

HATHERN HERALD



The Hathern Parish Council Magazine

AUTUMN 2021

hathernparishcouncil.org.uk



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WELCOME

...to a new-look Hathern Herald.

It is my absolute delight and pleasure to take over editorial duties on Hathern Parish Council's magazine. Firstly, a huge congratulations and thank you must go to Roy Dann, who has been involved with the magazine since its inception in 2005 and has edited it for the past 5 years. The Hathern Herald has indeed become a top quality publication over the last 16 years and I hope that it will continue to do so well into the future.

With new personnel comes a new design and new features - as well as retaining some of the old classics of course. In this edition you will find the return of *Nature Notes*, *Meet the Neighbours* and *Open for Business*. Also included is the first of several new features - *Furry Friends*.

Another exciting bit of news is that the Herald will now be produced four times a year instead of the previous three, so look out for your Spring, Summer, Autumn AND Winter magazines hitting your doorsteps.

As the newcomer, I'd like to thank the contributors who have all agreed to stay on and continue to produce the excellent work that they are now known for. In addition, we welcome anyone who may be interested in contributing articles for future editions or joining our editorial team.

Until the next time villagers. All the very best

Benjamin Hardy

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COMMUNITY MATTERS TIME TO RETURN TO THE LIBRARY...

Whether you visited last week, last year or whether it's been a little longer, Autumn 2021 is a great time to return to Hathern Community Library!

Back in June, Hathern's Big Weekend was the first community event of 2021 that HCL took part in and raised a fantastic £154.00. This was taken in book sales and donations and they also signed up more members and volunteers.

The lockdown period provided opportunity to tackle practical challenges at HCL, giving a brighter, warmer, more welcoming environment, improving the comfort of both volunteers and visitors, along with reducing energy usage. A successful application for a £500 Charnwood Borough Council Member's Grant through Keith Harris has been used to purchase new flexible display units, supplemented by HCL funds. Thanks to Keith for his continued support of HCL.

As the end of 2021 approaches, HCL is working towards being fully operational, providing the full range of groups, activities and services that were available pre-lockdown in March 2020. The new PCSO, Julia Parker, (collar number 6136) will be setting up regular community

COMMUNITY MATTERS

surgeries - check the website for the schedule.

HCL has taken delivery of a range of new books (82 books and accompanying digital collections) specifically around the new government funded campaign – Read, Talk, Share. This fantastic resource covers each of the three mental health schemes, Reading Well for Children, Young People and Adults.

This theme will continue through Libraries Week (from October 4th 2021), with activities and events showcasing library support for local recovery, delivering services to meet diverse needs of communities and helping to combat loneliness and improve wellbeing.



A big welcome HCL's two newest trustees, Alison Breacker and Emma Ward who joined at the July AGM. Bill Leivers and Bill Pritchard have recently stepped down - thanks goes to both of them.

Alison has lived in Hathern for almost 2 years, and is really excited to become a volunteer at HCL and get involved in events and activities in the village.

Emma lives in the Dishley area of Loughborough, and has been a borough councillor for the Dishley and Hathern ward since in 2019. She brings experience from her role as trustee at Gorse Covert Community Centre and Association.

Follow HCL on social media and online - hatherncommunitylibrary.org - for more updates from your little library!

Ella-Mae Hubbard

WELCOME

ALLOTMENT DEVELOPMENT

The Parish Council's allotment site off Shepherd Rd has been the subject of much work of late – and not just that of our tenants tending their plots! Firstly, the Council has teamed up with the Hathern Wildlife Group to develop and manage a wildlife area on the site and members of that group have been working hard to remove all sorts of rubbish from the site before they can put their plan into place. You can read more about this exciting project in the separate article on page 14.

Allotments have become extremely popular over the course of the COVID pandemic and our site has been no exception with virtually all of our plots taken at any one time. This has put pressure on parking for tenants and in particular the Council was concerned that more tenants were having to park along the highway verge. In response we have created a large hard standing for vehicles on the site itself so there is now no need for any offsite parking. Thanks must go to Simon Edgley and Hathern Construction for doing a great job and in record time.



PROGRESS AT DAISY BANK

It has been a long haul but we are finally getting there! The Parish Council and William Davis are now engaged in the legal transfer of all the public spaces on Daisy Bank. This will involve the handover to the Council of the play area, the wildlife corridors that run around the site, the large green recreational spaces, and the land that will become the extension to the cemetery. We are hoping to complete the process before the end of 2021 so that we can take over the management of the grounds maintenance for the new year.

Roy Dann
Chair, Hathern PC

MORE ROOM FOR HATHERN BAND

As you may already be aware the Parish Council hosts Hathern Band's Band Room on our sports ground site in Pasture Lane. It has been home to the Band since 1984. The success of the Band over the years has been reflected in the way in which their original Band Room building has developed – being extended twice already and most recently for a third time. This latest extension is providing a unique space for the youngest players to learn and rehearse before they move onwards and upwards. It is of great credit to Hathern Band that all this work has been funded and organised through the Band itself and expertly project managed by John Baum, a member of the Band as well!



UPDATE ON HATHERN'S COMMUNITY WOODLAND

The great news is that the Forestry Commission has agreed in principle to fund this project through its HS2 Woodlands scheme. The project will create a community woodland by planting 14,000 trees on a 15-acre site off Golden Square. As I write the detail of the proposal from Charnwood Borough Council (CBC) is currently subject to a consultation with Hathern residents. The Parish Council will continue to work alongside CBC to ensure that local people are involved and that the project delivers the wide range of benefits to our community that it promises.

PLANTING AND MORE PLANTING

If you have taken a stroll down Laurie's Lane during this spring or summer you will have no doubt seen the impressive display of shrubs and flowers that run the whole length of the lane. This is all thanks to our village gardener, Kim Lawson, and the huge amount of planting she has done over recent years. Kim is employed by the Council to look after the various planted areas in the village and we will hear about Kim and what she does around Hathern in a future edition of the Herald.

Back in February we hope you would have also noticed the thousands of snowdrops we have planted along the length of Pasture Lane. One resident was so impressed that they have made a substantial donation to allow us to plant wild daffodils along sections of the lane. More about that in the next edition. If anyone would like to get involved in helping out in anyway to make our green verges more attractive – funding, supplying plants, or planting itself then please get in touch.



SHORT STORY:
**TRYING
SOMETHING NEW**

The stupid grin on my face is going to get me locked up she thought, but do I care? No, I don't she muttered to herself, whilst glancing furtively around to see if anyone else was stupid enough to be out and about this early in the dawn. No, can't see or hear anyone. She pushed on over the dew-laden rocks, sure-footed as a mountain goat despite her age. How old am I this year? she asked herself. I'm seventy-four this year. She paused for a breather. Early dawn shadows slowly being washed away as the sun, winking at the new day, eased itself above the far horizon. Self-doubt within her welled up again, draining her confidence in an instant. What on earth am I doing she thought. Now's as good a time as any to take stock. She eased herself down, tired old knees groaning in protest.

She sat, perched on the closest rock and stared eastward at the brightening sky. I'm seventy-four years old, on my own, no children and no close relatives. Bored senseless with lock-down induced tedium. And then, browsing the Internet for a possible (who knows when) weeks' holiday in a rental cottage on a remote Scottish island up popped a truly magical photo – a scene of incredible landscape, a lake surrounded by soaring mountains capped with a dusting of pristine white snow. But it wasn't the stunning location that set me off, it was the photograph itself, the detail, the composition. Photography! That's it, that's what I'm going to do! And then for hours and hours and days and days I had searched the web for reviews on 'Best Digital Cameras for 2021.' It was as if someone had re-lit a fire in me that had burned

out long ago! My enthusiasm was frightening in its intensity – I was getting carried away on a sea of artistic creativity! And I didn't even own a camera! Well, not at that precise moment.

But I did know, more or less, what I was doing. Dad had been a keen photographer when I was just a kid, in fact I've still got his old Olympus camera and lenses up in the loft. We would often go out and about and he would never be without his camera, he just seemed to have a natural eye for composition and took some great shots over the years. As I grew older, he even let me use it whenever I went on holidays on my own. I even took a couple of photographic courses, thinking I could become a professional. And then, somehow, life took over. College, bit of a going-nowhere sort of career in Finance and Insurance, bit of supply teaching in Basic Arithmetic and then, suddenly, retirement. Where had that all gone? Enough of this she decided, no more picking over the scrap-heap of my life, everyone's life-memory is cluttered with 'What ifs' and 'If onlys'. Anyway, I don't owe anyone any money, so why am I feeling guilty? But the cost of these new cameras today! The longer she had researched the web the greater her sense of guilt and unease grew. What on earth am I doing? Buying the camera and a lens and a tripod is going to cost me close to two thousand pounds! I could buy a good used car for that or have a really good holiday. But I'm just so bored! There's only so many times you can mow the lawn or weed the garden she thought, obviously trying to self-justify what will be a considerable financial outlay. What am I thinking of! Am I stupid? But hey, you know

what – I'm going to have this camera. What on earth am I saving money for? It's not as if I really need it for something important like a really posh funeral casket! And I could always sell it again if I needed to. The camera that is, not the casket! And it's got me out here! Just look at this!

She eased herself upright again, knees cracking in reluctant admonishment. Shielding her eyes now as the sun gradually strengthened its grip on this new day, she looked out and over the landscape as it dropped away before her. The depths of the valley below remained secretly hidden in the sun-less shadows. And the fresh air! She could taste the scent of the surrounding pine trees. I would never have believed air could taste so good she thought. I would never ever have done this if I hadn't bought my camera. Wrestling her back pack off her shoulders and on to her rock she rapidly set her equipment up, with the image she wanted to create burning itself into her brain. Now, all set up, she paused briefly, staring at the view portrayed in the camera. That's it! The shutter clicked and she studied the captured image. Oh my! That's perfect she thought, better than I could have imagined it. She realised her pulse had shot up and she was actually shaking with excitement. Isn't this just magical she wondered. Me, an old woman in my early 70's, bones aching and slightly out of breath, I'm out here, doing this and so enjoying every moment, watching this wonderful world of ours come alive. Eyes watering with emotion she reluctantly began to pack her equipment away. Hoisting her pack across her shoulders she paused and looked out across the valley once more, seeing the sun reaching into the deeper hidden shadows. Magical she said to herself, just magical. And slowly re-traced her footsteps back down the ridge pathway to her parked car, several hundred yards below.

She sat in her car, engine running, warming herself with hands wrapped round her mug of Thermos flask hot chocolate. Now, what next she thought. Do I go home and process the images I have taken or do I continue up this road to the next village and see what is up there? Mulling over her choices she reluctantly decided to head home - enough clambering and huffing and puffing for one day. Acknowledging her age and physical abilities made the decision a tad easier. Twenty or thirty years ago may have been different she thought. But tomorrow will come soon enough! Eyes now sparkling with renewed enthusiasm she started to mentally plan for her next adventure! Where shall I go, what images will I find! Goodness me, she thought, some people my age will still be in bed or starting their first 'Wordsearch' or 'Sudoku' of the day! And look at me – how lucky am I to be trying something so different! Feeling more alive and energetic than she had for many years she set off for home, seeing every passing tree, hedgerow, hill and woods in a new perspective – this is all part of our world she thought, all part of our lives. Why oh why has it taken me this long to see it for myself? Why haven't I made the time to stand still and stare at our world, so full of wonderful things. Well, tomorrow, she determined, I will find another wonderful image to capture! Tomorrow!

Jo Symon 2021



MEET THE NEIGHBOURS WENDY COLEY

Say 'Hello' to Wendy Coley, who has lived in Hathern since 1972 when she moved here after getting married. An ideal location choice, Wendy worked at Loughborough University from 1972-74 as a Researcher after gaining her Master's degree in Ergonomics. Many in the village will recognise Wendy as the long-serving 'Avon Lady', and thanks to the tremendous loyalty and support of her customers was 'Avon Calling!' from 1979 until 2018.

A naturally competitive sporting teenager, Wendy excelled at swimming and dominated the County and Midlands Championships, winning County titles in '65, '66, '67 and '69. Midlands titles were added in the years '66 and '67. This competitive streak continued into 1969, whilst studying for a Bachelor of Science degree in Physiology at Sheffield University, when she became British Universities Backstroke Champion. Still swimming competitively, Wendy became Midlands Masters Champion in 1987 and 1988.

In 1990 Wendy saw something which further ignited her sporting interest and took her in a completely different direction. 'An introduction to Fencing' at Hathern Community Centre. No, not the 'fencing' going around the garden, this was 'fencing' with swords! So taken with this new challenge, Wendy and a co-first timer set up what was to prove the very popular and successful *Hathern Fencing Club*. That driving competitive streak reared its head again and in 1992 Wendy became County and Midlands Fencing Champion in the *Epee* class. Not to be outdone, daughter Laura became Junior County Fencing Champion in the *Foil* class in the same year - talk about *like mother like daughter!* This extremely unusual double achievement resulted in their appearance on national television. Having got the 'fencing bug' in a big way, nothing was going to stop Wendy now. Selected to represent Great Britain, Wendy won the Silver Medal in 1993 at the *European Masters Championships* in Berlin.

Wendy's drive to try different sports resulted in her trying Indoor Bowls in 2014, and yes, you've guessed it, she has represented Leicestershire County in that sport. Let's just put all that into context for a moment – Wendy has represented Leicestershire County at three different sports, Swimming, Fencing and Indoor Bowls. For most of us mere mortals just one would be regarded as a crowning glory.

Not the sort of person to blow her own trumpet, these sporting accolades are - for the most part - hidden from view. What has not been hidden from view however, and will be readily remembered and apparent to most of the long-time village residents is Wendy's 'puppy walking'. 'Puppy walking' involves socialising young dogs in their early months before they continue their training to become fully-fledged *Guide Dogs for the Blind*. Starting in 1989, Wendy successfully 'socialised' eleven of these wonderful animals and even more

was to follow. In 1999, Wendy began taking on the initial training of puppies for *Dogs for the Disabled*. Over the ensuing years no less than seventeen of these prospective puppies began their initial socialising whilst walking the streets of Hathern.

Keen to seek out new ways to 'fund-raise' for *Dogs for the Disabled* Wendy hit on the brilliant idea of sponsored climbing! Not content however, with climbing mountains - that's been done before - Wendy was keen to try something different... climbing volcanoes!

So, in 2006, Mounts' *Etna*, *Vesuvius* and *Stromboli* were all conquered - of course they were, nothing is going to stand in this lady's way, least of all three volcanoes! Hathern's villagers supported Wendy's fundraising to the tune of over seven thousand pounds, a magnificent achievement all round. Another fundraising idea was the recycling of used postage stamps which could be sold to stamp dealers. Even to this day villagers are still putting their used stamps into the bag at the



Post Office, kindly provided by Keith and Sue.

Formed in 2008, the fairly new charity *Medical Detection Dogs* was casting their net for suitable puppy-walking candidates, and, in 2012, guess who was first on the list? Yes, correct, Wendy. So, a black Labrador by the name of 'Barton' began his career, walking at the heels of Wendy around the streets of Hathern and even appearing with Wendy in the film *A Year in Hathern*. Barton was eventually partnered with a severely diabetic lady, potentially saving her life on many occasions as his sensitive nose identifies the change in odour when blood sugar levels are dangerously low, enabling appropriate action to be taken.

Local organisations were keen to learn more about *Medical Detection Dogs* and asked Wendy to give talks and presentations on the subject. Public speaking not being one of Wendy's foremost attributes, it was with some degree of misgiving that she reluctantly agreed. Needless to say, she was successful and more talks followed. Raising awareness of the work of the charity and the wonderful success of the dogs was paramount, and before the Covid-19 pandemic caused lockdown it wasn't unusual for Wendy to give up to fifty such inspiring presentations per year. And lockdown hasn't stopped her! Though a self-confessed 'techno-phobe', the intricate workings of the internet and *Zoom* are no longer strangers to Wendy and the talks continue. Even in today's enlightened world, audiences are staggered and amazed to learn that trained dogs can detect by smell alone such diseases as cancer, Parkinson's and even Covid-19.

Now, what must it be like to be able to walk to work? A gentle walk through the village streets, saying 'good morning' to all and sundry and then arriving at your workplace five minutes after leaving home. Well, we said



earlier that Hathern villagers would probably recollect Wendy as the 'Avon' lady. She will also be well remembered as the lady working in the pharmacy dispensary for Doctors Patel and Bhalla in their surgery on Gladstone Street, where she worked for twenty-five years.

Continuing on the theme of helping others, here's something that Wendy does that's a tad 'left field'. If you are reading this, you are fortunate enough to be able to 'see'. Nearly 360,000 people in the UK won't be able to read this. Have you ever tried to put yourself in someone's shoes who can't see? Or tried verbally to describe something you can see to someone who can't? Someone who has no conception of colour? Even the thought of attempting it can be intimidating don't you think?

Wendy does it through a travel scheme called 'Travel Eyes'. Responding to a request for 'sighted guides' to escort visually-impaired holiday makers on a wind-surfing holiday to a Greek island, the holiday was booked and successfully completed. Amar Latif, founder and owner of the company, lost his sight in his teens. Promoting his concept and appearing on many TV shows he has become very successful and influential in this sphere of accompanied holidays. Wendy has been privileged to be Amar's guide on a few occasions; Laos, Cambodia, India (describing the Taj Mahal to Amar was difficult!), and Italy,

where in Rome they had a meeting with the Pope.

Other notable 'Travel Eyes' holiday locations include Japan, Borneo, Costa Rica and canoeing around the Galapagos Islands, (where describing the animals and birds became challenging).

An inveterate traveller in her own right, Wendy has pushed her own travel envelope to such esoteric locations as North Korea, Togo, Benin, Burma (Myanmar), Ethiopia and Bhutan amongst others.

There is, inevitably, a downside to all this richly deserved success, and that is Wendy is a Spurs football club supporter! Ah well, you can't be good at everything can you! Flower arranging, yoga and wildlife fill whatever remains of Wendy's time – she is particularly grateful for living in Hathern as we are surrounded by wonderful open countryside which supports an incredible range of wildlife. She is gradually introducing nature and wildlife to her grandchildren, who are becoming more appreciative of our village setting. So if, in your walks around the village and surrounding countryside you happen upon this amazing lady walking her 'rescued' Labradoodle 'Luna', please give her a cheery wave and a 'Hello Wendy!' You might also ask her what her next project is – this competitive lady will no doubt have something already in the planning stage that will be interesting, compelling, challenging and ultimately rewarding.

Wendy's wish for our village? "To retain its wonderful community spirit and preserve our amazing local wildlife for future generations to appreciate and enjoy."

From someone who has given so much to others, that's not too much to ask for is it?

Dave Cleggett



SPECIAL FEATURE FAREWELL TOM SPARKS

Tom Sparks was a familiar face around the village, having lived in Hathern since he married Vera Savage in July 1953. Originally the pair lived in one half of the current house – Stints Cottage – with next door being purchased to knock through and create space for their growing family.

Tom never moved far – he was born in September 1927 in Loughborough and lived with his father William Henry Sparks, a decorated World War One veteran, his mother Beatrice and his two siblings. Tom was very proud of his father's military achievements and medals for bravery, and Tom would wear them every year at the Armistice Day parade.

Tom's working life began aged 16 when he joined Herbert Morris as an apprentice engineer fitter. However, this was soon interrupted, as on the 4th October 1945, aged 18, Tom joined the Territorial Army on National Service, with World War Two having only ended shortly before.

Initially he joined the Royal Artillery, before

moving again to the Royal Electrical Mechanical Engineers. His training saw him travel all over the country, Europe and parts of the Middle East. Many tales can be told of his adventures during his Service.

Once back in Loughborough, Tom returned to Herbert Morris to complete his apprenticeship and during this time he met and married Vera. Having left Herbert Morris Tom's career varied, taking him from an agricultural engineer, a vehicle inspector, a car salesman, a mechanic, as transport manager, and finally at the Department of Transport as a vehicle inspector. He retired in August 1992 at 65 years of age.

Tom had a passion for gardening which remained throughout his entire life - he managed up to 5 allotments on the Shepshed Road site and would regularly open his garden for the village Open Gardens weekend, which he did right up until 2019.

There are countless tales and stories from Tom's long life, many of which would have been recounted at his local pub, The Three Crowns. Vera could never quite understand the need to contribute on a daily basis to this worthy charity, and would regularly chastise him. Despite this he maintained his dedication from 1949, through the many landlords, right up to his death - his last visit being on the Sunday prior to being taken ill.

In recent times, Tom inevitably slowed down as his many years began to catch up with him. Rather than spending hours on the allotment, he'd instead enjoy going to lunch with friends and family. He'd always look forward to Hathern Band concerts, and he was immensely proud of his children, and in particular the achievements, scholarships, degrees and qualifications earned by his grandchildren.

After a few weeks in Hospital Tom passed away on June 8th 2021, aged 93. He will be greatly missed by his family and friends.



OPEN FOR BUSINESS ALL CHANGE AT CROSS STREET STORES

It has been eighteen years since Keith and Sue Thrush purchased the Cross Street Stores and Hathern Post Office businesses. In those intervening years they have seen staff members come and go, seen the village almost double in size, endured heartache when the Post Office was raided and rallied around to play their part when Covid hit. As they head into retirement, we thought we should look back on their time serving the community.

It was early one morning back in 1999 that Keith, who had been working 14 hour night shifts at Cable & Wireless, was driving home and almost fell asleep at the wheel. He knew then that things had to change. Having held down many jobs over the years, including being a draughtsman and at one time being the youngest landlord in Britain, an opportunity arose for him to take over Coles' News newsagents in Shepshed.

It was running this business that made Keith realise that he wanted to purchase Cross Street Stores when it became available in 2003. Keith initially ran the shop with his son Daz and part time employees Ellen and Diane. Some changes were made straight away, such as opening up a doorway into the rear stock-room to create a large space for cards and stationary plus a wider range of groceries.

Daz and Diane left the shop a short while later and Ellen retired and these exits coincided with Sue being made redundant from her job at the Education Centre in Leicester. She agreed to help out 'temporarily' in the shop whilst she looked for another post. Of course, it wasn't long before that temporary arrangement became permanent and Keith and Sue have worked side by side ever since.

As the business got more established and Keith and Sue settled into living and working in the village, they became more and more involved with the community. This became evident when, in 2011, the couple were founding



members of a small group called Hathern Village Association. It was down to Keith & Sue's knowledge of almost everyone in the village that they were able to help organise A Right Royal Street Party to mark the wedding of William & Kate - and do it on a tight budget into the bargain! Between them, they had contacts for gazebos, bunting, generators, bouncy castles, trestle tables and much more, allowing the street party to proceed as a free event for the village.

Following on from this, the first Fireworks & Bonfire event in 2011 was also a huge success, and one story that is still often told, is that although the event was expected to be popular, an unprecedented number of people turned up and the bar quickly sold out of everything. It was, however, the work of a moment for Keith to hop in his car and strip the shelves of alcohol from the shop. The event was enjoyed by all, but the shop looked very bare the following morning!

As the village started growing with several new

housing estates being built, the shop steadily became busier and Keith and Sue stepped away from the Village Association. They have never been as busy as they have in recent months when, due to the Covid-19 pandemic, Cross Street Stores became a lifeline to many village residents. Keith started delivering groceries to vulnerable and shielding villagers and Sue, with the help of a team of volunteers, kept the shop fully stocked and running - even spilling out onto the streets with a new fruit & veg stand.

Even though Keith has been eligible for retirement for several years, it's the couple's dedication to the community that has kept them working. The business had been on the market for some time but the pair wanted to make sure that the new owners were going to take the shop in the right direction for the village and look after the community and its needs. Now, finally, they can put their feet up and retire, although discussions are already ongoing as to what they can both do next!

WILDLIFE GARDEN

A consequence of the lockdown for many has been a raised awareness of the natural world. We have tuned into nature as never before and this has helped many people cope during these strange times. In Hathern, we had a small wildlife group and hosted a Facebook page to share information. During lockdown the membership has soared, now over 200. The group includes some amazing photographers who have the patience and skill to take remarkable photos of our local wildlife. Many of these would not look out of place in the Countryfile Wildlife Calendar.

Our Parish Council is wildlife friendly. It has planted trees and established wild flower meadows on its land. The council owns the allotment site on Shepshed Road, and it approached Hathern Wildlife Group with the suggestion that two adjacent allotments at the far end of the site could be developed as a wildlife area. The allotments had not been worked for many years and contained a lot of rubbish of one kind or another all subsumed

under a sea of brambles. We could have just left it all for nature to take its course, but the group decided to transform it into a small managed reserve, and a team of volunteers set to work. We worked our way through the jungle and discovered fruit bushes and trees which could be maintained for wildlife with some tamed brambles retained. We have even found a grape vine happily growing wild so perhaps we should start to think about a Hathern vineyard as well! Part of the area will be used in a more traditional way to raise native plants to add into the meadow areas in the park and the cemetery.

One of the best things that can be introduced to a wildlife garden is water, and at the allotments we had the space for a sizeable pond. If we'd set to dig it out with spades, we'd still have been at it this time next year. Luckily, the new allotments car park was being constructed so digger and driver were borrowed to dig the hole. At the time of writing, further contouring is to be carried out with a mini-digger and a liner installed so that it is hoped that by the time you read this, the pond will be complete, and we'll be planting it up with wetland plants.



Of course, wildlife is all around us as we work, and we are serenaded by blackbirds, robins and wrens in the adjacent hedgerow. Sometimes a red kite circles over keeping an eye on what we're doing, or more likely looking for mice and voles. If you're interested in wildlife, why not sign up to the Hathern Wildlife Facebook page and keep in touch with the sightings in the area and our progress at the allotments.

Dave Neville

FURRY FRIENDS

You must have noticed how many of our four-legged furry friends are in Hathern? The village has an abundance of perfect pooches and at certain times of the day Pasture Lane is buzzing with dog walkers out on their daily (or twice-daily) strolls.

If you are a dog lover yourself, you probably know lots of other fellow canine owners around the village and, as it always goes, only know the names of the dogs!

Well, fear not dear reader as in our new feature, we'll be introducing you to some of Hathern's hairy hounds - starting with our editor's very own pair of little monsters....

Charley is a 7 year old labrador and Maggie is a 5 year old cocker spaniel and they have been looking after their doggy parents Ben and Laura since they were puppies.

Charley is an avid walker and gets excited as soon as the 'walking socks' come out. She loves the sniffs around the village and especially likes walking along the River Soar.

Maggie is obsessed with birds and feathers and dreams of one day catching a crow (she won't). She likes nothing better than pouncing on a discarded feather.





Wicked Hathern
Fireworks
& Bonfire

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