

Hurst Village Society

The object of the Society shall be to preserve and enhance the character of the Parish of Hurst as a living community

Newsletter No. 89

www.hvs.org.uk

March 2004

HVS ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The date for the next HVS AGM has been set for Friday 30th April 2004 and will take place in the Small Village Hall. Please feel free to join us to meet committee members, understand more about the society and how it works and have your say in the committee nominations for the coming year.

The AGM is also a reminder to people to renew their membership of the Society – see the application and renewal form also in this newsletter. This is very important because the Village Society aims to provide an independent voice for Hurst residents, and therefore it relies on membership to support that statement.

New Editor

After four years, Wendy Tobitt has resigned her position as editor of the HVS Newsletter and is handing over the reins to Jane Twedde. “Our thanks go to Wendy for all her hard work over the years and we’re pleased that Wendy is prepared to stay on the HVS Committee as her input on many issues is invaluable” said Nick Willson, Chairman HVS.

You can contact Jane on 0118 934 2487 or at cjtwedde@aol.com. Please feel free to contribute any articles you think will be of interest to our readers.

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Call-up for all budding thespians—grumpy or happy ?

Hurst Horse Show and Country Fayre

Last year's show was a resounding success. Once again we were blessed with glorious weather and visitors were at an all time high. Visitors to the show were able to enjoy many and varied entertainments, from maypole dancing to the pet show. Other attractions included HuMP, our own home grown Morris dancers, line dancing demonstrations, dog obedience, and the marvellous orienteering of the Scouting Group to name but a few. Overall, the show was considered to be "good old entertainment" as one committee member overheard on one of his many quality control trips to the beer tent!

St Nicholas School is traditionally the main beneficiary of the show and, of course, the fund raising is of huge importance. However, what also becomes apparent as the weekend progresses is that this is an all-encompassing event including the whole of our community, so credit for the success of the show must go far and wide. Thanks go to all of you who contributed and helped—far too many to name here.

Which brings us on to this year! **2004 will be the 25th anniversary for the event** Many of the original organisers are still in the village, having served over 20 years on the committee. The current committee is determined to make the 25th anniversary show a BIG one and your help in guaranteeing success would be gratefully received. Everyone can do something, from offers of physical help to financial sponsorship, however small. Please put the dates **26th and 27th June 2004** in your diaries and, at the same time, be thinking about what you can do to help.

Easter Services at St Nicholas

Please join us in welcoming the Reverend Paul Parks to St. Nicholas church. There will be many opportunities for you to meet him over the Easter period with the church services listed below as well as the family bring and share picnic on Easter day!

4th April, Palm Sunday:

11am Holy Communion:

includes a procession from the Vicarage when the children will enact a drama on the passion of Jesus.

8th April, Maundy Thursday:

8pm Holy Communion

last supper and washing of feet

9th April, Good Friday:

2pm Meditation service

11th April, Easter Sunday:

11am Holy Communion

12:30pm family bring and share picnic
and Easter egg hunt at the Vicarage

Hurst Youth Football Club—Kicks off

Over the last six months you may have seen lots of happy, enthusiastic children playing football on Sundays at St Nicholas School. We have trained hard and played friendly matches against Twyford, Woodley and Reading, *writes Time Drake*.

As a Hurst youth myself I am offering, with the help of the senior team and various volunteers, children the opportunity to play in one of two local leagues from September. This is something that has not been available to our children up until now. **So come on you budding Beckhams or outstanding Owens—this is for you !**

Depending on demand, four teams will be entered into the leagues, from under 7s to under 12s. Other age groups may be entered, depending on demand. The teams would play Saturday mornings and train on Monday evenings (dates to be advised).

To register an interest in playing or helping, please visit **www.hvs.org.uk** and leave your details, or contact Tim Drake at **tmdrk@aol.com** **Registration is free and the closing date is 31 May.**

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## Pantomime—Mirror, mirror on the wall ...

Whether you're grumpy, sleepy or just plain happy, you can audition to take part in the Hurst Pantomime Group's next production—**Snow White and the Seven Dwarves**. The production will gain momentum from September when auditions take place followed by a regular programme of rehearsals. Look out for more information in future issues of the newsletter and posters around the village during the summer.

## Snow White celebrates D-Day on Sunday 6th June

A family day to raise funds for the pantomime and the Village Halls is being organised on Sunday 6th June. There will be a day of events reflecting the theme of 60 years ago, celebrating with food and drink, competitions and attractions for all. Snow White's D-Day will be held in the Village Hall and grounds. Please put this date in your diary and look out for more news.

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www.hvs.org.uk—What's On

The HVS web site provides information about events in the village and important dates to note, which are posted in a monthly email. There is also a skills register showing all the local skills we can call on within the village. So log on today and register for your regular email updates.

View from Shute End

Wokingham Unitary Councillor, Annette Drake, reports:

Barber Close: My thanks to the residents who helped resist the application for an access from Barber Close to the land behind the houses in Sawpit Road. This relates to the outline application which the residents had many objections to, but the most appropriate reasons for the rejection were the proximity of the access to No 3 and the fact that the affordable house would not be on the site, but elsewhere in the district.

Traffic Issues: I have had several letters about the ongoing problems with speeding traffic through the village. I have written to the Chief Constable of Thames Valley Police to ask him to look into this matter and await his reply.

No more pathway parking: The long awaited bollards to prevent cars mounting the footpath by the shops and the new cottages by the butchers seem to be on their way at last. This week I have worked with the Highways to determine how many are required and where they should be placed.

Council Tax increases: On 26th February the council tax increases were announced at 3.94%, adding to this the costs for the parish, police and the fire service this equates to a rise of approximately 4.985%, the lowest increase in the history of the Council. In real terms, this means a Band D property increase of £55.85 per annum.

Once again, many thanks to everyone who helps with support and pointing out problems that are the Council's responsibility. I am available most Saturday mornings between 10am and 12 noon.

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### **New Police Constable—On your bike!**

Welcome to our new Police Constable, Sandy Craske. Sandy started on 16th February and can often be seen cycling around the village.

If you would like to contact Sandy, her email address is:

**[sandy.craske@thamesvalley.pnn.police.uk](mailto:sandy.craske@thamesvalley.pnn.police.uk)**

## **Hurst Village Society**

### **Membership Application/Renewal Form**

Hurst Village Society was formed in 1971 to preserve and enhance the rural character of the parish. The current annual subscription is £5.00 per household. Membership of the Hurst Village Society is renewable on 1<sup>st</sup> January every year.

Complete Section A, then **either** Section B, **or** Section C. Please bring this with you to the AGM on 30th April , or send it to Eddie Coe (address below).

If you choose to pay by Standing Order, please consider making a donation as well, thank you. Then, photocopy this form, send the original to your Bank and a copy to Eddie Coe, HVS Membership Secretary, 4 Lodge Road, Whistley Green, Hurst RG10 0EH. Thank you.

#### **Section A**

Name .....

Address .....

Postcode..... Telephone.....

#### **Section B**

I enclose my cheque/cash for £5.00 being my subscription for 2004. I also enclose a donation for £.....to the Hurst Village Society.

#### **Section C**

To: My Bank:

Name .....

Address .....

Sort code .....

Please debit my account, number.....with the sum of £5.00, being my subscription to the Hurst Village Society, and credit Account Number 1349706 (Hurst Village Society No 1 Account) at Lloyds Bank plc, High Street, Bracknell, Berkshire RG12 1BT. Sort Code 30-91-11.

Date of first payment: immediately; and thereafter annually on 1<sup>st</sup> January

Signature ..... Date .....

# Village Halls ~

Fees for the hire of facilities at the Large and Small Village Halls have gone up with effect from 1st January 2004. The Village Halls Committee chairman John Edwards said: "We believe that the Halls are a valuable community asset, but they must operate in a way that balances the books and also generates a surplus for ongoing renovations."

"The budget for the Halls is constructed on the basis of income from hirers being used to pay for the operating expenses for the Halls. Last autumn we realised that our predicted income would not match our expenditure."

Investigations as to why this was the case showed:

- a planned 5% fee increase in May 2003 had not been implemented fully
- there was confusion and misunderstanding about which facilities and rooms were being booked and used, and the amount of time they were in use, which resulted in under-charging
- the informal booking system contributed to this confusion.

During January, the Village Halls users received letters from the Committee explaining that new charges would be applied from 1st January. All regular and Hurst-based groups receive discounts on charges, but in spite of this, the St Nicholas Pre-School Playgroup fees rose by 33%.

Hurst Village Society, is concerned that the increase in hire charges has impacted on some groups that use the Halls. "We do not want to see groups forced to stop providing the very necessary and popular services such as the Toddler and Pre-School groups. We also understand the problems that the Committee faces with increased maintenance and insurance costs, and users have to contribute towards these costs." said Nick Willson, chairman of HVS.

"The Village Halls provide an essential and superb facility for Hurst, and we would like to see individuals and groups using them to the full.

## ~ Hiring Charges

HVS has offered to work with the committee to improve communication with users by reviewing the booking and charging processes. Sometime in the future it is anticipated that an on-line booking form will be available to simplify the process and encourage more people to use the Halls."

In recent years, the Committee has worked hard to raise over £100,000 with support from the Millennium Commission, Hurst Parish Council, Wokingham District Council, Groundwork Thames Valley, Hurst Horse Show, the Whist Club and many others.

This money has been ploughed back into capital projects such as the significant building extensions, new equipment and enhancements introduced since 1999. But the cost of re-roofing the Halls manager's house (estimated £20,000) will be paid from the fee income.

Representatives of groups that use the Halls are welcome to join the management Committee especially anyone with project management, construction, finance and fund-raising skills.

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Planning issues (continued) ...

Tape Lane: Estate agents Martin and Pole are auctioning the land between Lodge Road and Tape Lane, which is currently used for horse and pony grazing. The auction is expected to take place towards the end of March, and it is likely that the land will be sold in two parts or as a whole. The current owner intends to retain a large plot fronting Tape Lane next to "Meadows" in case it is required for social housing in future. HVS has drawn Cllr Annette Drake's attention to the new gateway and gate into the field next to an old and protected oak tree. Apparently the "apron" to the gate does need planning permission. Write to the WDC Development Control Manager, Trevor Watson, at Shute End to let him know your views.

Nomination for Membership of the General Committee 2004 – 2005

The object of the society shall be to preserve and enhance the character of the Parish of Hurst as a living community

Hurst Village Society General Committee meets every six weeks to discuss issues associated with planning, the environment, transport and other public services in the village that are related to the aims of the Society given below. The Committee is associated with running the annual Dinner Dance, working with the Parish Council on the Village Design Statement, and organising other events such as Archery at the Hurst Horse Show. The HVS produces a Newsletter which is published at least four times a year, manages a village website www.hvs.org.uk, and publishes a Skills Register. The newsletter and website contain information about village events and activities other than those of the Village Society.

The aims of the Society include:

- to protect the physical character and rural environment
- to provide an independent focal point for the community
- to encourage involvement in village activities
- to promote the use of amenities in the village
- to encourage a spirit of neighbourliness
- to foster communication between members of the community.

The General Committee consists of no more than 15 members who elect their officers including: Chairman, Secretary, Treasurer, Membership Secretary and Social Secretary. Other responsibilities include Planning, Environment, Health and Newsletter Editor. Each year a third of the committee members stand down and may offer themselves for re-election.

Nomination for Membership of the General Committee 2004 – 2005

Nominee

Proposed by

Name

Name

Address

Address.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

Telephone

Telephone.....

Parish Council News

From Jan Martin—Chairman of Hurst PC - contactable on 0118 934 2851.

Parish Council Web site: With assistance from Duncan Kendall, a new web site (www.hurst-pc.org.uk) was launched by the Parish Council in November last year. The aim of the site is to keep residents informed on the activities of the council. A monthly crime report from the Loddon Valley Police is published on the News sections, along with details of the Council's major projects. The planning section is updated as soon as applications are made available, giving residents the opportunity to make comments within the notification period, and also to see the decisions. Elsewhere on the site is information and advice on commenting on planning applications, crime prevention, transport, schools and even refuse collections.

Community Shelter: At the January meetings, residents were invited to voice their opinions with regard the proposed community shelter to be sited in the recreation ground opposite Townsend Road. Beverley Stevens, the Mobile Provisions Co-ordinator and a member of the Youth Street Worker scheme run by Wokingham Youth and Community Service, gave a very good insight into the work done to help young people and explained that the shelter is a vital part of the youth provision programme. At the end of the meeting both residents and Councillors were in agreement that the project should go ahead.

Youth Provision: From 25th January, the popular Mobile Youth Facility will meet on Friday evenings from 7pm in the Village Halls.

Vehicle Activated Signs: After a submission by the Parish Council to the highways department at WDC, the highways board decided that Hinton Road, Lodge Road, Davis Street and the A321 Wards Cross are to be included in a programme of assessment for future implementation. Full details of this can be found on the web site. The Council is keen to get some more input from residents and invite anyone in the parish to email their suggestions regarding traffic management, speed limits, vehicle activated signs, etc to clerk@hurst-pc.org.uk.

Village Clean-up: The annual village clean-up, sponsored by the Parish Council, will take place on Saturday 20 March. As usual, please report to the Village Hall car park between 9am and 12 noon to collect safety tabards, litter pickers and rubbish sacks. This is an opportunity for you to spend an hour or two clearing hedgerows and verges of rubbish. Please wear waterproof boots which are recommended for this activity and provide your own gloves.

Keep Mobile: Operates a fleet of accessible mini-buses, all of which have adaptable seating arrangements to suit various needs. Keep Mobile are always looking for volunteers and especially need more drivers to help our 37 members. Please let us know if you would like to help Keep Mobile.

Planning issues

Sandford Farm: Cllr Annette Drake reports that she and Wokingham DC have heard nothing from Hicks-Persimmon following the council's request to the developers in November for more information in a new Environment Statement. The council will not consider the planning and minerals applications until the Environment Statement has been consulted with English Nature, the Environment Agency, other specialists and local people.

School Road: Millgate Homes' plans for four houses (two semis and two large detached) behind Mufulira and Rose Vale will be considered by Wokingham District Council Development Control Committee. The application is dated October 2003, but is on a recent list which can be viewed at www.hvs.org.uk following the link to Planning.

Parish Planning Guidance: The third draft of the Parish Planning Guidance was submitted to Wokingham DC just as this newsletter went to press, *writes Howard Larkin*. Preliminary comments by WDC have been taken on board in this third draft. The Parish Council has now formally asked for guidance to be adopted. It is far too early to judge what WDC's response will be, but there is a view that we should "publish and be damned". We would obviously prefer that the guidance be properly adopted as that gives some small power or status. We will report on WDC's reaction in the next HVS newsletter. Once again, we ask you to "watch this space" and be patient. We'll get there eventually!

Planning Issues are continued on Page 7

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## BioDiversity News

**Water Voles:** At the end of last summer, local student Stuart Croft, surveyed the ditches and streams in Hurst. Water voles were recorded at 23 locations, despite the driest summer on record. Hurst has been declared the largest known water vole population in East Berkshire.

**Red Kites:** Keep your eyes peeled for Red Kites over Hurst. These magnificent birds are being seen more frequently as the growing population spreads out from the re-introduction site in the Chilterns. The area has many stands of tall trees, farmland and open grassland, which they favour, so it hopefully won't be too long before they breed locally. Red Kites have a wing span of up to 2 metres; the best clue for positive identification is the forked tail and reddish-brown body.

**Local Nature Reserves:** A request has been made to the parish council for various areas within Hurst to be declared Local Nature Reserves. The woodland and field next to the village school between School Lane and Orchard Road is a possible site. We await a response and will report in the next newsletter.

## Gospel Hall News

There is a variety of activities at the Gospel Hall, so please come along and join us:

|                |        |                                                                                                         |
|----------------|--------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Mondays        | 6:15pm | JAM (Jesus and Me) for Children (term time only)                                                        |
| Tuesdays       | 7:45pm | Bible study and prayer                                                                                  |
| 1st Wednesdays | 8pm    | Ladies evening                                                                                          |
| Sundays        | 9:30am | Children and young people                                                                               |
| Sundays        | 6:30pm | Evening Gospel service                                                                                  |
| Third Sundays  | 5pm:   | CAMEO tea (come and meet each other) - 21st March<br>is the next scheduled date, followed by 18th April |

Please visit [www.hurstgospelhall.org](http://www.hurstgospelhall.org) for more details.

## Hurst Football Club—Promotion for First Team

2003/2004 has seen Hurst F.C. become one of the most successful local amateur football clubs in the area. The first team, promoted to the Reading Senior League last year, are more than holding their own and have reached the quarter finals of a senior club competition. The reserve team look set for promotion to the local partner division and the newly formed third team has had mixed results in their inaugural year.

Hurst F.C. is now in the position to offer anyone living in the village and surrounding district, no matter what their ability, an opportunity to play football for their local team.

We are proposing to support the 25th anniversary of the Hurst Horse Show with activities such as the popular penalty competition, and the following weekend we will present the 6th annual **Party in the Park** which has now become a village “al fresco” party that should not be missed! If anyone wishes to become involved in the club, whether playing or participating in the social events and clubhouse development project, please contact:

|                          |               |
|--------------------------|---------------|
| Tony Trevethan, Chairman | 0118 932 0652 |
| Jeff Pitt, Vice Chairman | 07885 049446  |

## St Nicholas East Wall News

On 27th January, a meeting was held with the various parties and the English Heritage. It was agreed to defer the underpinning whilst more investigations are carried out later this year. In the meantime, we are busy collating all the papers required to show that we have carried out the 2003/2004 (phase 1) development work satisfactorily. Our application for the phase 2 grant accompanies this and we hope this will be offered to us by mid-April.

# Hurst Village Society Committee Members

|                                                         |                                      |               |                |
|---------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|---------------|----------------|
| Val Bowman<br>vbowman51@aol.com                         | Little Farm, Hogmoor Lane            | 0118 932 1420 |                |
| Eddie Coe<br>eddiecoe@talk21.com                        | 4 Lodge Road                         | 0118 934 5103 | Membership     |
| Brian Colman<br>brian.colman@towrylaw.com               | 1 Aylesford Villas, Wokingham Road   | 0118 934 5677 |                |
| Fernando Esteve<br>fernando.esteve@bg-group.com         | Sandford, Lodge Road                 | 0118 934 4364 | Treasurer      |
| Trevor Gaylard<br>trevorgaylard@gatcombe.freemove.co.uk | Gatcombe House, Forest Road          | 01344 428865  |                |
| Duncan Kendall<br>dk-hvs@bdkso.co.uk                    | 6 Tape Lane                          | 0118 934 2852 | Website        |
| David Prince<br>david.prince1@virgin.net                | Meadows, Tape Lane                   | 0118 932 0310 |                |
| David Shapland<br>david.shapland@btinternet.com         | 1 Hurst Grove Cottages, Davis Street | 0118 934 2209 | Planning       |
| Wayne Smith<br>wayne.x.smith@centrica.co.uk             | Woodville, Wokingham Road            | 0118 934 0840 |                |
| Janet Spiller<br>janetspiller16@aol.com                 | 3 Hogmoor Lane                       | 0118 934 2438 | Environment    |
| Brian Thomas<br>brian_thomas55@hotmail.com              | The Retreat, Forest Road             | 01344 453256  | Secretary      |
| Wendy Tobitt<br>wendy_tobitt@compuserve.com             | 17 Martineau Lane                    | 0118 934 2381 |                |
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| Sheila Whittaker<br>frank.whittaker@lineone.net         | Apple Tree Cottage, Hogmoor Lane     | 0118 932 1937 |                |
| Nick Willson<br>nm.willson@virgin.net                   | The Gables, Wards Cross              | 0118 934 0319 | Chairman       |
| Ex-officio:<br>Annette Drake,<br>anmcd@btopenworld.com  | Walden Acres, Wokingham Road         | 0118 934 1036 | WDC Councillor |

*Published by the Hurst Village Society.*

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**www.hvs.org.uk**