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FEBRUARY 2025

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Cover Picture

This month's cover: Sunrise over Robinswood Hill, photo by Terry.

Hempsted Wine Circle & Social Club



Our Christmas party on 10th December kicked off, in accordance with custom, with a fancy dress parade. Someone or something beginning with 'A'. That was the instruction issued to club members of an extrovert disposition who like to disport themselves in outlandish attire. There were many bold competitors.



Paul Burry appeared as an aviator with goggles, flying helmet, and an aeroplane round his middle – beautifully constructed although the protruding wings tended to snag on door frames, passers-by etc. Other contenders included Amy Winehouse (Jo Stock), Agnetha from ABBA (Debbie Woodfine), Audrey Hepburn (Tracey Howard), an alligator (Rachel Roberts assisted by her dresser, Nick), and Albert Einstein (David Beck), to name but a few. The competition was judged by Jenny Caple. She awarded the ladies' prize to Donna Burry who appeared as an Advokaat bottle (could be recycled as a Ned Kelly outfit), and the men's prize went to Dave Woodfine as Aladdin.

Party games did not play a big part in the proceedings this year, but we did have a round of pass the hat where the number of hats is always one fewer than the number of players in the circle, and whoever is hatless when the music stops, is out. Much merriment but much cheating went on.

The catering manager and helpers put on a splendid buffet for the party goers, including warm mince pies as a

festive treat. With the company well-fed and mildly tipsy, a sentimental mood prevailed, and we sang some well-loved carols and Christmas songs, culminating in The Twelve Days of Christmas. As in previous years, each table took responsibility for a line in the song referring to one or another of the twelve gifts. It was impossible to get

everyone to sing in the same key which gave rise to a chaotic performance, but what we lacked in musicality we made up for in enthusiasm.

The Christmas party was much enjoyed by all who attended, and it concluded what has been a very successful year for the Hempsted Wine Circle & Social Club. We hope to go from strength to strength in 2025 and we wish all our members and Hempsted friends a happy and prosperous New Year.

HWC&SC meets this month on 25th February when our speaker will be Ray Sturdy giving his talk: Remembering the Swinging '60s.

Nick Roberts

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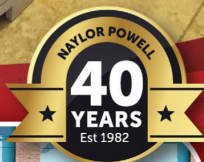


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The final meeting of 2024 was our annual Christmas Party on Tuesday, December 17th. It was a wonderful evening enjoyed by



everyone. As usual, we had an American Supper, which offered a variety of tasty choices, accompanied by a glass of seasonal mulled wine.

We had entertainment too, provided by musician and singer Lee Greenman. He had us all dancing and singing along. All in all a great evening.



Amanda Stevenson



Looking Ahead – 2025

Tuesday 18th February

Driving safely for longer in winter

Tuesday 18th March

Glorious Coloured Gemstones

FoSS Spring workshop



The next workshop will be in the Lysons hall on Thursday March 27th at 2pm. Beginners very welcome to join in with the friendly, informal, fun afternoon enjoying flowers and meeting friends, old and new. Please let me know if you would like to add your name to the list of those wanting to attend.

Diane.

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Hempsted C of E School

The children returned to school in January full of energy and enthusiasm for the new term ahead. Plans have been made to make learning as much fun as possible, with trips and visitors always an important part of this.

By the time that you have read this, our singing club will also have performed at the Young Voices Concert in Birmingham. This is a truly fantastic event involving professional singers, some well-known musicians, and dancers who all combine with the 6000 strong children's choir to make an absolutely awesome sound! All this in front of an audience of around 9000 people!

Before we broke up for Christmas we were truly lucky to be able to share several different performances and services with the parents and children.



The children were fantastic and helped spread some Christmas joy. I think each performance was special in

its own way. The Reception nativity had everything you expect from a Reception nativity. The KS1 performance was fantastically enthusiastic and the KS2 carol service was beautiful. Thank you to all the teachers and parents who helped make them possible.



Team Hempsted has been continuing to do extremely well in all sports. However a special mention needs to go to the team above. Last year our Panathlon swimmers won the District swimming Gala and we were asked to represent Gloucester at the National Aquatic Centre in London. The children practiced beforehand at Sir Thomas Rich's School, thanks to our parent governor Nick O'Neil. They arrived in London with butterflies in their stomachs but absolutely smashed it and came home National Champions. This is an incredible result and we are so proud. The team also once again won the District Gala again so watch this space...

This term we will be thinking about what truthfulness means and how we can show this value in school.

In schools, as in the world, truthfulness is a key value; it

RIP Churchyard Tree

On the morning of 8th December following a wild and windy night courtesy of Storm Darragh, early visitors to the churchyard discovered that one of the huge conifers had uprooted and fallen.



After all the sawing, clearing away and chipping of branches, we are left with a new churchyard feature, the stump!

At the recent meeting of the Eco Group we discussed what if anything could be created from the stump..... perhaps

something sculpted from the wood for passers- by to enjoy, or something interactive rather like the cairn. Could plants be grown over it or might it become the most desirable home in Hempsted for bugs?

If you have any ideas for the tree stump please do let us know. You can email the group at

HempstedEcoChurch@gmail.com .

We'd love to hear from you!

Rachel Laughton



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(Continued from page 7)

encompasses the concepts of encouraging all members of the community to be truthful in their dealings with one another. It is important to promote being true to oneself or standing up for one's own beliefs.

In John's gospel Jesus himself is described as 'The Way, The Truth and The Life'. Christians believe that truth is revealed in the Bible and supremely in the person and life of Jesus Christ. Through Jesus' teaching we are given an insight into the nature of God and the way in which God means us to live. Jesus likens the truth to a light being switched on. I am the Light of the

world. (John 8:12) The Bible states that the truth can be like treasure. God loves and cares for us and this is a great treasure. Throughout the term we will be exploring this value using a variety of Bible stories including; the story of Adam and Eve, Jacob and Esau and The Conversion of St Paul. We hope that through these stories we will learn more about the value of truthfulness.

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FUN AND FAITH

Hempsted Children and Families Newsletter

Hello and happy February! Firstly I'd like to rewind to Christmas Eve and share these pictures of the Crib Service rehearsal. At the service children from Messy Church shared their nativity dance to the song 'Shine' by Angie Killian. .



Thank you to the children and families who took part in and helped with the dance and to all who came to the service and shared in this experience on the most special of nights. *Rachel*



Children and Families
Worker

Coming up.....

Family Service Sunday 9th February 10am at St Swithun's

Messy Church Sunday March 2nd 3.30-5.30pm at Lysons Hall

You can follow [Hempsted Messy Church](#) on Facebook for news of Messy Church and family services.



From the Vicar

In the hall of The Rectory there is a barometer. The

barometer has been in my family for several generations. As a small child, I remember watching as Grandad tapped the barometer daily. After his death, Dad did the same and having inherited the barometer, the task now falls to me. What's the weather to be? Very Dry, Stormy, Much Rain, Changeable, Fair, Set Fair. Today the hands are set at CHANGEABLE. In case there was any doubt, at the height of Storm Darragh the barometer said MUCH RAIN.

So much for the weather. Where I wonder do you find yourself on the barometer of joy? I'm not simply talking about the joy of watching Chris McCausland lift the Glitter Ball on Strictly – fabulous though that was. I'm talking about an often quiet joy that lies within us. For Christians, this joy is rooted in our Christian faith.

One of the phrases that appears throughout the bible is: 'Do not be afraid.' It crops up time and time again. 'Do not be afraid,' the angel tells Mary when she is to have a baby. 'Do not be afraid,' the angels tell the shepherds when Jesus is born. When we look at the challenges facing the world, along with our personal griefs and anxieties too, it is very human to be afraid. Particularly in the early

hours of the morning, worries can be magnified such that we cannot sleep. Yet in our deepest need, we are invited to claim the promise that God is with us, calming our fears and renewing us in love.

So where I wonder do you find yourself on the barometer of joy? In a song entitled Joy from the Wild God album Nick Cave sings:

'We've all had too much sorrow. Now is the time for joy.....

All across the world they shout bad words, they shout angry words

About the end of love, yet the stars stand above the earth

Bright, triumphant metaphors of love.

Bright triumphant metaphors of love.'

I am writing this article on the Feast of the Epiphany, 6 January, when the Church remembers the journey of the mysterious star-gazers, the Magi, in their search for Jesus. In St Matthew's Gospel we read that it was a star that led the Magi, the wise men, to the stable. There they found Jesus the Christ child who is the love of God incarnate. This indeed is news of great joy for all people each and every day.

Nikki

Church Services

Sunday Services followed by coffee

2 February	St Mary de Lode	Parish Eucharist	1000
9 February	St Swithun's	Holy Communion	0800
	St Swithun's	Family Eucharist	1000
16 February	St Mary de Crypt	Folk Festival Service	1100
	St Mary de Crypt	Open for All Inclusive Worship	1600
23 February	St SwithunsParish	Eucharist	1000

Special services

Sunday 16 February at 11am – Folk Festival Service at St Mary de Crypt

Sunday 16 February at 4pm – Open for All Inclusive Worship at St Mary de Crypt

Fridays at 1pm 'Prayers for the City' - Discover DeCrypt, Southgate Street

Morning Prayer via Zoom takes place at 9.00am on Wednesdays and Fridays

Compline (Night Prayer) via Zoom takes place on Thursdays at 9.00pm.

For the Zoom links contact admin@swithunandmary.org.uk or nikkiarthy@btinternet.com

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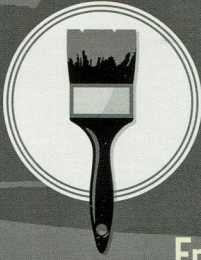
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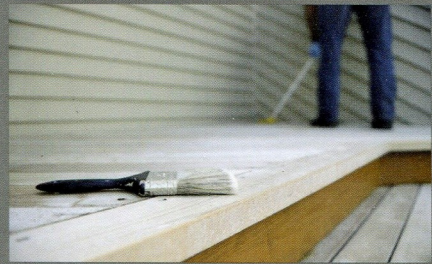
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To Broadband, or not to Broadband—that is the Question?

The HRA have been working closely with all Broadband providers, campaigning to get Super-Fast Broadband to the remainder of the village. This article gives the latest status of Broadband in Hempsted and hopefully explain some of the complexities in a simple way.

Why is Broadband Important?

Broadband is important because it provides high-speed, always-on access to the internet, which allows us many benefits:

Education - Broadband provides access to a wide range of free and open educational resources, courses, and platforms.

Healthcare - Broadband enables you to book appointments, request repeat prescriptions, view test results and even have consultations without leaving the house.

Employment - Broadband makes it easier for job seekers to search and apply for jobs, and it helps businesses find a larger pool of candidates.

Social connections - Broadband allows people to stay in touch with a broader social network and foster social supports. It can also help reduce isolation and loneliness. You can also enjoy the Hempsted Village Notice board.

Economic growth - Broadband can

lead to higher incomes, lower unemployment, and economic growth.

Innovation - Broadband can enable innovation by allowing firms to reach new customers online and use big data analytics.

Flexibility - Broadband can allow for more flexible work patterns, such as working from home or on the move.

Kids/Grandkids - Broadband allows our kids and grandkids to stream and watch movies and videos when we need a rest.

Why is it Difficult to Get Good Broadband in Hempsted?

Hempsted is, in effect, an Island-surrounded by the River Severn to the west and the Gloucester and Sharpness Canal to the east. Each access over the Canal is a swing bridge to allow tall ships to travel along the canal, which means that cables can't be laid over the bridges as they would in other communities. In order to get to Hempsted, you still need to get across the canal and canal laws mean you have to put the cable 10 metres below the canal. A general rule of thumb is, the deeper you put a cable, the more expensive it is to lay; and then it can be cost prohibitive to the company providing the service, and so they may choose not to.

(Continued on page 16)

(Continued from page 15)

Why do residents of Hempstead experience different broadband speeds?

If you drive down Secunda Way from Sainsburys, you will see on your right-hand side a number of green and grey cabinets. These are broadband cabinets and your house will connect to one of these cabinets. The speed you get will be determined by multiple factors as follows:

How close are you to the cabinet? The further away from the cabinet you are, the slower your speed will be.

The type of cabinet that you connect to. There are two types of cabinet FTTC and FTTP. FTTC means that from your house to the cabinet is a copper link (this is slow). FTTP means that from your house to the cabinet is a fibre link (this is fast). Unfortunately, your house will be connected to one of these cabinets and you cannot change between those cabinets.

When will Openreach give everyone FTTP? (Likelihood of service - **High**)

Openreach, are through the Canal (good news as that is the tricky part), and have advised that they plan to come and convert all their FTTC cabinets to FTTP between October and December 2025 (more good news), so a faster service should be available to most people early in 2026.

When will Virgin Media give everyone FTTP? (Likelihood of service - **Low**)

Virgin Media, are through the Canal (good news as that's the tricky part), and have advised that they have no plans at this point to come back and serve the rest of the village (bad news part). They have only served half of the

village and this is down to cost. They used a rental agreement with Openreach where they rented some of their underground duct space to lay cables to the newer build houses. The older style houses in the village are serviced overhead or the supplier would need a new dig, which they have deemed to be cost-prohibitive at this point.

When will City Fibre give everyone FTTP? (Likelihood of service -

Medium)

City Fibre, are not through the Canal (bad news as that's the tricky part), but have already completed most of the village install, but got a bit stuck between JD Karting and the Hempstead side of the canal, which joins it all together and makes it work. The HRA have offered to support them to get through the canal and they have agreed to come back and finish their build in 2025, so a faster service should be available to most people early in 2026.

What about BT / Sky / EE / others, when will they give everyone FTTP?

BT / Sky and others don't have their own network, they rent a line service usually from Openreach and then onward sell it, so for you it will depend on the Openreach status.

Hopefully, this information helps clarify the current situation and provides some positive news to look forward to.

Sue Steggles-Cole

HRA

FTTC - Fibre to the cabinet

FTTP - Fibre to the premises

Electric bikes: licensing, tax & Insurance



You can ride an electric bike if you're 14 or over, as long as it meets

certain requirements.

These electric bikes are known as 'electrically assisted pedal cycles' (EAPCs). You do not need a licence to ride one and it does not need to be registered, taxed or insured.

What counts as an EAPC

- An EAPC must have pedals that can be used to propel it.
- It must show either:
 - the power output
 - the manufacturer of the motor
- It must also show either:
 - the battery's voltage
 - the maximum speed of the bike
- Its electric motor:
 - must have a maximum power output of 250 watts
 - should not be able to propel the bike when it's travelling more than 15.5mph

An EAPC can have more than 2 wheels (for example, a tricycle).

Where you can ride

If a bike meets the EAPC requirements it's classed as a normal pedal bike. This means you can ride it on cycle paths and anywhere else pedal bikes are allowed.

Other kinds of electric bike

Any electric bike that does not meet the EAPC rules is classed as a motorcycle or moped and needs to be registered and taxed. You'll need a driving licence to ride one and you must wear a crash helmet.

Getting vehicle approval for your electric bike

An electric bike must be type approved if either:

- it can be propelled without pedalling (a 'twist and go' EAPC)
- it does not meet the EAPC rules

This should have been done by the manufacturer or importer before you bought it. If it's been type approved, it will have a plate showing its type approval number.

Editor

Source:

<https://www.gov.uk/electric-bike-rules>

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Gordon League RFC



We are now well into the second half of the rugby season and the first team competing in Counties 1 Tribute Western North, have

continued putting in great performances against some strong sides. These performances will hopefully continue, in order to avoid relegation, as it is possible that a number of teams may be relegated, depending on results in other Leagues.

The second team have been playing some friendly matches, following their withdrawal from the league. We hope numbers will be boosted from new players joining the club and from junior section players, once they reach the age necessary to play senior rugby.

Anybody wishing to play senior rugby is welcome and training sessions are held on Tuesdays and Thursdays at 7pm.

We also hold a 'touch rugby' session on Thursday, where any one aged 14 or over is welcome.

The junior section continues to go from strength to strength, with over 160 active members. This is a great reflection on the coaching and admin teams, which support the youngsters in their rugby development. Matches have been played at all age groups and the children have enjoyed the experience.

All children are welcome to the weekly training sessions, (ages 6 to 16). All sessions and age groups are

supervised by qualified coaches and are held between 10am and 11:30am. The younger age groups (under 6s and under 7s) commence at 9:30am. We encourage boys and girls to come and enjoy the rugby and facilities on offer and hopefully make new friends at the same time.

We have also started a dedicated girls session (11am to 12), which is a starter for girls who have not experienced playing rugby previously. This is continuing to grow every week, which is a great compliment to the coaching team who have given their time to get this new section up and running.

Our annual memorial service held on 26th January, was very well attended by club members (young and old) and it was good to catch up with some old members at the club after the service.

If anyone would like to book any of the club rooms or pitches, please get in touch. We are able to undertake catering in-house, with our catering facilities, which have been utilised for birthday parties, baby showers, wakes, anniversaries and company fun days.

Sponsorship opportunities are still available for various packages, including match days, match balls and advertising boards. If anyone is interested please contact me for further details.

Nigel McMahon

Knit and Natter



Several people who saw our "Hats" Christmas Tree enquired whether Knit and Natter is open to new members.

We are a small group that meets in members' homes. Our gatherings are very informal, and there are no rules or membership fees.

We meet on the second Tuesday of each month from 10 AM to noon and on the fourth Friday from 2 PM to 4 PM.

After a group discussion, we decided that we could accommodate two more members.

If you are interested in joining us, please contact Chris at 07854833818.

Chris Pullen

Coffee Pot at Christmas



We had a full house at Coffee Pot the week before Christmas. The Lysons Hall filled with laughter, chat and good cheer.

The morning ended with carol singing with keyboard accompaniment.

We look forward to many more mornings when people can make new friends and catch up on old acquaintances .



All are welcome to this monthly event which is held on the 3rd Friday of each month, 10.00 am to 11.30 am at the Lysons Hall, St Swithuns Road.

Chris Pullen

Sunbeams Toddlers Group



Bumps/Babies & Beyond also welcome with Grand/Parent/Carer.

Doors open 09.50am – 11.30am - 50p per Family

Monday 3rd Feb.

Monday 3rd March.

Wednesday 19th March.

Monday 31st March.

Bouncy Castle - Soft play - Craft - Songs - Puppet Shows - Dinosaurs - Trikes



Find us on FaceBook - Sunbeams



cathrjones50@gmail.com



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Head	Richard Waller	
Secretary	Hannah Bircher/Diane Beddall	523567
Website		www.hempsted.gloucs.sch.uk

School Governors:

Chair	Ben Nash	07874 263 251
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Friends of Hempsted School:

Chair	Becca O'Neil	523567
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General enquiries and helpline with answer phone		752086
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Chair	Grant Bowden	07857 838 736
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Women's Institute:

President	Angela Potter	312515
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Village Hall:

Chair	Tess Russell	
Bookings/Village Diary	Tina Critchley	T. 528898 M. 07871 939 124

15th St Peters groups:

Beavers, Cubs & Scouts	Yvonne Bunce	07960 049 632
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Gloucester City Council North Warehouse:

General enquiries helpline		396396
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City Councillors (Westgate Ward):

Howard Hyman		07903 021835
Pam Tracey		413497
Rebecca Trimnell		07749020520

Gloucester County Council Shire Hall:

General enquiries		425000
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County Councillors (Westgate Ward):

Pam Tracey		413497
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Citizen Newspaper (Hempsted Reporter) Kim Horton

	690793
	Mobile: 07710 456 979
	901096

Wine Circle & Social Club

Jane Pickup

Hempsted February

2025



CHURCH AND ONLINE SERVICES

Please see times for February on page 15

Weekly Events:

Yoga Class	Tuesdays 1.00pm & Thursdays, 6-7.30pm in Lysons Hall
	Wednesday 6.30pm & 8.00pm in Village Hall
Pilates	Thursday 10.30am & 6.30pm in the Village Hall
Zumba (Anna)	Monday 7.00pm in the Village Hall
Art Group	Thursdays at 9.30am in Lysons Hall
Junior Rugby	Sundays 10.00-11am, Gordon League RFC, Hempsted Lane
Beavers	15 th St Peter's Beavers Friday 5.00pm to 6.00pm
Cubs	15 th St Peter's Cubs Friday 6.15pm to 7.30pm in the Village Hall
Scouts	15 th St Peter's Scouts Friday 7.45pm to 9.15pm in the Village Hall
Community	9.00am-4.00pm daily St Swithun's Church Porch – run for the
Pantry	community by the community

Monthly Events:

Women's Institute	- Tuesday 18 th Driving Safely for longer in winter
Hempsted Wine Circle & Social Club	- Tuesday 25 th Ray Sturdy, Remembering the Swinging '60s.
Coffee Pot	- Friday 21 st 10.00-11.30am Lysons Hall

Dates for your diary:

Articles for **March's** Magazine should be emailed to:
stockwell.walker@gmail.com and terencejstevenson@gmail.com
before 10th February 2025