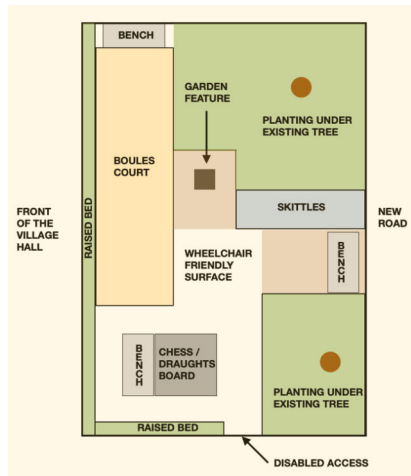




July 2022

Copy Deadline for next issue October 10 2022

UPGRADE FOR THE VILLAGE HALL GARDEN



Ambitious plans have been drawn up to renovate the garden at Firbeck Village Hall.

The project sets out to create a valuable new focal point for village life. Sustainable perennials, bulbs and herbs will be planted to brighten up the area and extra seating will be provided to accommodate outdoor boules, skittles, draughts and chess.

The village hall committee are launching a fund raising campaign, and anticipate it could take two years to pay for the scheme.

A sponsored walk is planned with more events in the months to come.

Villager Les Crownshaw is doing his bit - cycling from Lands End to John O Groats in the near future.

More information is available from Shirley Collins on 01709 817327 email s.collins1234@outlook.com and Les on 813613 email les.crownshaw@gmail.com

Villagers will be able to check on the fund-raising progress by checking the cash thermometer outside the village hall or by visiting Firbeck Online.



VISITORS FLOCK TO LETWELL FAYRE

Letwell summer fayre benefitted from some pleasant summer weather - and resulted in a bumper profit for delighted organisers.

There had been fears that visitors might stay away after cancellations caused by Covid in 2020 and 2021, but the village street was as busy as ever and this year's new attraction - a fun dog show - proved a winner with families young and old alike.

DAVID WRIGHT'S POPULAR NATURE REPORT

First let's talk about the weather. It's early July and there's been no rainfall of any note since March. Very strange.

Now on to the goodies, the highlight being two White Storks seen in Firbeck on 27th April. Wow! These are rare birds in the UK, although they were common up to around 600 years ago. It was probably a combination of factors that led to their extinction here, and their appearance on dinner menus provides a good clue. However, around 20 pairs are now seen annually and a few have bred here in recent years. They winter in Africa.



Reed Bunting - A Firbeck Visitor

Other welcome visitors to the FLAG area were a pair of Gadwall. They're greyish dabbling ducks with a black rear end, a little smaller than Mallards. I'm not sure whether they bred or not. And Lapwings have been regularly seen in the Firbeck area over the last few months. It would be good if they bred here again.

An unusual sighting at Lingodell on 1st June was a pair of Common Terns. These summer visitors from Africa are seabirds, but are known to visit watery inland sites.

I've not seen any Yellow Wagtails on Flat Lane this year, but was pleased that a pair of Reed Buntings took up residence in the oilseed rape. These birds have taken to rape fields as nesting places in recent years, presumably because of the similarity of the rape to reeds. A bird that is doing extremely well on Flat Lane is the Skylark.

Red Kite numbers are on the increase with several reported sightings and some may well have bred in the area. Similarly, Roe Deer are delighting lots of people with their presence.

Finally, something of a mystery at Princes Plantation where the rook nests have all but disappeared. I've no idea what happened to the nests which always used to last through the winter – there were usually around ten, but this Spring we were down to just a couple. I wonder if the late Winter storms were responsible.

01709 813360

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FRIENDS OF FIRBECK HALL REPORT BY SID ELLIS

With Firbeck Hall well on the way to becoming an exclusive and desirable residential enclave it seems appropriate to recall the perilous state of the Hall some 13 years ago when there was there was a definite prospect that it could soon become beyond repair.

I am reproducing here the letter sent to RMBC in May 2009 which is self explanatory. This was effectively the start of Friends of Firbeck Hall's campaign to save the Hall. As a direct result the Council finally put pressure on the then owners, who immediately instigated temporary roof repairs and erected secure fencing around all the vulnerable sections of the Firbeck Estate perimeter.

Needles to say, we suffered many ups and downs and several owners over the subsequent years before we could claim that our mission had finally been achieved.

Here's the letter which launched the campaign to save Firbeck Hall...

Dear Sirs,

A well attended presentation on the history of Firbeck Hall provided an opportunity for local residents (and others) to express their concern for the deteriorating condition of the building. This led directly to the formation of Friends of Firbeck Hall, a group devoted to the saving of the Hall. Within five weeks our membership exceeds 130 and is still growing.

Firbeck Hall is a Grade 2 Listed building. Application of the regulations appertaining to the upkeep and maintenance of such properties are the responsibility of the local authority. This led us to early discussions with your Conservation Department in order to establish the current situation.

We understand that since acquisition in 1996 no planning proposals whatever have been submitted by the owners in respect of the property. This cannot but create greater concern for the future of the Hall.

The theft of roof lead and other damage resulted in the actions you authorised in 2005 in respect of temporary repairs and security. Amazingly there has been no follow-up since that time; no further inspection or action has been taken. In the intervening period Firbeck Hall has inevitably deteriorated considerably to a degree where it is now in serious jeopardy.

Our members are demanding immediate and urgent action and in this context I enclose the relevant extract, Item 5-Repairs, from Legislation; - concerning the Listing of Historic Buildings in England. Compulsory Purchase, as outlined in the first section, appears to us the most appropriate action. Failing this we note that you, the Authority, can give 7 days notice of your intention to carry out the urgent repairs, which are certainly necessary in the case of Firbeck Hall to secure its preservation, and recover the costs from the owners.

Rotherham Borough Council is clearly failing in their responsibilities in respect of Firbeck Hall but it does have the power and authority to resolve the situation and save the Hall even at this late date.

Firbeck Hall has been a significant part of our village and the surrounding area for over 400 years. It cannot be allowed to deteriorate further. Urgent and immediate action is vital.

Yours faithfully,

Friends of Firbeck Hall

JUBILEE JOY

There are occasional moments when a community comes together - and Jubilee Sunday June 5th was one such occasion at Letwell thanks to generous funding from the parish council and lots of help from the community group and village volunteers.

The event will long live in the memory of those who were there. The festivities started with prayers, and a rendition of God Save the Queen. Then MP Alexander Stafford unveiled a plaque at the foot of a newly planted beech tree at the junction of Church Lane and Gildingwells road.

By then the weather was looking distinctly dodgy, but the dark clouds didn't get in the way.

Perhaps the performance of the Dinnington Colliery Welfare band - all of them squashed inside the village hall - summed up the spirit of the day.

The musical director, full of enthusiasm and jumping up and down with joy at times, swept the villagers as well as the MP and his wife, into a rousing performance of Rule Britannia, Land of Hope and Glory, and best of all that old WI favourite Jerusalem

Those present were enjoying themselves so much they persuaded the band to belt out Jerusalem twice.

The hog roast, carefully cooked by Carlton butcher Kevin Wright, comfortably fed the assembled crowd numbering around 70 or 80.

Then it was time for the Jubilee pudding competition with a fine cut glass cake stand as first prize.

All the entries looked decidedly yummy, and, of course, the bonus, for everyone, was that the assembled crowd got to scoff the lot once the MP had picked Vicky Bennett as the winner.

The children's art competition was a big success with Her Majesty featuring in all the entries in one shape or another.

Six year old Dylan Bell won first prize with 9 year old Tom Sharpe coming second. All those who had taken part were presented with a souvenir mug imprinted with their own particular drawing.

The event was rounded off with a sparkling performance from Letwell's own Roger Brooks and his sidekick Michael Tinsley on ukulele and guitar.

All in all it turned out to be a wonderful day - and one that brought out the best in the village.



MP Alexander Stafford with Letwell Pc Chairman Alan Nettleship

2022 POPPY APPEAL

The 2022 Poppy Appeal will start in late October. In the Woodsetts District, which includes Firbeck, Gildingwells and Letwell, house to house collection is usually our largest source of donations and has been carried out in the district for many decades.

Several of our long serving volunteers have now retired and, although this year's appeal does not start until late October, I would be very pleased to hear from potential volunteer house to house collectors as soon as possible.

Chris Stanton – Poppy Appeal Organiser – Woodsetts District.
cdstanton@hotmail.com

01709 818927

JACK T HARPER - PLAYING LETWELL FRIDAY SEPT 23RD

There are very few performers today who can make the successful transition from being one of the top Blues singers in the country to an all round musical entertainer with an astonishing, eclectic repertoire and a stage personality that's brought him to the attention of a whole new audience.

From Blues and soul, to swing and contemporary pop, Jack has the ability, stage presence, experience and 'wow' factor that will give any occasion that extra layer of musical entertainment that cannot fail to please lovers of great music. Jack has a very distinctive and endearing voice that brings something new to each and every song. His arrangements of some of the biggest classic hit songs makes his performance stand out and above all other bands and performers around today. Whether it be a small private party or a rock stadium Jack has the ability to adapt both his repertoire and the size of his band to suit the occasion.

Jack's musical skills are so varied that one performance will take him from playing a mean harmonica, through flamenco guitar to full-on electric rock. With some very talented musicians behind him, Jack has the ability and experience to read any room and deliver some classic sets that nobody will forget.

Search JackTHarperftzootz on Facebook



THE FIRBECK SCARECROWS ARE BACK!

FIRBECK VILLAGE HALL SCARECROW

Event

Saturday 27th August
10am - 5pm

THE FIRBECK SCARECROWS ARE BACK!

Come and join us
for a fun day out
for all the family



Our theme this year is '**Occupations**' so expect to see anything from a Scarecrow Traffic Warden, Vicar or even the Queen! Before you set off pick up a trail map for just £1, then enter it into our prize draw. Whilst on route keep a look out for our Firbeck Scarecrows Les and Dave as they walk on stilts (yes stilts!) from Laughton to Firbeck to support our fundraising work!

As well as a fantastic array of Scarecrows, families can also join in craft activities, outdoor games and enjoy Storytime Corner. Stalls selling bric-a-brac and plants will also be on offer, together with our fantastic raffle, for a chance to win a range of quality prizes. Then relax and enjoy a tasty sandwich, homemade cake and a drink at the Village Hall.

For more information get in touch with Sharon 01709 813727,
Anita 0750 5461368, Sarah 0779 2991299 or Jane 0777 3778769

LETWELL EASTER EVENT



Lots of fun was had by all at the Letwell Easter Event, although it now seems a distant memory !

It was a beautiful, sunny spring day on that Easter Monday afternoon. Tables and chairs were set out the green in front of the Village Hall, and we all enjoyed a good natter.

There was lots of enthusiasm and some pretty stiff competition in the Egg & Spoon Racing, Egg Rolling and Easter Bonnet contest.

Many thanks to all who helped to organise it and to all who came along. It was a lovely, relaxed afternoon.

LETWELL LITTER PICK

Although many of us routinely pick up litter as we walk through the village, the first RMBC 'Love where you live' litter pick in Letwell was very well attended on May 28th.

Free refreshments were provided in the Village Hall, courtesy of the Parish Council. Many thanks to all who helped to organise it and all the participants, a good job done by all.

Future litter pick dates will be advertised in the coming weeks.



LETWELL SOCIAL EVENINGS

Your Friday Night local at Letwell Village Hall.

On the last Friday of every month from 6pm. This is probably the closest we can get to having a pub, if that appeals.

An opportunity to have a chat and catch up with other Letwell residents and friends.

The Village Hall Bar will be open (very reasonable prices, cash and cards accepted) or bring your own drinks.

Friday July 29th - Special ticketed event with live music and food- look out for the flyer through your letterbox.

The Jubilations

I am sure this edition of Flag will be full of accounts of how the Platinum Jubilee was celebrated in our villages. What a wonderful opportunity the long weekend presented for reengaging with our friends and neighbours after two long years of the pandemic. Here in Firbeck, the plans made by the Church and the Parish Council all came to fruition thanks to the tireless efforts of a band of very willing and hard working volunteers.



The Church looked amazing with all the flower arrangements; the history exhibition was a source of great fascination; the Strawberry Tea on the Thursday was a wonderful afternoon very well attended (thanks to Mr and Mrs Peech for hosting the event in their lovely garden); we had a lovely service of thanksgiving at St Martins on the Friday and an enjoyable picnic in the church grounds on the Saturday (it was a bit chilly but at least it was dry). The cake competition was huge success with some truly awesome entries and they all proved to be very tasty!



We were delighted that so many villagers took the opportunity of seeing the Church and the exhibition and coming to the picnic. When one of the longer standing residents says “it's the best event in 60 years” I think that is a measure of success! Chris Martin has written an excellent account of these events in the Parish Magazine with many more photos which I trust everyone will have seen by now. My sincere thanks to everyone who contributed and helped to make it all happen.



Our village sign

The carved wood sign has now been restored and we will be looking at options for a new home where it may be enjoyed for years to come without exposure to the elements which had done so much damage. In the meantime work is in progress (by Derek and Enid Bailey) on a painted version of the sign to erect in its place at the centre of the village. Having had a sneak preview I can tell you it is going to look truly beautiful.

Yorkshire in Bloom 2022

Firbeck has been entered in this year's Yorkshire in Bloom competition, with face to face judging taking place on Saturday 23rd July.

The assessment covers three areas: horticulture, environment and community. The visiting judges will be assessing all visible areas, on their walk through the village, including the maintenance of planting, conservation of the natural environment, the cleanliness of the streets and absence of weeds, and community involvement in Firbeck.

The village is looking fantastic, as always! To support our entry, we are inviting residents to help with the maintenance of the verges and pavements outside their house. If everyone can ensure that any longer grass is strimmed and stray weeds pulled, we have a great chance of securing a medal.

The Neighbourhood plan.

The Parish Council has adopted a new mission statement - Preserving the past, planing for the future - which encompasses the objective of a neighbourhood plan. For this to be a successful exercise we need a good cross section of residents (new and long standing - working and retired - those with young families and those whose families have grown up in the village and flown the nest) to contribute and join a working group. If you would like to take part please contact anyone on the parish council.

The next parish council meeting in Firbeck will be on 24th August. There is no meeting scheduled for July.

Caroline Jopling - Chair Firbeck parish Council

A DAY TO REMEMBER

Letwell street fayre bounced back after three disastrous years with a highly successful day blessed by warmish weather and lots of visitors.

A hardy band of volunteers worked long and hard behind the scenes to ensure everything was in place for the show. Much of it involved carrying and ferrying essential bits of kit - from the coconut shy to the splat the rat frame and the maypole - backwards and forwards between the the very useful shipping container at Moorlands Farm and the village street.

The craft stalls inside the yard at North Farm proved very popular as did the dog show - which was a big hit in its debut year. Thanks go to international show judge Maxine Woodley, herself the breeder of a Crufts winner, for helping to pick the winners.

Large crowds gathered to enjoy the Thurcroft Brass Band and watch the Maypole dancing. The bacon butties - on offer all afternoon at the bus shelter courtesy of the local scouts - were a treat as ever as were the home-made teas at the village hall.

Takings during the afternoon amounted to £2600 before essential running costs were deducted.

The day ended with stallholders and their families enjoying a meal outside the hall.

The after-match party went on till 11 pm - with everyone agreeing it had been a day to remember!!

600 MILE TREK - BUT IT WAS WORTH IT

Live music has been attracting sell out audiences at Letwell Village Hall - with some of the visitors travelling long distances to catch the shows.

There were plenty of Geordies queuing up to see ex Lindisfarne frontman Billy Mitchell and his sidekick Bob Fox at the end of May.

But Letwell visitors Jane and Xzavier Marshall set a record that's unlikely to be beaten when Boy On A Dolphin appeared for the second of two nights on June 29th.

Incredibly, the couple travelled all the way from the seaside village of St Just in Cornwall to see the concert.

Why, I can hear you asking??

Well, Jane and Xvavier were big fans way back in their courting days in the early 90s, but lost touch with their favourite band after they moved away from Sheffield and eventually settled in the far South West.

When the couple - who now work at the Lands End Hotel - saw a snippet online announcing that John Reilly and the boys were making a rare appearance at Letwell Xzavier quickly booked two tickets and a night's accommodation at the Red Lion at Todwick.

Inevitably, the couple found themselves sitting on the front row.

Xzavier was in no doubt the marathon two day 610 mile trek was worth it.

"It was a long way to travel," he said, "but we wouldn't have missed it for the world.

"The band only play a couple times a year now so once we found out they were playing we weren't going to miss the show in spite of the distance.

"We hadn't heard them play live since 1991, but they were better than ever after 30 years. Pete Hiley on the Spanish guitar was just fantastic!"

Another long-time fan - who had first seen the band play at a giant ice stadium when she was growing up in Canada - travelled with her husband from her home at Chorley in Lancashire.

Nicola Moores loved the atmosphere at Letwell. "The band were amazing," she said. "It was great seeing them after so many years."

Friday September 23rd sees flamenco playing soul and blues singer Jack T Harper make his first appearance at Letwell with a band boosted by the presence of top sax player Steve Beighton - famous for his long term relationship with superstar Paul Carrack.

Tickets priced £15 are available from Martyn and Matt phone 01909 731626/07909960422 or 07746871392.

LETWELL DOG SHOW

Christina Warr looks back on Letwell's first "Scruffs not Crufts" dog show....

After meeting so many new people with their dogs walking through Letwell during lockdown we decided it might be a good idea to introduce a fun dog show to the village fayre.

What a great idea it proved to be. We were very lucky to get an international show judge Maxine Woodley to sponsor the event and provide prizes from her local business – Websters Dog Food.

We had six classes that everyone could take part in - Best Puppy, Most Handsome Dog, Prettiest Bitch, Dog with the Waggiest Tail, enticed with a very bouncy ball, Golden Oldie, Best Junior Handler, which the kids loved and then Best in Show. With 50 dogs taking part they were all very well behaved as were the owners!! Rosettes were awarded and goodie bags given out.

The winner of the Best in Show was Meg with her little dog Belle. She was over the moon, apparently, she had been practising her ring walk all week and was delighted. Runner up and Reserve Best in Show was Letwell resident Rita, with her most Handsome Dog – Ted.

I think all the dogs went home very happy with lots of natural dog treats purchased on the day.

Maybe next year we will add an extra category of Best Rescue so even more doggies can take part.

Christina



Winner and runner up



Most handsome dog - Ted



Best in Show

A RARE SIGHTING OF TWO STORKS IN FIRBECK



FIRBECK FIELDS...IN LANGOLD!!

Who decided to name the big new housing development at Langold Firbeck Fields??

Why name the estate Firbeck when the village is at least two or three miles away and in a different county??

Then again they weren't going to call it Pit Tip View were they...

Which takes us on to the other housing estate currently being built between Langold and Carlton.

Some over paid executive with a degree in marketing has named that Osprey View.....strange as Ospreys are thin on the ground at Langold and Carlton to say the least.

FLAG'S very own resident ornithologist David Wright tells us that he's never seen a single Osprey hereabouts.

He once spied a lone bird migrating high above Clumber many years ago.

No doubt all the Ospreys will be heading to Carlton when they hear the news...

SPONSORED WALK

On the evening of Friday 24th June a gallant band of residents from Firbeck and The Yews donned their walking shoes (and wheelchair) to raise funds for the village hall development. Walking the beautiful Firbeck footpaths, the group raised a staggering £648 towards the project. A massive thanks go to all who took part and those who sponsored them.

EPIC BIKE RIDE

Firbeck resident Les Crownshaw, is undertaking an epic bike ride this summer from Lands End to John O' Groats in the hope of raising some funds for the village hall garden. Les was 70 this year and is doing the trip on a vintage touring bike over 4 weeks. Supporting his journey will be Jane, his wife, and Charlie the dog, in their camper van. If you would like to sponsor Les and Jane visit their justgiving page at

https://www.justgiving.com/crowdfunding/firbeck-village-hall-garden-renovation?utm_id=1&utm_term=reykRNrrq

FACE PAINTING AT LETWELL FAYRE

