



# Monxton Matters

*Editor  
Mike Cleugh*

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## Another Excellent Event at the Black Swan



Thanks to our sponsor Matt McCann for the contributions made towards Monxton Matters throughout the year and congratulations on the recent excellent Halloween party. Keep up the good work Matt and I am sure that I will be joined by all the villagers in thanking you for your hard work in making the Black Swan the centre of village life and a great pub for us all to enjoy!!



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## Village Design Moves onto the Next & Final Phase



The latest draft of the Village Design Statement has been passed to the Council for their comments, which have been provided. Following this a session was convened by Joan Leslie to enable the pictures to be chosen from the vast number provided by each team.

Following this session a public meeting was held to display the photographs, which had been chosen by the VDS teams, as well as the draft copy of the text for review and comments, by all villagers.

It is proposed that approximately 300 copies will then be printed which will allow one per household plus additional copies for the TVBC and any interested parties wishing to understand the guidelines for any building work in the village.



# Monxton Village Hall Forthcoming Events

## At the VILLAGE HALL

|   |  |
|---|--|
| January Tues. Jan. 13 <sup>th</sup> ,<br>8pm. | Four Parishes Arts Society – Michael King ‘An Evening of Magic’<br>Monxton Village Hall. Visitors welcome. |
| Sat. Jan 31 <sup>st</sup>                     | 2pm. Jumble Sale at Monxton Village Hall   |

## Village Hall Weekly Programme

|                           |   |
|---------------------------|---|
| <b>Mon. Evening</b>       | Jujitsu   |
| <b>Tues. Evening</b>      | Occasional Band Practise and Four Parishes Meetings |
| <b>Weds Afternoon:</b>    | Badminton   |
| <b>Wednesday Evening:</b> | Line Dancing  |
| <b>Thursday: Evening:</b> | Occasional band practice/ PC Meetings               |
| <b>Saturday:</b>          | Jumble sales, occasional children’s parties         |
| <b>Sunday Mornings:</b>   | Monthly Church coffee mornings                      |

## VILLAGE HALL UPDATE

At the Parish Council meeting following the survey on the village hall, which was distributed to every household in the village, Mrs Jennifer Richards delivered the report on the findings. The percentage of replies was somewhat disappointing; although the overall opinion was that the Village Hall should be kept. A more detailed report is included on page seven of this issue. The Village Hall Committee is still actively encouraging Ampport to become involved in its use. It has been suggested that one or maybe two members from Ampport could sit on the Village Hall committee and that

the hall could be renamed Ampport & Monxton Village Hall. Regarding the parking issue, Mr Eaglesham stressed that proper quotes were required for the re-surfacing. It was agreed that the surfacing sample acquired by William Ross was not substantial enough to support the weight of parked cars. Mr Eaglesham requested the Chairman should ask Mr Ross for the suppliers contact details and Mr Eaglesham would also check out an alternative material. Mrs Richards also pointed out that the parking would be for the use of the Church as well as the cars using facilities at the Village Hall.

### **RURAL ENERGY PROJECT**

The Council has been advised that Monxton has been chosen as one of only four villages across Hampshire to be targeted by this project. The project is being run at the Environment Centre in Southampton and they are attempting to promote energy efficiency measures in rural villages that otherwise may be missed in mainstream campaigns. More information on this project will be available in future issues of Monxton Matters.

### **STREET LIGHTING**

The Council has received a brochure and information regarding Street Lighting in villages within Test Valley. HCC is very keen for villages to have this, and the Chairman asked for the views of the Council. One area where lighting could be requested was on the bridge by the village hall going towards the village green. It was agreed that the costs for such lighting should be looked into. The Chairman will follow this up. While the general consensus was that street lighting was not necessary, the views of the villagers are requested and should be sent to Sue Ryan or emailed to [Monxton.matters@btopenworld.com](mailto:Monxton.matters@btopenworld.com).

**EXTRACT FROM THE MINUTES OF  
THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING  
20th November 2003 at 8.00pm**

*Full edition available on the Monxton Website or from the Parish Clerk*

**MATTERS ARISING**

**FOOTPATHS**

The Chairman read out a report she had received from Emma Horrell. Byway 8 running up along side Little Cottage is very popular with dog walkers and unfortunately has become littered with excrement from such dogs. Mrs Horrell suggested that may be a sign is put up to request that the owners clean up after their dogs. Mrs Horrell has also reported this. She also highlighted the dumping of old sinks and toilet furniture by the bridge under the railway at the top of the gallops. This has also been reported for removal.

**NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH**

Chris Brandwood advised the Council that there have been two warnings from her committee. The first regarding 'dodgy tarmacers' from Shipton Bellinger and the second regarding ADT alarms. The company were offering cheap alarms but were not mentioning the £1,000 per year maintenance contracts. It was however pointed out that several members of the Council were not aware of these warnings and Chris advised that in the New Year she would have a committee meeting with all the Neighbourhood Watch representatives.

**Traffic Calming Group**

The Chairman invited Leon Allen to provide an update on any progress made since the last meeting. Mr Allen advised that he did not have much to report except that he had received a letter from Martin Wiltshire. The Chairman had rung his office and spoke to Hannah Barker who is now dealing with this matter, which she assured us is progressing. Mr Allen advised that one needed to be on top of this matter to get action. The Chairman thanked Mr Allen for the team's work.

**FINANCE**

Mr Eaglesham advised that the current bank balance stood at £9,214.51. As previously stated, of this, £5,000 has been put aside for improvements to the village hall. The Council had previously set aside £1,000 for the road signs. The invoice for traffic calming had been received. It did not come under the remit of arrangements for small parishes rather parish partnerships. It has been reduced because of mistakes and length of time to complete. The Council agreed to pay it.

The Precept for the next year was then debated and it was agreed that there should not be an increase in the precept for the coming year 2004/2005. Mr Eaglesham requested that the clerk should contact HAPTC regarding the insurance for next year. The Village Design Statement for which there had been a budget, was to be deleted from the precept, as one is able to apply for a grant from TVBC which will cover the costs when under £1,000. The Village Hall was discussed in detail and will be mentioned later, however it was agreed that money would need to be allocated for minor improvements. The Chairman also advised that we should expect an invoice from Mrs Julia Barratt, the lawyer representing the council for the Abbots Mead appeal.

**Overall there is to be an approximate reduction of 15% on the precept for the coming year. All members agreed the reduced precept.**

## Planning Matters (Abridged version)

| Item | Ref/Description  | Parish Council  | TVBC                     | Comments   |
|------|--|---|--------------------------|--|
| 1    | TVN.08558/1 - Erection of 4 bedroom dwelling and erection of detached double garage to Abbots Mead - Mr & Mrs J Wild (Amended plans received 11/03/03)     | Letter sent to the Secretary of State with Parish councils comments |                          | New appeal to the Secretary of state under consideration |
| 2    | TVN.CLE.00022 +1/2/3 Certificate of lawfulness for existing use at Prospect Farm - Mr Machin   |   |                          | No further information                                   |
| 3    | TVN.08869 Erection of slimline lattice tower, antenna, dishes and cabin and associated works, Part OS Parcel 8600, Salisbury Road, Kensboro, Abbots Ann    |   | Approved                 |  |
| 4    | TVN.04867/2 Erection of rear conservatory, the willows, Monxton high street  |   | Approved and being built |  |
| 5    | TRE.CA.00587/80 prune horse chestnut tree, Old Farm House, Monxton   |   |                          | Application withdrawn                                    |
| 6    | TVN.LB.00829 Provision of two first floor windows in gable end of side elevation together with internal alterations – Hals Croft, Abbots Ann road, Monxton | Letter sent to TVBC, awaiting response                              |                          |  |
| 7    | TRE.CA.0587/83 – Crown, reduce Ash tree by up to 30% at the Cottage, high Street, Monxton  | Letter sent to TVBC, awaiting response                              |                          |  |
| 8    | TVN.05120/1 Erection of rear conservatory – Saddlers cottage, High Street, Monxton   | Letter sent to TVBC, awaiting response                              | Approved 24-11-03        |  |
| 9    | TRE.CA.00587/85 Reduction of Holly tree, Little Cottage, Monxton   | Letter sent to TVBC, awaiting response                              |                          |  |

## MATTERS BROUGHT BEFORE THE MEETING BY PARISH COUNCILLORS

Mr Colbourne informed the council that the unsightly vehicles in Broad Lane had been removed, but that he was nevertheless concerned that the area should not be used for business purposes but for private parking only. Mr Arnell advised he would check out the planning applications on this. Mr Colbourne also advised that the yellow bollard on the approach to Red Post Bridge from Monxton is still damaged. Mr Colbourne also advised the Council that behind 21 & 22 Sunnybank, there is a drain which is constantly overflowing. Sue will contact TVBC concerning this matter. Mr Eaglesham advised the Council that Lloyds bank have stopped paying interest on deposit accounts and suggested that the council's bank account be moved to the Bank of Ireland. The Council agreed on this. The Chairman advised that she had attended the Test Valley Association of Parish Councils meeting where she had been informed that all thatch cottages were to be logged with the Fire Brigade. The members were also informed that houses should be fitted with 10 year fire alarms. The Chairman also gave an update on the allotment land behind Sunnybank. Although Monxton wishes to give the land back to Test Valley, the latter are keen for the village to keep it. TVBC also advised the Council that as the land is agricultural land it would be very difficult to obtain planning permission for low cost housing. The matter is still ongoing.

## Christmas Bingo

The annual Christmas Bingo, held on December 12<sup>th</sup> was one of the first events to show off the preliminary improvements to the hall. We have new red curtains, deep red velvet stage curtains, loaned very kindly by the Pantomime group and three new up-lighters.

Brian Allen, who has turned into the village hall's fairy godfather, as a brilliant handyman, painted the lower part of the walls and we hope to have the whole hall repainted in March, as part of the DLO scheme to help surrounding villages. All who have seen it greeted this as a great improvement. The Grand Christmas Raffle was a great success and the evening enjoyed by players from both Monxton and Amport.

## Witches of Monxton!

On Saturday 1<sup>st</sup> November, a Children's Halloween Party was held in Monxton Village Hall. The main organizer was Emma Horrell of Kings Brook, Monxton. About 40 local children, between the ages of 2 and 12 attended the party. Everyone, children and adults alike arrived in fabulous, scary Halloween costumes such as witches, wizards, skeletons and ghosts.

A huge effort was made by all the children and to choose a winner was a very difficult decision. In the end, 'The scariest fancy dress costume' was awarded to Jake Hoadley from the boys and to Megan Douglas from the girls.

After this, the children were treated to a Halloween tea party, with all kinds of scary food, cakes and jellies. The fun then continued with various games, nail painting, bat and pumpkin decorating and a scary 'guess what's in the box' game. To end the afternoon, the children took their pumpkins by torch light into the paddock. A scary time was had by all.

Emma made a tremendous effort, and huge thanks also go to Di Derbyshire and Mary Lou Hoare for their help. Thanks also go to Mrs V. Rushworth-Lund for the use of her paddock. All in all, it was a great success and a tough act to follow next year.

## Annual Christmas Bazaar

Held on November 29<sup>th</sup>, this was a great success yet again, in spite of the terrible rain. With 17 stalls, even more than previously, selling Christmas decorations, fabulous flags, home produce, honey, cards, aromatherapy gifts and candles, to include just a few (already there are bookings for next year) the morning finished on a festive note with sherry and a mince pie offered to each visitor by Neighbourcare.

### 'Christmas with a Twist'

The hall, decorated with a red and gold theme glowed for the evening of December 5<sup>th</sup>, when 46 guests sat down for a sumptuous feast of vegetable terrine with chilli prawns, turkey gratin, baked potatoes, red cabbage and peas, followed by Christmas Cassatta -- all cooked and prepared by Liz Allen, helped by husband Brian (with back up from Diana Jones and Jennifer Richards)

## DATES OF THE NEXT PARISH COUNCIL MEETINGS

The Parish Council will meet on Thursday 22nd January 2004 in the Village Hall at 8pm.

The dates for the meetings for the rest of the year are as follows:

**Thursday 25th March 2004**

**The AGM will be held on the 13th May 2004.**

## **RESULTS OF THE RECENT SURVEY & THE FUTURE OF MONXTON VILLAGE HALL**

The response received from the inhabitants of Monxton, in reply to our request to advise us, the Village Hall Committee and the Monxton Parish Council, regarding what they wanted to happen with respect to the future of the Village Hall, has been somewhat disappointing.

Out of 125 copies of "Monxton Matters" distributed to homes within the Parish, only 38 replies to the questionnaire have been received, of which 37 households have indicated that they would like the Hall to be improved and remain open. One household wished for it to be closed.

We had asked for every household in the Parish to reply because, unfortunately, the future of the Hall is in doubt. The fact that 87 households failed to reply infers that they have little interest one way or another about the future of the Hall. Even if we look at only the 78 households that are within half a mile of the Hall it still means that more than half of those households do not seem to care if the Hall is forced to close because of lack of support and funds.

Jennifer Richards and Diana Jones have worked extremely hard over the past two years to ensure the future of the Hall, for the benefit of all the inhabitants of Monxton, and I believe that the response to our questionnaire does now put a very large question mark over the future of the Hall.

Some of the replies suggested that interest free loans would be the answer, but the cost of improvements is **not** the problem. That can be met by grants from the Hampshire County Council and the Test Valley Borough Council, and the Improvement funds that have been raised by the Hall Committee over the past few years. The lack of regular use and the fall in annual income is the problem!

If the hall can not achieve an income every year that is exceeding the annual basic operating costs of £3,325 per annum, then those interest free loans would never be repaid.

Income from the Play School, Band Practice and Tai Chi has ceased and the Hall is also likely to lose the income from Line Dancing, as they are looking for a more suitable Hall.

**The total effect of this loss of income would turn last years profit of £1,800 into a loss of £845 in future years.**

The Parish Council must ask themselves the question that if more than two thirds of the households in the Parish appear not to care whether the Hall should remain open or not, is there any point in applying for the Hall improvement grants, **if we cannot guarantee the future financial viability of the Hall over the next five to ten years.**

Should the conclusion be **not** to go ahead with £40,000 worth of improvements, **this would not mean the Hall has to close.** The Hall has over £12,000 in our bank account, of which £5,000 could be used for repairs to the roof of the kitchen extension and some decorative improvements, and the balance could subsidise any annual losses over the next five or so years. Assuming of course, that there are no major repair costs during that time.

**For a summary of the financial situation please see below.**

**Costs:** basic annual operating costs for the Hall are a Total of £3,325

**Income;** Over the last two years up to the 30th April 2003 the income from activities generated a surplus, however it started to fall during the first half of the year and that fall in income has accelerated during the six months to 31<sup>st</sup> October 2003. Income from the Play Group, from Band Practice and from Tai Chi has ceased and it is likely to be lost from the Line Dancing group next year. Thus next year, a predicted fall of £2,800 in net income from Hall Bookings is expected **leading to a loss next year of £845.**

This would mean an extra five to six Special events each year for the hard working team of Jennifer and Diana, which may **not** be achieved when less than a third of the village have expressed an interest in the Hall remaining open, even though it was stressed in Monxton Matters how important it was that each and every household did respond. Anyone wishing to comment on this article should either email the editor at [Monxton.matters@btopenworld.com](mailto:Monxton.matters@btopenworld.com) or send a letter to Jennifer Richards at Monxton Mill.

## The Old Farmhouse (A potted history)

The Old Farmhouse is a Grade II listed property, which was built between 1620 and 1660. The House was owned by Kings College Cambridge as part of the Manor of Monxton, which had been bestowed on the college in 1441 by King Henry VII.

At the turn of the last century a carpenter called Mr Hemar was in residence later it is believed the family moved to Southern Australia.

In 1932 the property was purchased by Gordon Harker (1885-1967) who was a well-known Cockney character actor who, at the height of his fame bought the house where he entertained many of his stage friends often holding parties in the cellar, where the bar he installed, still stands today.

After the village hall was built he was naturally asked to perform the opening ceremony on the 21<sup>st</sup> February 1936. In 1937 he married Christine Barry an actress in the parish church and finally sold the house in 1957 moving out of the parish.

Admiral Taylor followed with his wife Irene he is buried in the Monxton churchyard

The current owners of the property are Craig and Anna Rochford family who recently moved into the house in 2002 with their five daughters.

