

Graveley Matters

July 2020

Dear Neighbours,

Coming to the end of the school term feels like a milestone reached, but with the long summer holiday stretched out ahead of us, I am wondering what we will do to fill and vary the time when we are largely stuck at home.

My kids – like many others – are less inspired by gardening to fill their days, although our son, Tom, has embraced the opportunity to earn money through lockdown to save up for a drone (the lawn has been well mowed). I was very dubious about this purchase, expecting almost immediate disappointment as it impaled itself into the ground, or went AWOL across the fields never to be seen again. But it is actually an incredible bit of kit and as someone who is technologically apathetic – as well as hopelessly inept – I am impressed. Needless to say, he won't let me have a go, but I am appreciative of the photos he has been taking, some of which I have stolen for this month's edition!

The summer will offer relief from constant video lessons and meetings for us all. Although, I have enjoyed the odd light-hearted moment listening in on lessons and hearing the less IT savvy teachers



grapple with how to screen-share or stumble over their keyboard looking for the button to unmute themselves, with the pupils – all fully functioning IT pros – being slow to offer advice! It has all been good humoured and hats-off and enormous thanks to all teaching professionals who have given our children routine and structure and an education under the most challenging of circumstances.

Emma Hogg
emmafc@hotmail.com

The maze at Crow End – photo by Tom Hogg. If you wish to use the maze during the summer, please contact me via the email above.

St. Mary's Church Services (11.30 am start unless stated otherwise)

5 th July	Holy Communion.	26 th July	Morning Worship
12 th July	Morning Worship	2 nd August	Holy Communion.
19 th July	Short Holy Communion.	9 th August	Morning Worship.
The church has installed social distancing measures. Book swap remains suspended until further notice.		Rector: Dave Brown (01438) 213587, revdmbrown@gmail.com Churchwardens: Janet Singleton (01438) 813863 and Hilary Thompson (01438) 720771	

Graveley Matters – have your say on changes to our newsletter.

Lockdown has forced us to change the way that we distribute Graveley Matters. With the Bridge Builders Christian Trust office being closed, I was not able to get it printed and with stringent social distancing guidelines we felt it inappropriate to deliver door to door. So, we started sending the newsletter by email.

In the absence of an email distribution list, the system has been a bit haphazard and reliant upon the Graveley Matters distributors (Marion Bracey, Pauline Logan, Penny Lines and Danielle Galvin) and I emailing Graveley Matters to everyone we have email addresses for and then asking recipients to do the same. Probably some subscribers may have not received the newsletter at all, whilst others got multiple copies. Not ideal.

With the Bridge Builders office to remain closed for the foreseeable future, I feel it is a time to consider how we want to receive Graveley Matters in the future and, whilst we're at it, find out what people want to read within it.

So, I have created an online questionnaire. But, before excitedly clicking the link and heading to the questionnaire, a quick note about subscriptions.

Traditionally, subscriptions are collected in July and we ask for just £6 for the year. Everyone who helps to produce or distribute Graveley Matters does so as a volunteer, so the only outgoings are the printing costs charged by the Bridge Builders Christian Trust. The subscription covers that, and any remaining money is then given as a donation to St. Mary's Church and used towards maintaining the historic building.

If readership preference is to continue with the electronic format newsletter, there will be no printing costs, so there is a question as to whether people would want to make a voluntary donation to the church in lieu of receiving the village magazine? St Mary's church appreciates every bit of help it gets, and these last few months have been especially challenging as the church has been closed for services and collections not taken.

Please go to link below (click or copy and paste into your browser).

<https://forms.gle/A5CktyKF4fh33fFD8>

Thank you!

Emma (ed).

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to read yours?

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Out and about in Graveley

Socially distancing on VE Day.

With the planned street-party abandoned due to lockdown restrictions, villagers found other ways to celebrate VE 75 Day on Friday 8th May.

It was a lovely hot, summery day and several socially distanced gatherings popped up around the village.

For those of us on Church Lane, the party goers gathered on the verge either side of the lane outside Graveleybury Farm. Music played Dame Vera Lynn from a cassette player and bunting and flags adorned the farm buildings. (The cassette player took some explaining to the younger generation, who thought it an amusingly vintage artefact). People arrived with wheel-barrows of refreshments and picnic blankets and plonked themselves down on the verge, respectfully two meters away from each other.

Similar gatherings were taking place Pond Side and whilst it was a shame that the village was not able to come together to mark the special occasion, it was nice that the community spirit did not wane and the toast to the Nation took place at 3pm as planned.



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*Amy Hobbs, MAFHP, MCFHP
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Out and about around Graveley.

Beautifying Graveley High Street!

Thank you to Graveley Environment Group for yet again donning high-vis vests and planting-up the central reservations on the High Street. At least this year the invisible corona virus traffic calming effect made it a safer exercise!

These flower beds are a horticulturists nightmare. Awash with grit and salt throughout winter and a daily attack of pollution, it takes the greenest of fingers and the sturdiest of plants to prettify these plots.

Thank you to all who got involved. Your work really does make the village look more attractive and inviting.



A long way from home and a happy ending.

Last week, a stray cat appeared at Graveley Hall Farm. He frightened us out of our skins when he leapt down from his hiding place.

He was a lovely cat. Very small and very affectionate. We didn't recognise him as local and asked around. No luck.

He seemed too lovable to have been dumped and too nervous to leave our tack room to be a street-wise cat on a journey.

So, to the vet we went, hoping that he would be microchipped: he was. And what a journey...

His family in Milton Keynes last saw him the previous week and had given up hope of seeing him again!

We are still wondering how he made it to Graveley.

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Village diary

Graveley book swap: Suspended due to COVID pandemic until further notice.

Graveley Parish Council Meeting: Meetings via Zoom on the third Tuesday of the month. Please contact the Parish Clerk for information.

Graveley Table Tennis Club: Suspended due to the COVID 19 pandemic.

Graveley contacts and organisations

Graveley Village Website: www.graveley.org.uk

MP for Hitchin and Harpenden: Bim Afolami.
bim.afolami.mp@parliament.uk

County Councillor: Mr Steve Jarvis.
steve@stevejarvis.org.uk. 26 High Street, Graveley,
Hitchin, SG4 7LA. 01438 727122

North Herts District Councillors: Mr George Davies,
George.Davies@north-herts.gov.uk. Mr Terry Tyler,
07868 016401, terry-tyler@hotmail.co.uk

Parish Council Chair: Martin Griffin,
Martin.Griffin@finedata.com

Parish Clerk: Danielle Galvan,
Parishclerk@graveley.org.uk

Graveley Cricket Club Secretary: Mrs P Logan, 01438
355089

Bell Ringing: Peter Bracey, Tower Captain, 01438
350082

Report fly tipping: Call Urbaser 0800 3286023

Graveley Village Hall bookings: Beverley Dean,
bdeangvh@mail.com, 07543 610908

**To report a crime, dial 999 for emergencies and 101
for urgent matters to discuss over the phone.**

Area sergeant: Guy.Westwood@herts.pnn.police.uk

PCSO (rural): Becki O'Driscoll,

Game reviews:

OK Play!

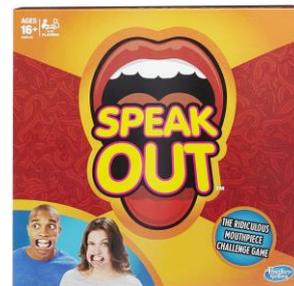
This is an extremely easy game to learn with the shortest set of rules I have ever seen (as someone who doesn't bother to read rules, this suits me very well).

It is a simple 5 in a row tile game for up to 4 players. Can be played anywhere and is compact and designed to hang off a handbag. These last attributes are somewhat redundant currently when the concept of going out is as alien as a Martian invasion and our brewing agoraphobia will likely have us cowering behind our closed doors for months to come. That aside it is an excellent game. Play it at home – highly recommended.



Speak Out.

If you were ever fitted with dental braces, you may have an advantage over others in this game... or not. This is a game where you speak a straight-forward word or phrase with a plastic mouth guard in your mouth. You will look and sound ridiculous, but it is funny. Not one for a first date but can be played via Zoom!



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Notes from the Countryside

Wild life report

Our baby Blue Tits are flourishing and our bird feeders are humming with activity. We get huge pleasure from watching them, particularly when the parents are feeding their young while sitting on top of the feeder pole. Fat balls are very popular at the moment.

We have two beekeepers with hives on the farm and they are doing very well in the calm and hot weather. This is the time of year when bees are inclined to swarm and I noticed signs of this happening the other day. Before they swarm, they send out scouts and this was happening. In preparation, the beekeeper had put a new hive next door in the hope that they would move in, however when the expected swarm happened, they went into the top of a nearby tree and were reluctant to cooperate. They used to say that a swarm of bees in May is worth a load of hay; a swarm in June is worth a silver spoon, but a swarm in July isn't worth a fly! A load of hay being worth much more than a silver spoon means that the new colony will produce a decent crop of honey in its first year. The later swarms will need feeding to get them through the Winter and thus cost money.

Farming report

The very unseasonal weather continues with an almost complete lack of rain and as I write this, strong winds are blowing across the farm, having the effect of further drying out the land. Spring sown corn is under a lot of stress and farmers are getting very worried for harvest prospects.

Unusually for this time of year, we have been haymaking. My Father always used to say "Harry you will never make good hay until July when the land has dried out a bit." Of course, this year the land is already bone dry and we have been making some very good quality hay without a drop of rain on it. Rain is now wanted on the aftermath to encourage re-growth for a second cut of hay in August.

You may remember that our bull had destroyed my hen run. We put up a fine new one and I bought 5 beautiful pullets to occupy it. They soon started to lay and I was getting nearly 5 eggs a day from them. Disaster then struck when a fox managed to climb over the 6

foot high wire netting fence and killed four of them. It ate only one of the hens and in the way that they do, killed the others for pleasure. I never knew that a fox could get over a 6 foot fence, so I now have a two strand wire electric fence that generates 5000 volts and that will deter them. One hen has survived and is faithfully producing an egg every day.

Garden report

Fleece saved my early potatoes from the frost and we are now eating the first earlies and they are delicious. I grow a variety of lettuce called Clarion and they are cropping very well indeed with lovely big hearts to them. My beans are climbing their poles, the warm weather has brought them on very quickly, but they do need a lot of water to keep them going.

**Harry Bott
Benington**

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Please come and help shape your Graveley village.

Become a Parish Councillor.

Are you interested in the life of your village; your parish; your environment; recreational facilities, planning and housing issues? Just a few of the areas where the Graveley Parish Council gets involved to help make a difference to the Graveley community.

Graveley Parish Council is seeking to co-opt a volunteer parish councillor. The Council meets approximately 10 times a year, usually on the first Tuesday of them month for an hour, normally at the Village Hall, albeit via video conferencing during the COVID 19 pandemic.

To express your interest, please submit a letter of application giving brief reasons why you should be considered for the vacancy to the clerk at the address below by Tuesday 14th July 2020. A decision will be made at the meeting on Tuesday 21st July 2020. If you require any further information please contact the clerk.

E: parishclerk@graveley.org.uk
T: 01438 893149
W: www.graveley.org.uk



Village Hall Treasurer Required!

Do you have a head for figures and four hours per month to spare?

The Village Hall Trustees are looking for a volunteer Treasurer to work alongside them to help keep the books of the village hall, send out invoices and make payments etc.

Some experience in finance would be beneficial although full training can be provided.

If you are interested or have any questions, please email: pete@braceys-accountants.co.uk

Applicants must be independent of any users of the Hall.

Gardening on a grand scale – keeping the church yard tidy.



If you have visited the church yard in the last couple of months you would have noticed how fantastic it looks. Tony our grass cutting man is doing a brilliant job!

If anyone could help towards the cost of keeping our church yard looking so good, the church would be very grateful.

The Parish Council have given a generous contribution in years past but this is discretionary and depends on other calls on their finances for use in the village. But in these hard times and no congregation coming to church, we could do with help!

If you think you could contribute something please contact Hilary Thompson on 01438 720771.

With anticipation, Thank you very much.

Marion Bracey.

VILLAGE HALL BOOKINGS

For all village hall enquiries, please contact:

Beverley Dean

bdeangvh@mail.com,
07543 610908



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GRAVELEY'S BIN SCHEDULE

7th and 21st July; 4th and 18th August = GARDEN WASTE AND RECYCLING (including blue box for paper).

14th and 28th July; 11th and 25th August = REFUSE BIN

- The BROWN FOOD CADDY bin is collected each week.
- Please dispose of old batteries in specialist bins located at shops and supermarkets or you can place them in a bag on top of the recycling bin.
- Textiles, such as old clothes, paired shoes, towels and bed linen will be collected if placed in a carrier bag next to your recycling on collection day
- Extra recycling: You may place additional recycling out for collection next to your grey bin in a recyclable cardboard box or reusable plastic storage box.

Graveley Matters
Editor: Emma Hogg
Email: emmafc@hotmail.com

Please send copy to the editor by the end of the month.