

THE HEX-PRESS

YOUR FREE HEXTHORPE COMMUNITY NEWSPAPER no. 87 October 2010
Sponsored by HEXQOL, the Hexthorpe Quality of Life Initiative

GOOD NEWS FOR THE HEX-PRESS

There is good news for the future of the Hexpress. There was a real fear that the Hexpress would fold. However, there have been talks between the Hexpress and Hexthorpe School. The outcome is that the Hexpress is linking up with the school's "Hexfiles". This joint paper will be published three times a year – in October, February and May.

The school has in recent years published Hexfiles every term of the school year. It is a small magazine put together by the pupils. The Hexpress has struggled over the last few years to raise funds and so it has only appeared occasionally. It is now hoped that both the Hexpress and Hexfiles will be on a firmer footing.

There are a number of advantages in this venture. There will be a much greater chance of finding funds through a united paper. The bond between the community and the school will be further strengthened. The children will be able to make a larger contribution.

The two papers will maintain their own identity in the new publication. It will continue to be delivered to every household in Hexthorpe. The Hexpress first appeared in 1989. It was published and financed by Hexthorpe Methodist Church. In 2001 it was handed over to Hexqol, who have published it ever since. It has played a vital role over the years in our community. Many people have contributed to it. It has always been the aim of the paper to highlight the good things that have happened. Through its letter page it has provided

a platform for those who have concerns. Council and other officers have often replied.

In this issue we have two articles that are of immediate interest to the life of the community. One is based on an interview with Ben McCall, the director of Doncaster New Deal for Community. The life of New Deal is coming to an end and we asked Ben questions about its role in Hexthorpe. The other is the story of an attempt by the members of Hexqol to provide a resource centre for our community. It was a frustrating time and raises many important questions.

We hope that in the new venture all matters concerning our community will continue to be raised. We want people and local organisations to feel that they can contribute and that their voice can be heard on matters related to our community life. We have much to be proud of; we also have much that could be improved. Together we can make a difference.

A Big Thank You

Have you ever wondered how the Hexpress over the years arrived at your door? It has been delivered by a dedicated team of local volunteers, some of whom have done the task since the first issue, twenty-one years ago. A big Thank You is due to them. Their efforts have been much appreciated. With this joint venture a new team is doing the job, although some of the old team have made themselves available again.

WHO'S WHO

Local Councillors

Stuart Exelby 70 Carr View Avenue, Tel 329521
Glyn Jones 20 Lister Avenue, Balby DN4 8AR
Tel. 816881
John McHale Tel. 326350

Methodist Minister

John Hartley 1 Cedar Road, Balby Tel: 852024

The Junction Manager

John Crawford, 61 Hexthorpe Road Tel: 349341

Parish Priest

Hexthorpe Community Constable

contact P.C. Trevor Wood Tel: 0114 220 2020

Hexthorpe Safer Neighbourhood Team

Contact: Tel. 385339
Address: Balby Depot, Oswin Avenue, Balby

MOBILE LIBRARY

On Fridays:

Patrick Stirling Court	9.30-10.00pm
Shadyside: (opp. Windle Rd)	10.05-10.35am
Eden Grove	10.40-11.10am
Shadyside (St Jude's Church)	11.15-11.45am

Any letters, articles, adverts contact:

Donald, 31 Old Hexthorpe, Tel: 852521

The Junction

The Junction is open to all from 10.00-4.00 each weekday. There is a comfortable drop-in where you can spend as much or as little time as you like. You can have a tea or coffee and join in the friendly chat or just sit in peace. Members of staff are happy to talk privately with you if you need to talk over something, or need some specific advice or help. There is a computer suite with free broadband access for all. Free computer courses are also available. For further information or help please call in or ring 349341.

WEEKLY EVENTS

Methodist Church Hall

S.A.R.A Group (Stay and Rest Awhile)
Mums and Tots Group Thursday 9.45 - 11.45 am

Mini Cruz
Key Stage 1 children Tuesday 3.30 p.m.

Mega Cruz
School Years 3-6 Tuesday 5.30 p.m.

The Group with No Name
School Year 7 and upwards Tuesday 7.15 p.m.

You are invited on any Sunday to the Worship Services at Hexthorpe Methodist Church
10.30 am and 6.00 pm

* * * *

At Hexthorpe Parish Hall (St Jude's)

Laughton Road, Hexthorpe

Monday	1.45-3.15 pm	Yoga
	6.00-7.00 pm	Tae Kwon Do
Tuesday	5.30-9.30 pm	Tae Kwon Do
Wednesday	6.45-8.15 pm	Yoga
Thursday	6.00-7.00 pm	Tae Kwon Do
Friday alternate weeks	7.00-9.00 pm	Prize Bingo

Other events as advertised

Hire of hall - phone 321569

Up to 6.00 pm	£15.00 per hour
From 6.00-9.30 pm	£20.00 per hour

Sunday Services

9.00am	Morning Prayer
10.00 am	Parish Mass and Junior School

Regular meetings for you to attend and hear the latest news concerning Hexthorpe and also for you to ask questions.

TARA

Hexthorpe Tenants and Residents Meeting
Every third Tuesday of the month at 7.00pm
in Hexthorpe School Hall.
It costs £1 per household per year to join.

Enjoy Walking? Want to get out more?

Come along and join local people on a series of local led walks around Hexthorpe and its surrounding area. The group walks every Thursday at 9.a.m. from outside the main entrance to Hexthorpe Primary School.

It is organised by the national charity Living Streets together with friends of Hexthorpe Flatts Park and the Neighbourhood Community First Officers. Jim Shaw of Living Streets who leads the walks says, 'Although the walks were initially started as a means of getting parents walking more after dropping their children off at school, anyone is more than welcome to join us. The group is very informal and friendly and the walks usually last no more than 45 minutes. As well as being an ideal way to start your day, the varied routes we take may also give people a different perspective of Hexthorpe that only being on foot can offer.'

Jim has been working with The Friends of Hexthorpe Flatts Park group in trying to promote the charity's Walk to School scheme.

Contact Jim on 07590 048491 for further information.

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We would like to help, please do ask

“By 2011 we want people to be queuing up to live here, not queuing up to leave”

This was the heading of a New Deal document in 2001 when it was setting out its goals to transform Central Doncaster. The Hexpress appreciates the time Ben McCall, the present New Deal director has given to discuss where the New Deal is at now and plans for the future.

An area of 4,000 linked up households made up the New Deal area. In Doncaster that included the first 6 streets as you come into Hexthorpe from town. £50 million was made available over 10 years to regenerate the area. So just what has New Deal achieved? What have been the benefits in Hexthorpe? What about the future? What is happening to the properties purchased by New Deal in Hexthorpe and Balby?

So are some people queuing up to live here?

Ben, although a professional, seems to have a real, genuine heart for the people of the area. He was quite open about the positives and also the negative aspects of the New Deal programme.

Although there is much to be done regarding the visual environment, Ben pointed out that there have been improvements – quality of housing still remains a problem, but many properties have been renovated e.g. the prominent ones on Hexthorpe Road, that have been an eyesore for years. Alley Gates have been introduced. It is not only in physical improvements that New Deal is interested. Ben said that they had a holistic approach. Much of the work that has been done is not immediately obvious.

Social regeneration is a high priority. Much has been achieved in the areas of education and training. There are schemes to help those without work. The rate of worklessness has come down. Over a thousand people have been found employment through the various schemes. In a sense, Ben says, it can be frustrating in that the figures don't always

reflect success. When people find employment they often move away and so it is then not reflected in the local rate of worklessness.

It was suggested to Ben that the New Deal in its beginning laid great emphasis on being ‘bottom up’ – that people and groups would set the agenda. It appears to some that over the years it has become very much ‘top down’ – that things are being done to and for the community. Ben responded by pointing out some of the groups in Hexthorpe that had benefited from New Deal input – the Rowing Club, the Boxing Club, the Allotment Holders Society, the Junction. Over the years he reckons that up to a third of the New Deal money has been spent on supporting third sector (community) groups – like those listed above - through their grant system.

Three houses – two in Hexthorpe Road and one in Windle Road - have been bought and renovated. The tenancies have been advertised. Ben says that there is to be a rigorous process of interviewing prospective occupants. Only people who have a commitment to be part of community life will be considered. If there is no evidence of that after 6 months then new tenants will be sought.

The former Care Home on Greenfield Lane was bought in the hope that a dentist could be established there. However, the premises are not suitable for that purpose and so a new use will have to be found, including a possible sale. The Hexthorpe House pub was bought and demolished. At the moment it is still unclear as to what is to happen to the site; there is the possibility of some sheltered accommodation scheme. Ben promised that consultation will take place.

On being asked why feasibility studies had not been made before purchase, Ben said that with hindsight that should have happened, in particular in relation to the Greenfield Road Site. It was pointed out to Ben that local organisations, in order to access funding, had to go through a rigorous process, including the development of a business plan. If that had happened in this case the property would not have been bought. Most people seem to appreciate the fact that the eyesore of a derelict Hexthorpe House has gone, but for how long will it now be left? Local groups who could have used both the vacant Shadyside site and now this site have a sense of frustration. 'Bottom up' can deliver if encouraged.

The New Deal is in the process of becoming the Central Doncaster Development Trust. This will be fully operational in 2011. The properties mentioned and the old college near the Minster are being developed so that a legacy from New Deal will be left and central Doncaster can continue in its transformation.

HEXPRESS COMMENT

We would love to hear what you have to say regarding New Deal and also the article on Hexqol and The Mallard centre. Is Hexthorpe a better place now to live in than it was 10 years ago? What are the positives about our community? What could be improved? It is easy to sit on the sidelines and complain. However, a number of people in various groups, both now and over the years, have put in many hours to help improve life in Hexthorpe. Sometimes there seems little obvious reward; but where would our community be without them? Please let us hear what you are thinking. Why are you still living here and not queuing up to leave? What do you like about living here?

Angies

Tasty Corner

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HEALTHY LIVING FOR ALL

My name is Andrew Picken and I work for NHS Doncaster as part of the Enhanced Public Health Programme (EPHP) to which I help deliver in Hexthorpe.

What is the Enhanced Public Health Programme about?

The programme involves encouraging healthy lifestyles through a whole range of different community activities, events and services to help you make the right choices.

It includes the following that are run in the area in local venues and are free of charge if you live in Hexthorpe!

- Free access to exercise sessions
- Weight management classes
- A range of information and advice on your health such as alcohol issues, keeping warm in winter and activities in the area to name but a few that you can join!
- Healthy eating sessions and nutritional advice
- "Test your health" sessions for anyone over the age of 40
- NHS Help giving up smoking
- Activities for young people outside School (Dj-ing, Sports)
- Smoke free homes
- Counselling services
- Healthy walking groups

Who do I work with?

To help promote the EPHP I work closely with Hexthorpe Primary School (you might have seen me at their events), Police, Neighbourhood team, Opportunity centres and most importantly local community groups. I also set up 'Health projects' and have free training available in walk leadership courses for volunteers. This can be great for your CV and enable you to lead health walks to help people exercise more.

How to find out more?

Want to know more or find out what's available and when then please contact:

Andy at NHS Doncaster on 07919624466 (call or text)

or look in the display board outside Hexthorpe Primary School to find out what's going on and where.

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LEAVE UNEMPLOYMENT BEHIND

Have you ever seen the 'Success Doncaster' bus parked near the Clock or Junction?

Have you ever wondered what it is for?

Here is the answer from the Balby and Hexthorpe Opportunities Centres.

'Our trained customer service advisors will provide a warm welcome at our local Opportunity Centres. There is one based at Balby library and we have a unique mobile bus that travels around the neighbourhood.

- We have free to use computers to help you search for a job, prepare a CV, write a business plan or look for training and college courses.

The Opportunity Centres provide details of local job vacancies and advice and information about how to search for and apply for a job.

- If working for someone else isn't your thing, we can help you set up your own business and become self employed.
- There is also support and advice available on any money management issues you have from our financial advisors.

All the support is free and confidential and you don't need an appointment. For further information please call the Opportunity Centre on 855791 or email balbyandhexthorpeoc@doncaster.gov.uk

"Don't know what the world is coming to"

How often have we heard that remark or said it ourselves?

Listen to what others have said.

'When I look at the younger generation, I despair of the future of civilization.'

Aristotle 300 BC

'The world is passing through troublesome times. The younger people of today think of nothing but themselves. They have no reverence for parents or old age. They are impatient of all restraint. They talk as if they knew everything and what passes for wisdom with us is foolishness to them. As for the girls, they are immodest and unwomanly in speech, behaviour and dress.'

Peter the Monk 1274

'There is nothing around but ruin and despair.'

William Pitt 1806

'Nothing now can save England from shipwreck.'

Lord Shaftesbury 1806

'Nowadays life is not worth living; with hustle and bustle it is just one long process of growing tired.'

Samuel Butler 1851

'In every department of our nation, industry, commerce and agriculture, there is no hope.'

Disraeli 1852

Also see the News in Brief on the next page (p8)

News in Brief

Successful Coffee Event

A Coffee event was held recently in the Parish Hall. It was part of the biggest coffee morning in the world. Proceeds were for the McMillan Nurses. It was extremely well organised and also well attended. Local people were there as well as community officers. Congratulations to the organizers – the Neighbourhood Team – the cakes were superb!

Credit Union

A branch of the Doncaster Credit Union is now up and running at the Junction. Two of the staff there have been trained and the hours of opening are between 1.30 and 2.30 on Wednesdays. A Credit Union is made up of members who can save together, withdraw and access loans at fair rates of interest. You can save as little or as much as you want, when you want. It is ideal for those who for any reason are not happy using the established banks. If you are interested please call in at the Junction. Diana or Sue will be pleased to help and advise you, or call 349341.

What a Driver!

'If ever there is a competition for the bus driver of the year, then I know who should get it.' 'It is a pleasure to catch the bus, you are always made welcome.' 'She is the most considerate bus driver I have ever come across.' These are just some of the comments made about Hexthorpe's favourite driver. She is of course, Diane. Diane has become very much part of the Hexthorpe community.

There is always a cheerful welcome and a goodbye for all the passengers. Diane knows many by name. No-one is ever left at a bus-stop; she seems to know those among the people walking along the pavement who need the bus and so she waits. She knows which stops many want without being told. What other driver waits for the passengers to find their seats before driving off? Diane takes pride in the appearance of the bus e.g gathering up discarded newspapers.

Thank you Diane, for brightening up many people's day. It must also give you a great feeling of job satisfaction

A Scene on Hexthorpe Bridge

October 8th 1920 Doncaster Magistrates Court

As a result of a Sunday evening scene on Hexthorpe Bridge, two women H.C. and J.T. appeared at the court in answer to a summons by a third woman S.M. for using abusive language. From the evidence it appeared that the parties mentioned, together with others in the neighbourhood were indulging in 'a general interchange of personalities' – it was decided that the best way to treat all the same was for them to pay a fine of 5 shillings each.

A Scene in the Street

October 30th 1885 School Log Book

A few boys are very rough in the school playground and in the streets. F.P. is a very vicious boy and he was fighting with J.C. in the street. He has played truant several times. Both boys were punished for fighting. They received two strokes on each hand.

A Scene in the School

August 6th 1891 School Log Book

Mrs W. attempted a forcible entry into the school because I refused to allow her son to leave before 12 o'clock. Her children have frequently been permitted to go, but owing to their irregular attendance I refused further permission. She assaulted me and I ejected her from the school.

A Letter to the Gazette

Doncaster Gazette 1900

Not alone in London or our big cities does hooliganism flourish and ruffianism reign. Scarcely, however, would one expect that in presumably quiet Hexthorpe such a pestiferous gang could exist, making the night hideous with their idiotic yells and maniacal horseplay. Yet it is a fact that bands of these imbeciles do exist and by their brutal lawlessness place both life and limb in continual jeopardy.

Yours faithfully, *Disgusted*

Carols in the Dell

Christmas Carols in the Dell, Hexthorpe on Wednesday 15th December from 6.00pm-7.30pm with the Doncaster Scout Band and Hexthorpe Primary School Children. Refreshments and Santa.

MALLARD CENTRE IS 'DEAD DUCK'

This is a fairly long detailed summary of the struggle to have a Resources Centre in Hexthorpe. We think it is necessary so that everyone is informed as to what the story is. Many have asked questions and hopefully this will answer them.

'The Mallard centre has been blown out of the water. It is now a dead duck'. So the minutes of Hexqol said in June 2007. What had started out in 1999 with a vision of a new Resources Centre for Hexthorpe was now no more. Dedicated local people who had devoted hundreds of hours in striving to provide a superb facility for the community had to admit that their efforts had failed. So what went wrong? Why is the site for the proposed centre now just a weed patch? Are there lessons to be learned?

A summary of the story

- It all began with a meeting in Hexthorpe School in 1998. Andy Ross, the former manager of the Junction, and Bob Baker took the lead. There was discussion about the way forward for Hexthorpe. An open forum was held in Eden Grove in February 1999. Various heads of council departments were present and more than 250 local residents turned up. That was an amazing turnout. It showed how local people were in support of new initiatives for the community. Doncaster Health set up a Hexthorpe Pilot for Community Involvement. Anne Heaven played a significant part in this.
- A major survey was undertaken. A questionnaire was given out and there was more than a 20% return, which officials said was very good. As a result it was decided that the best way to deliver much of the findings of the survey was to establish a community group with the name of Hexthorpe Quality of Life (HEXQOL). The main object of the group would be to enable a community resources centre to be built.
- In October 1999 this group met for the first time. Bob Baker was the chair, Andy Ross had left Hexthorpe. There were six local residents, eventually that reduced to three, and six local council and agency workers. Two councillors, firstly John Hoare then latterly John McHale gave full support. This was appreciated.
- A site for the centre was secured next to the Bowls Club. Advice was given by community development workers. A Consultant helped to draw up a Business Plan. This was a major piece of work involving many hours of discussion, consultations, training and visits. Discussions were held with various agencies (stakeholders) – e.g.s education, health, library, to see if they could use the proposed centre. Secure promises had to be found to make sure that it would be a viable concern.
- An architect was engaged and plans were drawn up, a quantity surveyor estimated the detailed costs, an engineer examined the site. More consultants had to be engaged to guide the group through the various necessary paperwork and technical matters, to firm up the promises of the stakeholders and to help with funding applications.
- Hexqol became registered as a Company by Limited Guarantee. The audited accounts had to be sent to Companies House for scrutiny and publication.
- Vision days for residents were held with the plans and a model of the proposed centre on display.
- By the end of 2002 a comment in the minutes showed the growing anxiety of the group, 'All the agencies are always encouraging in words but concrete help would be appreciated'.

- The original estimated cost of the building was £800,000. This was realised to be somewhat expensive and so less adventurous plans were drawn up for £650,000. Over the years the costs inevitably escalated until finally some £819,000 would be needed.
- Contacts were made, discussions took place, complicated forms were filled in and various funders promised much, but nothing materialised. Hopes raised were constantly dashed.
- Then early in 2004 the consultant said that 'she had not been able to identify suitable stakeholders. Those who had earlier promised their support had moved on to other projects e.g. Doncaster College is now concentrating on obtaining University status, the PCT are committed to their 'Liff' programme. No one organization will guarantee responsibility for ownership or funding revenue nor give support of any substance to guarantee sustainability.' This confirmed the group's fears.
- However, hopes were raised again when New Deal suggested that they could fund the project, it becoming part of their legacy when New Deal finished. The plans had been approved by the planners; all the building plans, costs and site were ready for the off. If funding came the group could go out for tender and then building could start within months. But no funds materialized.
- In April 2007 New Deal said that they would not be supporting the project; they said that it was not viable. The group decided that all avenues had been explored and therefore there would be no Mallard Centre. The site still remains empty, reminding us what might have been.
- Hexqol is grateful to all those who gave support from the initial stages until the project was ready to go to tender. A total of some £133,000 was received from funding bodies.
- The following awarded Hexqol grants – SRB Community Fund, Quick Win New Deal Fund, Neighbourhood Renewal Fund, Community Forum, DMBC Safety in Community, SY Police Authority General Fund, New Deal Impact Fund, DMBC
- The key major funding bodies that applications were made to were NRF, the Doncaster New Deal for Communities and the Big Lottery Fund. A very complicated form was submitted to the Lottery Fund. This took many hours to fill in by volunteers. After a long delay it was returned asking for more technical details and it must be resubmitted within 7 days. This was an impossibility. Advice from technical experts was needed. This would cost money and so it was catch 22 situation. A grant was needed to apply for a grant!
- NRF promised to support the project; New Deal was ready to match fund. NRF never delivered and so nothing materialized.
- Hopes were raised with New Deal, as described above. In 2007 they said that they would not be supporting the centre.

What about the funding?

Consultants, architects, surveyors, engineers, buildings all cost money. From the start many hours were put in accessing the necessary funds. Successful bids were made. The total received was £133,000. This was for all the preliminary work. It was hoped that the funding for the building would come from major funding organisations.

Some Reflections

- The £133,000 came from funds that were wholly or partly dedicated for needy communities. It was to trigger off receiving major funds to develop the Mallard Centre. However, virtually all the money went to pay professionals who provided their necessary expertise. All this of course was perfectly legitimate, but it did mean that in this case there was no eventual benefit for the community. That has been the experience of Hexqol. How many similar scenarios are there throughout the country?
- The initiative was spearheaded by local people. The vision came from within the community. The Hexqol local members were in the main still there after eight years. Development workers, advisors, agency and local officers came and went. It seemed that each stakeholder had their

own agenda that was subject to change and it became impossible from a local perspective to join them up. The system seems unable to cope with 'bottom up' schemes.

- The members of Hexqol spent hundreds of hours pursuing the vision. Five were there throughout the whole time. The Hexthorpe Vicar, John Gilbert, was always very supportive. Joan Reasbeck kept the minutes and Donald was treasurer. Brian Cliff was a faithful member who made available the Travis Centre for meetings and offered hospitality – he was always keen

that 'bricks and mortar' should be seen! Bob Baker was the chairperson and the driving force behind the project. For some years he lived the Mallard Centre. He spent many hours at meetings fighting the cause, chasing people up, writing letters, making phone calls. Bob left no stone unturned in his pursuit of the goal. Even after setbacks he was not deterred. All the members of Hexqol were volunteers and they gave of their time without receiving any payment.

HEXPRESS COMMENT

We have published details of the Mallard Story so that people can have a picture of what has been involved over the years. Many local people asked questions about the seeming lack of progress. It was not for want of trying. The community should be grateful for those residents who have worked so hard. Some community workers and officials from statutory groups have been extremely helpful and sympathetic; our councillors, formerly John Hoare and more recently John McHale have been tireless in their efforts. We know that the members of Hexqol have on occasions felt frustrated by some 'professionals' – promises not kept, phone calls not returned, appointments missed. There are lessons to be learned as indicated in the reflections. We hope that soon the derelict site on Shady Side will be used for a positive purpose for the community. Where will the initiative come from? The community has tried but to no avail.



The site today – but no Mallard Centre

The HEX-PRESS

YOUR FREE HEXTHORPE COMMUNITY NEWSPAPER • No. 60 • June/July 1999

Hollywood for a Day

Hexthorpe Road became Hollywood for a day recently. It was used to film a scene in a new film 'Whatever Happened To Harold Smith?' The film stars Tom Courtenay, Stephen Fry, Lulu, Michael Legge and David Thewlis.

The street was chosen because the parade of shops gave the ideal background for the scene. Some of the shops were painted up, giving a



the street. It all created enormous interest in the neighbourhood.

Most of the film has been shot in Sheffield and it is anticipated that it will be in the cinemas sometime in next year. Look out for it and see Hexthorpe chips being eaten on the set!

1970s look. Overnight there appeared an ironmongers a hairdressing salon and some dentist's rooms.

A spokesman for the film said " We looked long and hard for a location and it was perfect. It captured the mood perfectly."

Car transporters carried in a fleet of 1970s cars to give an authentic look to

