabulous time was had by all.

On Wednesday 23rd of October, the children in Years 4,5 and 6 were invited to come into school dressed as 'Frozen



Characters.' The purpose of this was to bring the Frozen topic to life. Over the course of the day, the children created frozen landscape art, made food used in the book, and explored frozen terrains across the world.

As we head into November, it is a time to remember our heroes, past and present, in the forces. On Monday the 11th of November, each class will hold a special assembly at 11.00 to mark the 11th hour, of the 11th day, of the 11th month. The children will reflect and remember the people that gave their today, so we could have our tomorrow. Poppies will be available every day for the children to purchase.

The children in Reception and Year 1 will begin their nativity rehearsals after half term - watch this space!

Applications are now open for new reception children in September 2025 and we welcome visits to our wonderful school. Please contact the school directly on 01582 840376 or email at admin@gaddesdenrow.herts.sch.uk to arrange a visit. We are pleased to offer one-to-one school visits so that we can fully answer all your questions. We look forward to seeing you!

Miriam Barrow
Governor at Gaddesden Row JMI



Great Gaddesden C of E (V.A.) Nursery + Primary School

As we head into Half Term week (at time of going to print) bridging October to November, it's time for our latest update, and it has been a busy month full of events.



Over October, the school has been welcoming families looking for a Reception school place for September 2025. Visiting parents have commented on the behaviour, warm and calm environment of our pupils, and the fantastic surroundings we have around our school.

For parents or those with friends and family looking for a school place, please do get in touch, and you can find more details on our site.

The start of October saw our first EYFS Forest School, crafting creatures from conkers, constructing a Forest School circus out of tarps and exploring activities our natural environment. We've also started a new project to bring natural resources inside the classroom, building boxes of treasures captured from Forest School and other donations from nature.

Mid-October also saw Vision Day exhibition followed by Harvest Service. Our pupils' expression of Vision Day was exhibited at St John's Church—thank you to everyone who joined us.



Harvest is our opportunity for thankfulness, and pupils shared poems, prayers, readings and songs with great poise and purpose. Harvest festival was also the theme for Early Years, who had a busy week learning about Harvest, sorting, harvesting, washing and preparing vegetables and blending soup.

On the topic of thanks, our Macmillan coffee meeting, generously attended and supported, raised over £110—so a further warm thank you all round.

As we head into November we have our Parent Forum upcoming (14th November 09:00–10:00) where we'll welcome parents to consult on and discuss areas of interest.

Let me also take this opportunity, on behalf of the Governors of Great Gaddesden to share an important update. We're delighted to welcome Sarah Pugh as our new Chair of Governors, having taken up the tenure from Carole Connelly over October. Sarah has close connection with

the school developed in her capacity as a parent governor, and local resident of Great Gaddesden. We look forward to working with her.

Deep thanks to Carole, for her steadfast support, determination and leadership over the recent years, reflected in the legacy of strong governance and progress laid over her tenure.

That just about wraps our theme of thankfulness for

October. See you in November (from *novem*, the ninth and penultimate month—until the lunisolar calendar was abolished by Julius Caesar around 45BC and January, February added to follow a solar calendar of 12 months and 365 days).

*“Treat others exactly as you would like to be treated yourself”—Luke 6:31
John Bevan*



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Affinity Works on the River Gade



Commencing works at Water End Road Bridge

Affinity Water have remobilised to the Water End Road Bridge site and have carried out the vegetation clearance work to displace the water voles upstream. While this may look drastic, it is designed to make the area completely inhospitable to water voles to ensure they will not be in the area when we are working, and will therefore not be harmed. All displacement work has been carried out in accordance with a licence from Natural England and under supervision from an ecologist. The

need to displace the water voles has also meant that we are reducing the extent of the works somewhat, so that there is sufficient undisturbed habitat upstream for them to move into, but we are still planning to remove the weir and thereby create a more natural chalk stream habitat for the benefit of wildlife.

The Environment Agency have also started work digging the new channel through Gadebridge Park.

Sarah Caleb

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The Final Push 2024!!!

November is upon us already!! How on earth did this happen? Where is 2024 going? And more importantly, have you been successful in ticking off your New Years Resolutions regarding your fat-loss and fitness goals?.....

If your answer is no to the last question or you have hit the dreaded winter Plateau read on...

Most people think it's about the composition of their diet. They think it's about knowing exactly how many calories to consume. They worry that it's one certain food or food group that is stopping them losing fat.

But fat loss is far more about behaviour change than it is about nutrition. Knowing what to do isn't the hard part. I've worked with well over 100 personal trainers, nutritionists, doctors and dieticians over the years, as fat loss clients. Yet many of them have more knowledge than I do about nutrition. However, knowing something and doing something are very different.

Picking up knowledge is relatively easy. Applying it is where most people need help.

If you feel like you know what to do but you're just not doing it then I want to help you!

Starting from week commencing 11th November I am Launching one final push 6 week Lift Lean Programme. This programme doesn't discriminate your current fitness levels, whatever your start point, whatever your fitness goal. It is honestly never too late to start. In fact now is the best time to start. Ending the year on a high and starting the new year knowing you are already leaps and bounds ahead of those leaving it to January.

The Fit Hut is a small friendly Fitness Studio in Potten End, and we not only tackle your Nutrition, Fitness and Health, but we pride ourselves in making everyone feel welcome, at ease and motivated and most importantly like you are part of a family.

So don't feel blue this winter, let me help you feel your best self and live your best life!

Come join us this November for our final 6 week kick start course.

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Jo Regardsoe

Great Gaddesden Cricket Club

The 2024 season sadly came to an end in mid-September – since when it seems to have rained near-continuously. This has made the end of season work needed on the playing square very difficult. However, during a recent couple of dry days we finally managed to cut the square and scarify it and then repair the ends of the pitches with seed and loam. The ends of the pitches take most of the wear – from heavy-footed bowlers and also batters that seem to like to dig trenches when taking their guard!

Once the seed/loam are in place we then have to net the treated areas to keep the pesky pheasants from eating all of the new grass seed. A few more 'Game Pies' over at the Crown and Sceptre could well be in



The repaired pitches complete with anti-pheasant netting!

order – and could also include the rabbits that recently seem to be taking great delight in digging holes in the outfield!

Not long until the winter indoor practice nets start in January....!

The Austrian 3-Day Unicorn March

I'm often told that some things in life are certain, e.g. taxes & death obviously, but also if I clean my trainers prior to a run along Ledgemore Lane, then just down from Hoo Cottages the road will inevitably be flooded, oh yes & at some point a runner will pick up a running injury. My turn duly arrived on a trot back home from Luton, somewhere between Pepperstock & Flamstead on a fast downhill in Chad lane, the right knee suddenly got painful. I pushed on expecting it to pass but eventually I relented & took a seat outside St Leonard's Church, before hobbling back to Gaddesden Row. I'm no expert on fixing running injuries, but ultimately it needed a rest & so the continuous training for the impending Ridgeway Run was cancelled. Instead, it was time for a relaxing walking long weekend to the Austrian Tyrol...

Having recently completed the Nijmegen International 4-Days Marches, that being the Dutch 'International Marching League Walking Association' event, I wanted to see other countries IML events: www.imlwalking.org/

An IML event must be a minimum of at least two days & usually at least 20-km per day to be walked. Austria's IML entry is the 'International 3-Tage Einhornmarsch', it doesn't have the same numbers of participants as Nijmegen, with less than 500 walkers from across the globe, but the scenery on the routes around the high plateau of the Seefeld Olympic Region (near Innsbruck & just south of the German border) is breathtaking.



The arrival of the IML walkers in September coincided with heavy rain, courtesy of Storm Boris & so I had packed my waterproofs & plenty of layers. The first day started for me just after 0800-hrs in the rain & sleet – at just over 1100-metres above sea level, so snow was forecast. I had entered the 30-km route, but this was closed due to the weather conditions, so I adjusted to the 20-km route. In due course

the rain turned to snow & it was beginning to settle. At the checkpoints my entry card was clipped & hot tea was provided. Some international walkers were supplying some stronger drinks too. Day-1 finished at the sports hall for me in just under 4-hours & the walkers reception included music, food & drinks.



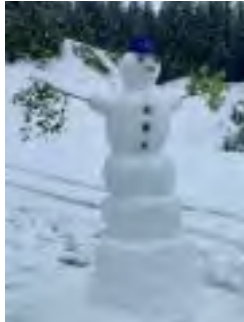
Day-2 arrived with a blanket of almost a foot of overnight snow, this being an Olympic skiing venue (& not the UK) meant nothing ground to a halt, pretty much every Austrian was out in their tractor snowploughing, & getting to the sports hall was no problem with every lane & footpath having been cleared first thing. I know we don't get snow as often in the UK, but I don't recall a snow plough ever visiting parts of Gaddesden Row. The route had to be adjusted though & all the 20/30/42-km routes had been moved on to an alleged 7-km loop of the village of Leutasch, with three laps required for me to achieve the IML 20-km requirement (alleged because it was in fact just over 8-km). Throughout the first lap the snow continued to fall & I was briefly slowed by tractors ploughing, a team of German, Spanish & US soldiers enthusiastically sharing their schnapps & the farmers rounding up their cattle, all with obligatory



of incredible views along the Bichlwald Walk following the Leutascher Ache (river) through the hamlet of Moos which then led to the idyllic Gaistal Valley where walkers should normally feel the traditional alpine pasture atmosphere of the Alps, just this time it was all blanketed in snow. The route finished with the reception back at the sport hall (by the newly installed snowman) in just under 4-hrs & I was presented with the IML Einhornmarsch medal & another stamp in the IML passport, but this had been like no other IML walk I had experienced thanks to the September snow.



cowbells. I duly completed 3-laps & logged 24.5-km in 4-hrs 40-mins, to be greeted with the walker's reception back at the sports hall.



The sun shone brightly on Day-3 & I was treated to 20-km

Retired Runner

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September 2024 - A Record Wet Month

My headline probably won't surprise too many people, as the deluge has been pretty much unavoidable. The impact has been most noticeable if you're a gardener, farmer or just a regular commuter, and I suppose it affects us psychologically following a rather disappointing summer. The weather has certainly been showing some significant twists and turns. Only recently I was reporting how rainfall wasn't showing any sign, or at least indication that our climate in Gaddesden was getting any wetter. Mother nature has her ways of making up the deficit, but one of the characteristics of the natural world is that most things happen in a heterogeneous manner. Too much of this, not enough of that. However, this huge variability is what makes the weather interesting to me. You just never know what's in store.

September 2023 recorded the first ten days of exceptional heat. One year on and we find ourselves suffering from extreme rainfall. Before this year, the wettest September on record was back in 1974 recording 143.5mm or 5.65", the only September to record above 5" over the last 53 years. Fifty years on, and the record for the wettest was easily broken. Falling on 19 days, the total rainfall was 180.0mm, a remarkable 7.085". In my whole record, only 2 other months have recorded above 7", they are October 1987 (7.365") and October 2020 (7.625"). The average rainfall for September is only 55.6mm (2.19") so that represents 324% of average. Furthermore, the record for the wettest 24 and 48 hour period was also broken for ANY month. The previous record for the wettest 24 period was on 2nd October 2020 recording 60.1mm (2.365"). On September 22nd this year, it was 62.0mm (2.440"). The 48 hour period 21st/22nd measured 82.7mm (3.255"), that's almost one and a half times the average for the whole month! In Gt.Gaddesden, September is, on average the 4th driest month of the year so quite an achievement. Anyone driving past my home at Gade Valley will have noticed the residents here have our own instant lake whenever we have heavy rain. I've recently spotted our own flood sign in the layby. Whatever happened to road maintenance? Our

neighbours in Bedfordshire received even more rainfall and this caused severe flooding around the River Ouse. Many roads were under water. Slow moving thunderstorms developed just to the north of our area on the 21st. The wettest place was Woburn recording 248mm (9.8"). In Bedfordshire and Oxfordshire it was the wettest calendar month experienced in a record dating back to 1836. The changeability of the weather is demonstrated by the dry week between the 13th and 19th. A gradual rise in temperature peaked at 24.1C on the last dry day. By this time, the ground very dry, but not for long! I mentioned last time, the amount of thunder heard has declined over the decades, and only heard on 3 days this summer. Thunder was heard on 4 days in September, the most since 2006 (5 days). This included a storm around 3am on the 8th when approximately 8mm fell in 10 minutes. Temperature didn't feature too high this month. The warmest day was 28.3C on the 1st, the only day to exceed 25C.

There are two other occasions on record for producing similar scenarios to that with high rainfall in September, most recently September 16th 2016 when torrential rain and thunder arrived during the early morning. Total rainfall for the 24 period was 51.1mm (2.01") but most of the heaviest rain fell between 0520 and 0550GMT. The thunder was noteworthy for being particularly explosive. I can remember trying to get myself ready for work that morning when these powerful ground strokes tripped off the electricity switch box twice. Very inconvenient! Upon travelling to work a little later, the roads along Dagnall were under floodwater. I remember the section approaching Dagnall roundabout looking like a river! The only other occasion we've experienced so much rain over a short period in September was way back in 1968, even before I started keeping records, but it's always something I can remember. There was flooding over a large area of south-east England which commenced with moderate rain on the 13th and 14th but continuous heavy rain on the 15th. Most of the London area had severe

Top 5 Wettest Septembers

18.0.0mm (7.085") 2024
143.5mm (5.650") 1974
120.1mm (4.730") 1976
117.7mm (4.635") 1998
115.2mm (4.535") 1993

Average Monthly Rainfall Gt.Gaddesden (1991-2000) (Wettest to Driest)

Nov 82.2mm (3.235") Oct 79.4mm (3.127")
Jan 74.4mm (2.9302) Dec 74.2mm (2.921")
Aug 63.0mm (2.481") Feb 58.0mm (2.284")
May 57.9mm (2.281") Jun 57.3mm (2.255")
Sep 55.6mm (2.190") Apr 54.4mm (2.140")



flooding and it is sometimes referred to as the Lewisham flood, one of the worst hit areas. The wettest place was Tilbury in Essex recording 201mm (7.9") and it is estimated an area of land some 6,250 sq.km of land received over 100mm. It took over a week for the floodwater to subside. Although I didn't keep records then, there was enough physical evidence to suggest even in Gt.Gaddesden we received exceptional rainfall. The river Gade had swollen accordingly and Pipers Hill road was underwater. The area where the garden centre is located was just a field used for

agriculture back then and was mostly underwater. Since then, the ground has been raised, and the same for the land the other side of the river. This was completely flooded. It's amazing to me that I can still remember 15th September 1968 as one of the few occasions when Gt. Gaddesden has experienced any sort of notable flooding. On a final note, total rainfall for 2024 up until the end of September is running at 1,199mm (30.46") which is a record for this time of the year. Will 2024 be a record wet year?

Steve Flitton

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Farming

Harvest seems like a distant memory, and much has happened since. Since I last wrote, all the crops were safely gathered in, and the busy autumn period of preparing ground for planting has taken place. Much of the produce has already been moved off the farm, on its upward journey through the various supply chains.

First to go was the oilseed rape, which readers may remember was cleaned to remove impurities. This went from here to a large central store, and from there is likely to be crushed at a plant in Erith in Kent, to produce vegetable oil.

The malting barley went next. We only had one field's worth of this, around 85 tonnes or so, which only makes up the best part of three lorry loads. Despite the relatively small quantity, this is still enough barley to produce over one million pints of beer. Sadly though, the value of the barley in a pint of beer is less than 15 pence, which just goes to show how much money is tied up further up the supply chain when you consider the cost of a pint!

Wheat too has been moving, most recently to Weetabix. I was concerned after harvest that the protein level of the wheat would be too low to make the grade. However, it seems that with low proteins across the country this year, the specifications have been relaxed slightly, allowing lower protein crops to be used. As ever these markets have been impacted by global events, with war in the Middle East, Persian oilfields, and weather in Europe all playing their part, combined with exchange rates, domestic supply and demand, political and other factors – predicting what's going to happen is anybody's guess...

Our more "stable" commodities, the Wildfarmed wheat, Wildfarmed barley, and organic oats are all safely in the sheds, waiting for movement. The latter has made the grade for organic porridge, though I'm not sure which processor this is going to yet.

With many of these crops, we will be saving some back to use as seed for next year's harvest. This year has seen the development of another home-grown seed cleaning project, this one significantly increasing our capability. It has involved mounting a second hand cleaner (bought on the industrial version of ebay...) on an old trailer, and then sourcing, repairing, and adapting two conveyors and one auger to feed it with grain, put the output in a trailer or seed bin, and put the rubbish in another bin. After a fair amount of tinkering, it is now up and running and is doing an excellent job. It is important to clean the grain before planting to remove weed seeds, broken grains, and bits of straw and unthreshed ears that would otherwise block up the drill (planter). The machine has been christened Nessie by Dave the electrician who did the wiring, and only now needs some eyes drawing on her as a final touch....



We are looking to expand the area of arable ground in organic conversion this year, though await confirmation that we will be able to do this. Assuming we get the go ahead, we will be planting a diverse mix of grasses, legumes and herbs in the fields to the north of Ledgemore Lane in the early summer. As with our existing leys, the mix of species is designed to increase fertility, smother weeds, and provide diverse range of habitats for the two years that the organic conversion takes.

On 7th September we hosted the annual Redbourn and District Agricultural Competitions association ploughing match, something we had not done for many



years. The match was held on Elm Tree Park, the biggest field on the farm, and attracted a record number of entrants at 42. It was a lovely rural scene, with ploughmen and women from all over the district coming to compete. It followed many hours of tinkering over evenings and weekends, as competitors got their machines set up just right. For many ploughing can seem rather anachronistic, with the advent of weedkilling sprays and reduced cultivations, but it remains a vital skill, particularly in organic farming where of course no chemicals are allowed. There are some spectacular photos and videos to see on the association website, which can be found by googling “redbourn ploughing”.

Finally, I can't write about the farm without mentioning the weather... since the 21st of September, we have had about 6 months' worth of rain in three weeks, just when we should be starting to plant the wheat for next year's harvest. As a result, it's looking increasingly likely that very little of what we planned to plant will get done, although we have managed to make a start on a couple of our best-drained fields. Saturated soils are impossible to plant on – not least because the machines will do damage to the soil, but also that the seed drill will block up, the tractor will get stuck, and the seeds will rot in the ground. The pattern of extreme weather that we have been experiencing recently seems to be continuing, which has certainly made growing crops something of a challenge, and one which we have to think very hard about meeting. Creating resilience to these extremes is top of the list, and I'm constantly thinking about how we can continue to produce in these challenging times.

GFJH



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Gaddesden Row Village Hall MacMillan Coffee Morning



On Saturday 28 September , Gaddesden Row Village Hall had it's annual MacMillan cancer support fundraiser coffee morning . We have to say a huge thank you to those who donated cakes and raffle prizes. It was lovely to see our

community come together along with our regular ladies cycle group who kindly donated beautiful handmade crocheted poppies . Thanks to everyone's generosity we raised £420 which is the most we have ever made .

Sue White

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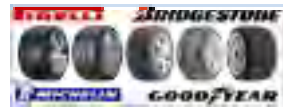
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NEWS: Qualified physiotherapist & trainer Moira is starting her new follow-on Friday morning class in November. If anyone is interested in joining, then please get in touch Moira@stjudesclinic.com

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Gaddesden Diary

Weekly Events

Mondays

7:45pm

Chip Van

Gaddesden Row Green

Tuesdays

9:00am

Holy Communion

Great Gaddesden Church

Wednesdays

9:30am

Toddler and Baby Group / Coffee Morning

Gaddesden Row Village Hall

8:00pm

Bellringing

Great Gaddesden Church

Thursdays

10:00am

Baby Sensory

Great Gaddesden Parish Hall

Fridays

9:00am

Walk and Talk

Great Gaddesden Churchyard

10:00am

Pilates Moira's Medicine in Movement

Great Gaddesden Parish Hall

Saturdays

2:00pm

Meditation Workshop in Temple

Amaravati Buddhist Monastery

Sundays

10:30am

Christian Spiritualists Church Group

Great Gaddesden Parish Hall

11:00am

Parish Communion (see below)

Great Gaddesden Church

November Events

Saturday 2nd

3:00pm

All Souls' Service

Great Gaddesden Church

Thursday 7th

8:00pm

Thursday Murder a Pint Club

Crown & Sceptre

Sunday 10th

10:50pm

Service of Remembrance

Great Gaddesden Church

Tuesday 18th

7:30pm

Parish Council Meeting

Great Gaddesden Parish Hall

Saturday 30th

9:15am

Terry Douris Surgery (check Facebook)

Hemel Hempstead Garden Centre

10:00am

Christmas Craft Fair

Gaddesden Row Village Hall

Save the Date

Saturday 7th December

7:30pm

Oh La La ! Quartet

Great Gaddesden Church

Great Gaddesden Parish Newsletter is read by over 1000 people in and around the parish. Funded by the parish council, the church, advertising, and voluntary contributions from our readers.

To contribute search online for "Just Giving" then Great Gaddesden newsletter or scan the QR code.

Editor: Richard Collis

richard@richardcollis.com 07971795571

Full Year Advertising Rates for 2024

1/2 £100 1/3 £95 Full Page £300

1/4 £60 1/8 £40

Community events advertised free of charge

The opinions expressed in the publication are those of the authors. They do not purport to reflect the opinions of the publishers.

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Cultivating with Clive



I don't need to inform you we are well into autumn now. With the leaves falling on the lawn, the nights drawing in, November can be a depressing time of the year.

Well I suggest us gardeners should embrace November and reap the rewards of the work we do this month next spring.

Bulbs should be our main focus this month. If you haven't already planted all your daffodils, alliums, hyacinths, crocus and not forgetting the wonderful tulips: Now is the time to get cracking.

If anyone saw *Gardeners World* in early October, Monty planted a "lasagna" bulb container where he used a large pot. He then put a crock in the bottom, filled it with a peat free compost with plenty of grit mixed in and planted the bulbs in layers in order of flowering time. I would recommend :

Tulips at the bottom, narcissi or hyacinth for the middle layer and then on the top layer choose from crocus or grape hyacinth. Cover the top of the pot with gravel, water and leave until the spring. I would definitely raise the pot off the ground to make sure the bulbs don't get waterlogged

Another idea is to buy some paperwhites

(*Narcissus papyraceus*), this is a white beautiful, very fragrant daffodil. Plant them in an attractive container now and give them to someone for Christmas.

In the borders I tend to leave all my annuals and perennials and cut them back in the spring. This will leave some shelter for the insects to over winter and also some food for the birds.

Clive Hill

THINGS TO DO IN THE GARDEN IN November

- Keep clearing fallen leaves from the lawn.
- Keep off the lawn when it's wet or frosty.
- Clear up leaves from around the rose bushes that have black spot and burn the leaves. DON'T compost them!
- Clean and if needed insulate the green house.
- Plant garlic and fruit bushes.
- Prune apple and pear trees.
- Save pumpkin seed for next year's crop.
- Keep brassicas netted to keep the birds at bay.



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Hertfordshire County Councillor

Terry Douris

Jane Timmis – 07712 050363
Email: jane.timmis@dacorum.gov.uk

01442 402273
email terry.douris@hertfordshire.gov.uk

Ed Barradell – 07928 692862
Email: Edward.barradell@dacorum.gov.uk

Harpenden and Berkhamsted MP
Victoria Collins MP
victoria.collins.mp@parliament.uk

Great Gaddesden Parish Council

Next Parish Council Meeting 18th November 2024
at Great Gaddesden Parish Hall, 7:30 pm

Chair:	Ben Cosbie Ross	07813 842 229		
Members:	Corran Griffin	07368 201 866	William Ristoff	07801 042 594
	Rosie Hamilton	07786 651696	Guy Halsey	07811 317 177
	Chris Turner	07905 742 178	Mark Griffin	07931 900 000
Clerk:	Andrew Farrow	07512 192 188	clerk@greatgaddesden-pc.gov.uk	

The Parish Council's website is available at
greatgaddesden-pc.gov.uk

Local Community Social Media - search facebook for:

"Great Gaddesden Parish Council", "Great Gaddesden Community Group"
"Gaddesden Row the Village"

If you're worried about anything from dog-fouling, fly-tipping, litter, issues with pavements, pot holes etc.
please contact one of the Parish Councillors or report it online. Search online for:

"Dacorum report it" and look for the Dacorum website,
or for highways issues search for:
"Herts report it" and look for the Hertfordshire website.

Defibrillator Sites

Bridens Camp: The cricket club pavilion

Gaddesden Row: In the old phone box at junction of Bradden Lane

Great Gaddesden: In the old phone box next to the school

St Margaret's: Within the Monastery grounds

Water End: The Red Lion Pub, on the perimeter wall by the front entrance

From Terry Douris - your County Councillor

Berkhamsted Tip is getting a facelift.

Major improvements are taking place at the site to increase the capacity and to smooth the experience of customers. The number of containers will increase from 11 to 28 and the parking spaces will increase from 9 to 22. It does mean that the site will be closed for 8 weeks from 25th September. Other local sites are Hemel Hempstead and Watford but do check their opening hours on the website.

Annual Slipper swap

However it is a very useful scheme providing older residents with new non-slip slippers to replace older worn ones. A lot of household incidents do occur because of slips and trips with slippers. The nearest event is in Berkhamsted on 21st November when advice and local guidance will be available on hand to prepare for the winter. but more details can be found on the Hertfordshire Libraries website.

Prayers at Full Council meeting

It is customary for prayers and reflection to take place immediately before the Hertfordshire Council Meeting. I have made a point of inviting a range of clerics and we have been fortunate to have the Lord Bishop of St Albans, Archbishop Angaelos from the Coptic Church in Stevenage, Rev Austin Janes the local priest in Grovehill, the President from the Hare Krishna Manor in Letchmore Heath, Rev Dr Rob Marshall who frequently can be heard on the Today Radio 4 programme and most recently Venerable Ajahn Amaro from our own Buddhist Monastery in St Michaels

Household support Grant

HCC has set out how it plans to distribute this grant. The plans set out proposals that will see us continue to work with a range of partners across the county to make sure we can get the right help to those who need it, at the right time. This targeted approach will mean that residents can be supported and get assistance from the county council, local district and borough councils, and a range of other community and voluntary sector organisations. The proposed offer of support includes:

- Supermarket food vouchers for families receiving benefits-related free school meals for the October half-term, Christmas school holidays and February half-term next year. The number of families eligible for this support has grown by nearly a quarter since this funding began in 2021.

- Our Welfare Assistance Scheme, helping households on low incomes facing an immediate financial crisis, including providing outreach clinics to support the those who are unable to access our online support.
- New 'Winter Essential' and 'Winter Tangible' schemes, providing supermarket vouchers, heated blankets, warm bedding and clothes to families in crisis, known to our social care teams.
- Support for food banks and help with energy costs delivered by district and borough councils and Hertfordshire Community Trust.
- Support for homeless persons and survivors of domestic abuse.
- £150 vouchers for new pensioners registered for Pension Credits.
- £50 vouchers for care leavers over the age of 19, identified by our Care Leavers team.
- Further funding for our Money Advice Unit and Citizens Advice to enable them to continue offering financial and debt support.

Community Grant Training Scheme

Dacorum Borough Council has launched its Community Grant Training Bursary Scheme. This initiative supports the professional development of unpaid coaches and volunteers in sports, arts, heritage, cultural, and community groups within Dacorum. It offers financial help for training and qualifications to boost their skills and knowledge.

You can apply at any time of the year, for grants ranging between £100 and £500. You can also apply for a Small and Community Grant alongside this bursary.

We particularly encourage applications from the following groups:

- Young coaches and volunteers: Aspiring young people aged 14 to 21 (subject to course age requirements)
- Inclusive coaches and volunteers: Clubs and organisations delivering accessible projects for people with SEND/additional needs or with an inclusive focus.

- Culturally diverse and lower socio-economic communities: Clubs and organisations serving underrepresented groups.
- Female coaches and volunteers: Clubs and organisations that support female participation in leadership and volunteer roles.

The bursary is part of our Community Grants scheme. Applicants must be unpaid coaches and volunteers at clubs and organisations in Dacorum.

- The training or qualification must start within 12 months of receiving the grant.

More details are available on the DBC website.

Pension credit are you eligible?

If you are of pensionable age and on a low income, you may be entitled to Pension Credit. Look for Pension Credit at gov.uk

Do you have a project?

If you have a project which could do with a little financial help. If you do, I may be able to help from my Members Locality budget. There are some rules so the best first step is to drop me an email outlining your project.

Keeping in contact

I will publish the details of dates and times of my surgeries at the Garden Centre on the Gt Gaddesden and Gaddesden Row Facebook pages. Alternatively, you can contact me on 01442 402273 or by email at terry.douris@hertfordshire.gov.uk

Parish Council News

Elsewhere in this edition there is a long article about the most recent version of the Dacorum Local Plan, so I'll keep this update on what else is going on as short as possible.

Over the weekend of 13-15 September an event was held at **Highridge Farm** in Frithsden which was noisy enough to cause extensive disruption across the parishes of Great Gaddesden and Nettleden with Potten End. Dacorum have issued a letter explaining what actions have been taken as a result and explaining how residents should report problems like this in the future – the letter is available on the Parish Council website. In addition we expect officers from Dacorum to attend the next meeting of Nettleden with Potten End Parish Council on 21 November to answer questions; residents of Great Gaddesden Parish are very welcome to attend.

In the last newsletter I reported a proposal involving the sub-division and sale of **land to the south of Pipers Hill** running from above the water meadows to the top of the hill. This is all National Landscape (AONB) so development is already heavily restricted,

but after an intervention from Cllr Timmis, Dacorum have issued with impressive speed what is called an Article 4 Directive which further restricts what can be developed without permission.

Unfortunately Dacorum hasn't shown the same speed in dealing with the **car storage site at Cupid Green Lane** where we're told that a complex ownership structure is causing problems in identifying who to take action against. This has now been outstanding for a considerable period and it's difficult to understand why this is proving so difficult to resolve and will be writing to the Enforcement Department at Dacorum to express our concern.

Finally there will be a **CPR and defibrillator training session** at Gaddesden Row Village Hall at 2pm on Sunday 10 November. Clever though these machines are in explaining how they should be used, it's far better if we can train as many people as possible in what to do. If you're interested in attending please contact Julie Kuzel on julie.kuzel@mypostoffice.co.uk.

Andrew Farrow

Parish Council News

This article is all about the Dacorum Local Plan – fundamentally how many houses are going to be built in the borough and where in the next 15 years; I’m certain its authors would shudder at that summary, but that’s what most of it is about, and what most of us are most interested in.

If it feels like you’ve read about this before - then you’d be absolutely right. There were versions in 2020 and 2023, but whilst changes were made after those earlier versions, what we have now is almost certainly what will be submitted to the Government for approval. Anyone can comment on this version and those comments will be submitted to the Government, but it is highly unlikely that this document will be changed before the Government gets its teeth into it.

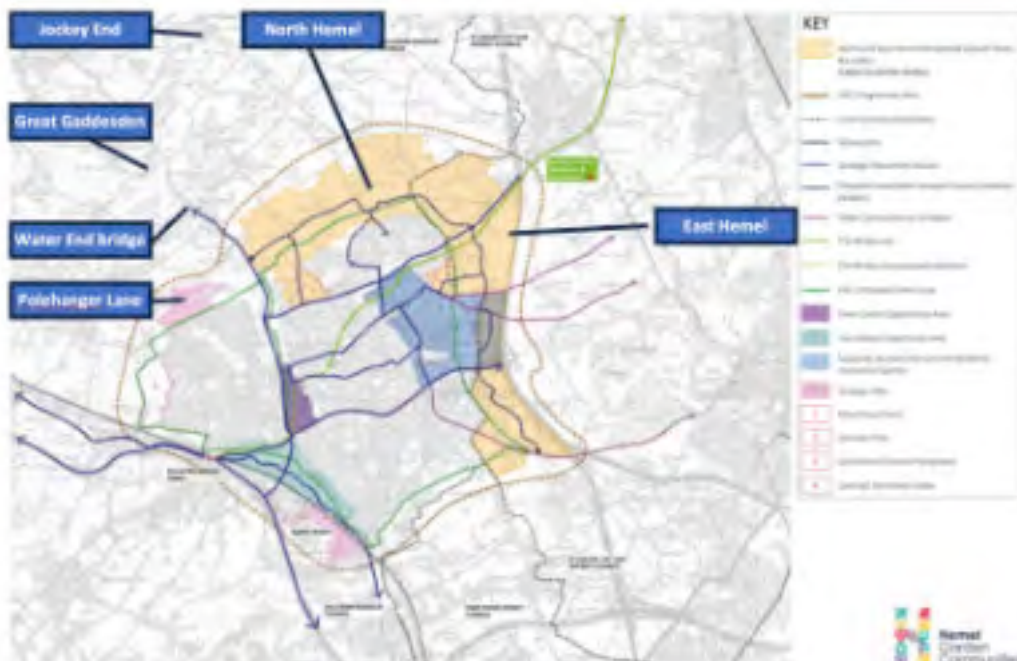
The consultation process will run from 4 November to 17 December 2024.

If you want the full monty, then search for “Dacorum Local Plan” where you’ll find more reports than you would have thought

possible, and details of how to comment.

In the meantime, here are some headlines (but please bear in mind that we’ve not had very long to look at it ourselves – the Parish Council will be considering a more considered response at its meeting on 18 November).

- 15,300 new houses will be built in the borough by 2041 – borough councillors were advised that any delay to the Plan risked this figure rising to 19,800 because of changes to planning policy being introduced by the government and that they would see more speculative proposals like the proposal for 350 houses at Marchmont Farm opposite Piccotts End (which isn’t in the Plan).
- Most of the development is in Hemel with some in Berkhamsted and Tring (much of the housing growth proposed for Tring in the 2020 version of the plan which was removed in the 2023 version has re-appeared).
- I hope the map below will help orientate you for the main developments in Hemel relative to the parish, but it’s difficult to find



something that works in the magazine. Most of the development is on the northern (Great Gaddesden!) side of the town including 750 houses at Polehanger Lane which weren't in the previous two iterations of the Plan. The Plan numbers only include the first 1,500 houses of what is referred to as North Hemel with another 3,500 to be built after 2041. It also excludes the 5,500 houses to be built in East Hemel which technically is part of St Albans (the term "Hemel Garden Communities" now generally seems to refer to broader developments across Hemel – but sometimes it's specific to North and East Hemel, an ambiguity which doesn't really help understand what's going on!)

- If you're wondering what's happened to the Potten End Hill SANG – so are we! The Plan has a list of the SANGs necessary to support the planned development and it doesn't include Potten End Hill, but the planning application is still under consideration.

- We'll be giving particular attention to the following areas over the next few weeks:

- We remain perplexed at the assessment that north Hemel is a sustainable location given its distance from the railway stations and its proximity to the National Landscape (Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty), although there does seem to be more detail around green space between the development and the Gade and the National Landscape than we've seen before.

- Infrastructure – there are plans for primary and secondary schools, retail units and community centres but transport remains a concern. We still have no idea what a "sustainable transport corridor" is but it runs through the centre of the HGC development, possibly terminating on the Leighton Buzzard Road. There's also a slightly unsettling sense that the transport policy assumes that everyone will be travelling south and that no-one has heard of the Water End bridge.

- The cars may all be going south, but leisure activities will be heading north with "improved and enhanced countryside access links and off-road paths ... to the west and north of the town".

- Protection of the Gade including abstraction is explicit in the Plan but at first sight perhaps not as strong as we would like.

There will undoubtedly be other issues that will emerge as we look into it which will be discussed at the council meeting on the 18 November. If you have any observations you should above all else log them on the Dacorum website, but if you have the time please let us know what you've said.

*Andrew Farrow
Parish Clerk*



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IN ASSOCIATION WITH THE FRIENDS OF GREAT GADDESSEN CHURCH

Draft Local Plan and Regulation 19 consultation approved

Last night (Tuesday 15 October 2024), Full Council approved the draft Dacorum Local Plan to 2041, and what is known as the Regulation 19 consultation. This will allow for public comment on the draft Local Plan's legal compliance and 'soundness' with national planning policies.

Consultation feedback is restricted to whether the plan is consistent with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and meets all the necessary legal requirements.

The Local Plan is a blueprint for future growth and identifies land for infrastructure, employment and housing developments in the years to 2041.

Residents, community groups, businesses, neighbouring local authorities and other organisations have helped shape the document by contributing to three extensive public consultations held in 2017, 2020 and 2023 to get to this stage.

Numerous studies have also been carried out to assess the impact of the proposals on the environment, transport, heritage, the Green Belt and social issues, such as education and leisure.

Councillor Adrian England, Leader of the Council said: "The new Labour Government's decision to increase our current target of 1,016 homes per year, in line with changes to the NPPF, to 1,313 is hard to argue against in light of the national housing crisis.

"Our Local Plan commits us to the full local housing need figure of 1,016 homes per year, substantially less than the new targets set by Labour. However, these are within the transitional arrangements proposed by the Government for well-advanced Local Plans such as Dacorum's, and an ambitious level of growth to meet housing needs and secure investment in our borough.

"This Local Plan is the right plan to protect our communities from uncontrolled development, but it is also essential for shaping our borough for the years to come. To ensure your voice is heard during the forthcoming consultation, please register with us on Let's Talk Dacorum."

Councillor Simy Dhyani, Deputy Leader of

the Council and Portfolio Holder for Housing, said: "Rejecting or delaying this plan won't stop development, but it would mean homes are built without the infrastructure we need. That's a future I know none of us want.

"This plan is about more than just numbers - it's about ensuring the right homes are built in the right places, with the schools, roads, and services our communities need to thrive. Only a local plan gives us the opportunity to address these requirements head on."

The consultation will start at midday on Monday 4 November and end at midday on Tuesday 17 December 2024. Documents for the consultation and the draft Local Plan will be published on our Let's Talk engagement platform on 4 November 2024.



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Update from Victoria Collins MP

It's been another busy month at Westminster, where I fight for your interests as MP for Harpenden and Berkhamsted.

And one issue which affects many people in the constituency is noise generated by aircraft at Luton Airport.

It's severe enough already, without adding to it. That's why I'm adamantly opposed to plans for a huge expansion of the airport.

The owners want to increase annual passenger numbers from 19 million to a staggering 32 million, by 2043. That involves many construction changes to the airport, plus changes to flight times and frequency.

Extra noise would be far from the only consequence. The bulk of those extra 13 million passengers, each year, will need to travel through Hertfordshire to get to Luton airport.

This would put intense strain on our local road and rail network - causing congestion on the M1 and already-overcrowded trains.

At a time when we face a climate emergency, the vast increase in flights would also generate carbon emissions on a colossal scale. The Government's own advisors, the Climate Change committee, have advised against the expansion.

For all those reasons, I believe - as do thousands of residents - that expansion should not go ahead. The decision will be made by the government, and they have pushed that back now until January, which is why I'm lobbying ministers to see sense and refuse permission.

I'm also raising the subject whenever possible in the House of Commons. A few weeks ago, I put a question to the transport minister, asking whether the government has assessed whether the expansion is compatible with the views of their own advisers on the Climate Change Committee. I also stressed the impact of noise on nearby communities.

In reply, the minister said noise must be balanced with local economic activity. It's true that job creation is important, but I believe it should not be at such disastrous cost to both the environment and people's entire way of life.

That's why I'll keep fighting to stop the Luton Airport plan - just one of the many causes I champion in parliament. I've also raised the



Victoria Collins, St Albans MP Daisy Cooper, and Thames Water staff at Markyate overflow.

plight of unpaid carers, who deserve a far more generous Carers' Allowance. I've asked why Hertfordshire rail commuters are charged such high fares. And I secured a parliamentary debate on a subject very close to my heart - the pollution of our local chalk streams.

These waterways are rare and precious. There are only around 200 chalk streams in the whole world. And as the MP for Harpenden and Berkhamsted, I am privileged to represent four of them: the River Bulbourne, the River Lea, the River Gade and the River Ver.

But they're under severe threat - from sewage dumped by irresponsible water companies.

This year alone, more than 2,500 hours' worth of sewage has been pumped into the River Ver through Thames Water's overflow at Markyate. The Ver Valley Society has now identified higher levels of e-coli in the water.

This pollution violates our right to visit, enjoy - and paddle in - our local rivers. It also endangers wildlife. The unique purity of chalk streams provides the perfect habitat for a whole variety of creatures, from brown trout to kingfishers. That's why they're known as the rainforests of England.

I'm determined to spare no effort to save

them - by raising awareness and pressing for action. As well as the Parliamentary debate, I've met Ofwat, the regulator, and the Minister for Water and Flooding, to demand intervention.

We need tougher government restrictions on water companies - let off the hook for years by the Conservatives. Ultimately water companies should be turned into public benefit companies, and Ofwat replaced with a new regulator which has real teeth. I'm also

personally calling for the creation of Blue Flag status to protect rivers - like at beaches. Decisive steps must be taken before our chalk streams become polluted beyond the point of recovery. That's why I'll keep battling away at Westminster, on your behalf.

Don't forget, you can always get in touch to raise a local issue, or a problem where I can help as your MP. Email me at victoria.collins.mp@parliament.uk

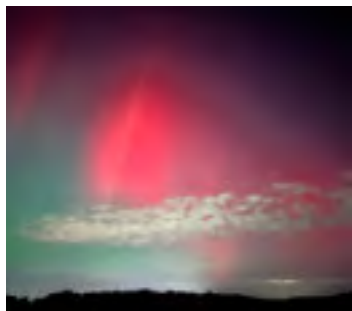
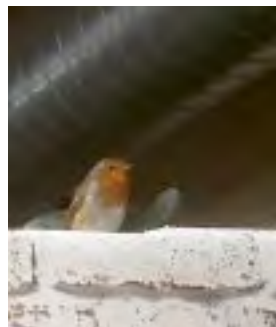
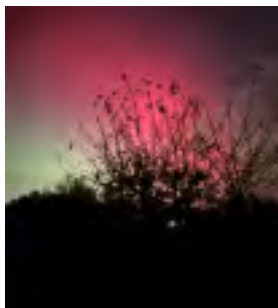
BIRDS OF GREAT GADDES DEN WHATSAPP GROUP

George is taking a break this month but the group has been busy spotting wildlife and the northern lights around the parish.

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georgemoreton92@gmail.com

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Upper Gade Valley Conservation Society

I'm pleased to tell you that we had our first meeting of the Upper Gade Valley Conservation Society in September. It was attended by a group of residents with an interest in preserving the Gade. The society had wound down after covid and has now been reformed. The group agreed that our mission will be to develop and impart knowledge of the Upper Gade and surrounding habitat to the community, whilst protecting the river and its surroundings in the face of inevitable change.



We are aware that the Gade, along with most chalk streams in the country, faces a range of pressures, from over-abstraction and sewage pollution by water companies, to pollution from road run-off and agriculture, and we are looking at ways to help support our stretch of the Gade.

We agreed that one of the best ways to protect these beautiful and precious landscapes is through engaging with local communities and educating people about the treasures these rare habitats hold. We hope to develop activities in this area which we can update you on in the future. If you have any knowledge about our local area, for example about wildlife, plants or local spots of interest and would like to share, please do get in touch.

And we're not the only ones interested in protecting chalk streams. Our newly elected MP, Victoria Collins, recently held a debate in the Houses of Parliament on the issue and has suggested improvements to the Government's Water Bill which is currently going through Parliament. I'm planning to get in touch with her to reiterate how important an issue this is for the Upper Gade Valley Conservation

Society and I'm sure she would welcome support from the community. You can get in touch with her here victoria.collins.mp@parliament.uk

The group has also been reviewing various policies and planning applications including the recently published Dacorum Local Plan. There was also a considerable amount of interest in responding to the proposed construction of almost 400 homes near the River Gade at

Piccott's End.

Another area of work we intend to carry out focuses on monitoring the health of the Upper Gade. I was amazed to learn that the health of chalk streams can be monitored by regularly sampling the number and types of invertebrates in the river. Key critters to look out for include a variety of riverfly, such as mayflies and caddisflies as well as tiny shrimp. They are seen as 'canaries of our rivers'. Being low down on the food chain, a drop in their numbers will have a knock-on effect on the entire ecosystem. This is why monitoring riverfly populations helps ensure issues such as pollution events can be quickly identified.

The monitoring is done via a technique which involves kicking up the water for a short time and catching whatever is dislodged in a net. That's the fun bit. Afterwards you then have the lengthy task of trying to identify and count all the tiny creatures in your sample! I spent the day at the River Chess in Latimer learning this technique and am hoping to support work being done to enable regular monitoring at the water meadows.

Fionnuala Walravens

Learn, Laugh, Live

Members of our U3A attended the Boxmoor Trust Autumn Festival on Boxmoor in September which was a friendly social event. A number of prospective members were interested enough to a come to our October Monthly meeting where we all enjoyed a talk about the Women of Bletchley Park.

Our interest groups have continued to meet as they learn laugh and live to the full.

Exploring London made several visits during the summer. In June to Spitalfields to learn about the story of industry and immigration in that area. July took them to Battersea to see the park , site of the 1951 Festival of Britain, and the newly developed power station. August saw them in Canada Water and the Rotherhithe peninsula, September the Custom House at Limehouse and October Sands End.

The News group stay in touch with current affairs and have speakers from various political parties as well as discussions and an occasional quiz led by group members.

Classical Music Appreciation have a full programme to delight the listeners. Upcoming meetings will include Fantasia 200 (with a video), Elgar's Dream of Gerontius, William grant Still and Samuel Coleridge Taylor .



Poetry Writing group spent a thoughtful afternoon in October when one member brought along some of her art work and others responded poetically. A different but successful approach. Future meetings will explore various genre, an approach which has always been enjoyed.

Science and Technology have heard about 'How Aeroplanes Fly', 'the Geology of the Chilterns' and more recently 'The Life of Sir Humphrey Davey'

Amongst a range of Craft Groups Calligraphy Group

have produced a beautiful poster on Proverbs.

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Interesting People

I love people watching from my kitchen window. Every morning and evening the dog walkers pass by on their way to a nearby field. I love dogs and often notice them first but some of the owners have their own peculiarities which really amuse me.

Mr Brown Spaniel appeared during lockdown, he's a lively young pup whose owner is usually wearing wellingtons unless the weather is extremely warm. He seems quite strong and the owner walks in a strange back leaning gait to counteract the pulling of the lead. He obviously enjoys chasing a ball as with the lead in the right hand Mr Owner usually carries a ball flinger in his left. On the return journey Mr B Spaniel is still full of bounce whilst his owner seems exhausted. This performance is repeated again in the early evening... lucky dog.

Miss Black Cockerpoo is a new pup on the block. She is walked later in the morning and her owner has spoken to me several times telling me that she is hoping to train her to walk beside her husband's electric wheelchair ... I am waiting with more hope than expectation to see this in the future.

Bubbles is a tiny chihuahua who is walked by a well built, muscular young man who is a good 6 ft tall and looks really comical as they pass by, the tiny dog trotting along in front of his proud owner.. On the only occasion that I was outside when he called the dog by name I was forced to run inside before bursting out in hysterical laughter.

There's also a lovely old black Labrador who is walked morning, noon and evening by various members of the family, sometimes individually and sometimes in twos or threes. He has aged considerably since I first noticed him but walks calmly on the lead often looking back to check that his escorts are keeping up. His people are all tall, obviously a mother and several now adult children. I have seen the children grow up as the dog ages, such a lovely family.

The Macintosh lady and her friend have two little bundles of white fluff who could well be litter mates. The women chatter as they walk and the dogs play, often tangling their

leads and coming to a halt waiting expectantly for adult intervention. I think that their walk takes a circular route as I have never seen them pass in the opposite direction.

The most amusing is the little terrier that leads his family past on the opposite side of the road. He is most definitely a dog on a mission, galloping along with his extending lead at full stretch. He hauls along his lady owner who seems to trot to keep up as she is quite short in stature. Several feet behind with his legs moving at comic book pace is an equally short, elderly, bearded man. Always wearing a dark jacket except on the few hot days when he wears an oversize sweater, he is constantly hurrying to catch up but I have not as yet seen him succeed except on the one day that the dog decided to halt for a quick sniff and the procession came to a sudden halt. Strangely they maintained a distance between each other so I could assume that this is a well planned, socially distanced exercise routine for all three. Over time this group has offered me many hours of wild imagination. Are they really together or is the short guy in dark clothing chasing the woman, she could be using the dog as a form of protection. Is his beard real? Could the dark, loose clothing and a false beard be a disguise - perhaps he is a secret agent following her to see how she hands over information to a foreign power under the guise of an innocent dog walker. She is hidden in plain site as despite noticing them many times I have no idea of what she wears, my attention is drawn to the dog and the man - very clever disguise, just as expected from a spy. This theory is strengthened when I realised that unlike all the other dog walkers they appear at a different time each day. Perhaps I should follow them? Perhaps that could put me into danger, he could have a weapon hidden in his clothing. Perhaps? Maybe?.....

But of course common sense overcomes such silly ideas and I put the kettle on and enjoy my afternoon tea.

Jane, November 2023

To cut or not to cut

You may well have noticed that the hedge cutting season is well underway.

When to cut a hedge? This is a question that we have been facing for a while. For farmed land the answer has in recent years been rather different for that of domestic hedges and boundaries.

New rules for agricultural land came into force on the 23rd May 2024 as one of the last acts of the previous government. There was little change here, but a stronger emphasis on farmers to protect hedgerows as 'important ecological building blocks across our landscapes'. This includes providing habits, acting as wildlife corridors, slowing soil erosion and water run-off. Hedgerows are also seen as crucial in supporting crop pollinators, sequestering carbon and enriching the landscape.

Simply, there is a clear requirement that states that 'you must not cut or trim a hedgerow that is covered by the rules from 1st March to 31st August'. Pretty straightforward then? There are lots of further details that define what a hedge is, relating to length and connectiveness to other hedgerows, but this is mostly sensible and applies to all types of agricultural and horticultural land including allotments.

It gets a little more complicated when the rules go into exemptions, notifications and permissions. Much of this boils down to hedges in areas used by the public ie roadside

- if the hedge causes an obstruction
- is a danger to users
- limits the view of users
- obstructs the view of a lamp.

And, notification/permission is not necessary for cutting or trimming during the closed season, and the only checks that will be made are if the farm receives a visit from the Rural Payments Agency RPA.



Additionally, any maintenance work, including hedge laying or coppicing, dealing with weeds or pests etc is also allowed.

The above also excludes boundaries of private gardens so there is no problem then?

Well, yes there is just a small issue with domestic hedges and that relates to the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 and the protection of nesting birds. In May this year the

following headline appeared in the Express **'Gardeners banned from cutting hedges in May with fine and jail time warning'** Reading on illuminates the issue a little more as the paper says 'While it's technically legal to trim some types of domestic hedge at this time of year, if it causes a bird's nest to be damaged or destroyed – intentionally or otherwise – then you're still breaking the law'. There are many articles written on this concern. They broadly break down into two groups. The first, like the above tabloid exposes, that raise the concerns and fears, but offer little by way of illumination; and more thoughtful pieces that often focus on the legal issues and the meaning of 'intentionality'. But even this more detailed analysis tends to leave the question 'what should I do in my garden?' unanswered. A google search throws up most options, 'the best time for trimming is Spring to Summer', 'the best time is over winter when they are not growing', 'some hedges should be cut once, or twice of even three times a year depending on species'. Food for thought?

Some important themes emerge here, domestic hedges are made up of many different kinds of plants that grow in very different ways, hedges are likely to be at different points in their development – some newer and still forming, others needing to be controlled or cut back, and some with die-back that need renewing. And so any universal solution as to when and how to cut is likely to be unhelpful.



Privet, for example should be trimmed twice a year, between early Spring and late summer to maintain their shape. But this is in conflict with the other advice that says that in the nesting season

(March – August) you should check carefully that there are no nesting birds in your hedge, if you go ahead and cut, and you either disturb or destroy a nest then you are liable. There is much less written on how this liability would be dealt with, who is going to report such activity taking place in the privacy of a domestic garden, and to whom? So, we have two types of regulations that overlap to some extent and

a rather grey area on how these laws are policed.

For farmed hedges, cutting during the restricted months is often quite visible and subject to RPA inspections, for domestic hedges the position is less clear cut and relies strongly on individuals making reasonable decisions. The responsibility for enforcement of the 1981 Act that covers the protection for nesting birds sits with all of the following - the police, Natural England, the Environment Agency, the Joint Nature Conservation Committee, and even Wildlife Inspectors who are authorised in writing by Defra! Easy then, although in the small print the fines include imprisonment for up to 12 months or a fine of up to £40,000. No wonder the tabloids are stirring the pot.

I suppose then the answer is whatever you decide to do with your hedges, do it very carefully and check, check, check for nesting birds.

*Robin Douglas @ The Barn
October 2024*

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Val's Ramblings

The reports of my ramblings have deviated from schedule following my faux pas (that's a clue to where I'm going next) with content for the September issue – my apologies!

Yes, having returned from Scotland towards the end of July I enjoyed four days at home before flying off to France. Luton to Bordeaux by Easy Jet, this girl knows how to travel!

Jan and Jayne, two teaching pals, have had a house in France for about 30 years and very kindly invited me to join them while they were there this Summer. The house is in a tiny hamlet, La Coulibiere, which has ten properties and was surrounded by fields of sunflowers and maize whilst I was there. Situated close to Pont l'Abbe d'Arnault in the Charente-Maritime it boasts the second highest hours of sunshine after the



southern Mediterranean coast and is within a day's drive from Watford where Jan and Jayne live! The sun certainly shone and temperatures never got below 30C for my complete stay!

The high temperature was an important factor in planning our outings but the proximity of the River Charente and the Atlantic coast provided plenty of opportunities to stroll by the river, paddle in the Atlantic and follow the French custom to lunch between 12 and 3pm! Chez Gaby at La Tremblade on the coast close to



Ile d'Orleron had the most wonderful waiters, lunch at La Courtine on the river near Cognac preceded a walk along the river, Royan on the coast, had a superb harbour, provided retail therapy and the most delicious ice cream! Further inland the main bridge across the Charente at Saint-Savinien sported beautiful flower baskets and during a walk along the river we encountered a beagle! (another of my weaknesses) Continuing further upstream, at Port d'Envaux, was an extraordinary site with statues and sculptures carved into the rocks.



La Rochelle was memorable not only for its magnificent 'Old' Harbour but also for the best English-style fish and chips I've ever eaten! A bridge from La Rochelle links the mainland with Ile de Re, (which we didn't



was an amazing adventure which I thoroughly enjoyed. I travelled alone and despite all the kerfuffle at airports managed to get to the right place and on the right plane at the right time!

For my final series of travels for 2024 I was on much more familiar territory, both transport wise and geographically, but more of that next month!

Val

visit), but another spectacular bridge links the mainland to Ile d'Oleron which we did visit, and I paddled in the Atlantic whilst watching the sailing school practise their skills.

A second visit to a friend's home in Cognac for a birthday lunch introduced me to Moules et Frites! I had tasted my first mussel the previous day and wasn't overly impressed but devoured a whole plateful with no ill effects - but definitely not something I would choose!

My first time in France for almost 60 years

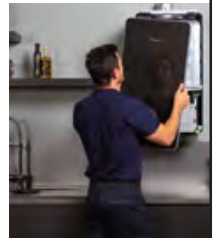


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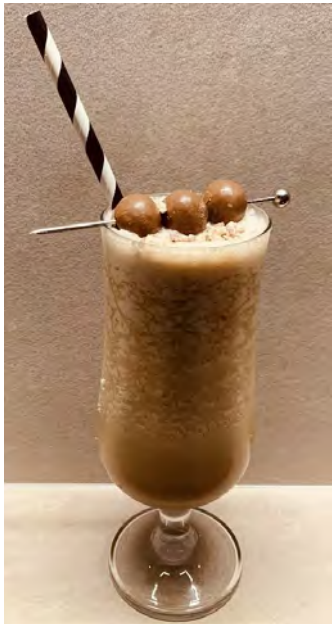
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Cheers!

It is November, but is it too early for a Christmas cocktail? Never! This one isn't in the official Christmas cocktail canon, but it is rich and chocolatey and reminds me of seasonal overindulgence. I have mixed it in honour of our neighbours in Bulbourne. So, I hope this brings some fun to your evenings in the lead up to Christmas. This month I bring you the...

Bulbourne Bushwacker



To prove that this is not a traditional Christmas cocktail, I can tell you that The Bushwacker hails from Florida. It was created in the 1970s and has further geographical heritage linking it to St Thomas.

The Bushwacker is an adult chocolate milkshake with a similar mouthfeel to a Pina Colada. This is where our local ingredient kicks in. I have been wanting to do a milk based cocktail for ages and I am excited to tell you that following a trip to a vending machine at the Clipstone Dairy, we have local milk. At Clipstone, you can buy lightly pasteurised milk that comes fresh from their very own Leighton Buzzard herd. Clipstone's cows are free range and farmed naturally using low intensity farming methods. All making a huge difference to the flavour – and the cows of course! Yum! Get yours at <https://www.clipstonedairy.co.uk>

On to the mix - blenders at the ready! Throw in one cup of ice, 30ml dark rum, 30ml khaluha, 30ml dark Creme de Cacao, 60ml cream of coconut (not to be confused with coconut cream or coconut milk), 60ml Clipstone Dairy Whole Milk. Blend until thick and smooth (don't overdo it), pour into a hurricane glass (this is the closest I have) and garnish with Maltesers. Voila!

Yule is coming. Enjoy Bulbourne Bushwacking!

Craig

Shopping List:

Clipstone Dairy Whole Milk
Dark Rum
Khaluha
Dark Creme de Cacao
Cream of Coconut
Ice
Maltesers



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