

THE HEXPRESS

YOUR FREE HEXTHORPE COMMUNITY NEWSPAPER

No. 117 December 2022

thehexpress.co.uk

The Dell Café to Close

This was the shock news announced on the third of November 2022.



“It is with much regret that we announce that The Dell Café will be permanently closing for business on Friday 16th December.

We have been open and trading for nearly 9 years and I have been proud to serve the community and provide a facility and focal point for people to meet, in good times and bad.

Sadly, we have experienced a massive increase in our costs, including stock and energy, and cannot absorb these any longer. We have therefore taken the sad decision to close.

I will miss everything about the cafe especially all the lovely people I’ve met past and present.

*Thank you so much for your custom over the years.
THE DELL CAFÉ CIC & Lizzie (that lady from the cafe)
13 November 2022”*

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WHO'S WHO

Local Councillors

Sophie Liu Tel. 07981 869 276

Glyn Jones Tel. 01302 816881

Methodist Minister

Parish Priest

Fr. Richard Hume Tel. 01709 231326

Hexthorpe Police Community Officer

Sergeant Steve Roberts: Tel: 01302 385339

Hexthorpe Police Community Support Officer

PCSO Emma Langstaff: Tel. 01302 736930

WEEKLY EVENTS

The Crossing @ The King's Cross Church

Monday

3.30-5.00pm Mini Cruz (Key stage 1)

5.30-7.30pm Mega Cruz (Key stage 2)

Tuesday

9.15-11.00am SARA Group for Parents and Kids (0-3)

7.00-9.00pm Youth Group

You are invited on any Sunday to the Worship Services at The King's Cross Church
10.30am and 6.00pm

PACT MEETINGS

These are held every four weeks at 2.00pm at St Jude's Parish Hall. All residents are invited to meet and ask questions of the local police officers.

The Junction

The Junction is open on:

- Monday.
- Tuesday 10.00am to 1.45pm and 2.15pm to 4.15 pm,
- Thursday 10.00am to 1.00pm and 1.30pm to 4.00pm.

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 01302 349341.

At Hexthorpe Parish Hall (St Jude's) Laughton Road, Hexthorpe

Monday

1.30-2.30pm Yoga

Wednesday

10.00-11.00am Keep Fit

11.00-11.30am Coffee Morning

Thursday

9.30-10.30am Play/Learn (Mums & Toddlers)

11.45-12.45pm Keep Fit

2.00-3.00pm PACT meeting (see opposite)

Contact: 01302 340346

The Hall is available for hire for parties and other special events.

Sunday Services

10.00am Morning Prayer

11.00am Parish Mass

Any letters, articles, adverts contact:

thehexpress.co.uk or Donald 01302 852521

Some activities are taking place with perhaps variations of timings. Please make enquiries to the organisers, if in any doubt.

These are just a few of the comments made by customers on hearing the news:

- * 'The best cafe to ever exist with the best coffee / toastie maker ever.'
- * 'Am really sorry to read this Lizzie. You are being missed already by many. I am going to miss my bacon n Brie that's for sure.'
- * 'The Dell Cafe - my life won't be the same without your ham and cheese toasties and your rocky road.'
- * 'So sorry to see this sad news, you'll be very missed by lots of us.'
- * 'This is sad news. The quality, service and location are second to none. I'm so very sorry for you.'
- * 'So sorry to hear your news, one of my favourite cafes, best wishes for your future.'
- * 'Sorry to hear this, Lizzie! The good news is I'll get one more visit before you close your doors. So sad to read this Lizzie. Thankyou & hope you find another happy place soon.'
- * 'Oh no! Sorry to hear this.'
- * 'Not only is the food and drink great, but I reckon that it is one of the finest positioned café in the city. What a view over the park!'

What Lizzie wrote in February 2019 Lizzie,

'I would like to thank all my amazing customers who not only support the cafe during opening hours but also check it's security throughout the night! It made me so proud to be part of Hexthorpe community tonight, when I turned up to the cafe after 3 phone calls from lovely customers to say the alarm was going off, to see a few of my customers stood in their pjs around the building. They were checking the cafe was all locked up before I got there; fab 😊 thanks so much you guys'.

'We have a special visitor at the café today! A pig or boar (we aren't sure) has turned up wanting some cake and tea! RSPCA on their way.'

Hexpress Comment

The café has become very much part of the Hexthorpe scene. It will be missed by many. Some have found it a welcoming place when feeling lonely or needing to find a listening ear. Many regularly go there to meet friends or family. Some have even found it when, wanting a break from driving on the motorway, came off at Warmsworth and ended up in the Dell Café.

Many have recalled the days of the old Dell Cafe where their wedding receptions were held. The café has hosted a number of events over the years, among them were - book club, craft sessions, knitting group, the Hexfest music days, parties, meeting place for those doing business, entertaining visiting dignitaries...

Lizzie could well write a book - 'The day to-day-life of a Hexthorpe Café'. There would be some fascinating stories to tell! Unfortunately, it has become a victim of the present spiralling costs that are now so crippling. It is no longer viable to keep open.

We want to thank all those who have contributed to the life of the café - from Janet at the beginning, to helpers and volunteers and especially to Lizzie for the past years. Who knows - one day a new Dell Café might emerge?

Celebrating 100 Years of Flying Scotsman

The 'Flying Scotsman' has been on show at London King's Cross Station beginning the celebrations of its 100 year anniversary.

Local celebratory events are planned next year to mark the centenary of construction of the locomotive in Doncaster.

A new children's book, 'Flying Scotsman and the Best Birthday Ever' by Michael Morpurgo and illustrated by Michael Foreman, will be released to begin the centenary campaign. The original illustrations will be featured in a special exhibition at Danum Gallery Library and Museum next February.

Cllr Nigel Ball, Cabinet Member for Public Health, Leisure, Culture and Planning said:

"I am delighted that the original illustrations by Michael Foreman will be featured in a special exhibition at Doncaster Gallery, Library and Museum next February before going on tour around the country."

Many of our Doncaster residents will have memories, stories and images of Flying Scotsman throughout the years. The National Railway Museum would love to see and hear these as part of their exhibition to express the impact and legacy of Flying Scotsman.

Please visit <https://www.railwaymuseum.org.uk/flying-scotsman/your-moments-and-memories> if you have a personal story or photo that you would like to share on what Flying Scotsman means to you.

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Flying Scotsman - the Pride of Hexthorpe



The world famous steam locomotive 'Flying Scotsman' was built at the Plant Works in Hexthorpe in 1923 and given its name by the LNER in 1924. It was the first of five Gresley's Pacifics to haul the prestigious non-stop Flying Scotsman train service from London to Edinburgh. On 30th November 1934, driven by Bill Sparshatt, it became the first steam locomotive to be officially

recorded at 100 mph. This is only one of the famous locomotives that have been built in our community - local men producing magnificent machines. We have much to be proud of.

An Introduction to the New Hexthorpe Vicar - FR Richard Hume



I was born and raised in Bradford (proud Yorkshireman); on leaving school, after a short career in retail I worked in the hotel industry in sales, reservations and Front of House management in the West Midlands. Latterly I had a very fulfilling career as a funeral director, before moving full time into ministry. After training at Queens Theological Foundation (ecumenical college) I was ordained a deacon in 2017 and priest in 2018. I continued as a funeral director, but the pull was towards full time ministry. So here I am.

St Jude's Church is a small congregation with signs of growth; we are becoming more representative of our community by the different nationalities in our congregation. Our main act of worship is the Parish Eucharist/mass at 11.00am every Sunday, at which everybody is welcome. I'm also vicar of St John the Baptist Edlington.

I'm still finding my feet amongst both congregations and getting out and about in both parishes and building on past and new relationships. Below are some opportunities when I'm delighted to invite anyone and everyone to join us in our activities and worship and meet the community.

Christmas at St Jude's Church



Saturday 3 December 12.00 - 2.00pm	Christmas Fayre
Sunday 27 November 11.00am	Advent Sunday Blessing of Advent wreaths
Sunday 18 December at 4.00pm	Christingle Service
Saturday 24 December at 8.00pm	First Mass of Christmas
Christmas Day 11.00am	

Christmas at The King's Cross Church(TKCC)



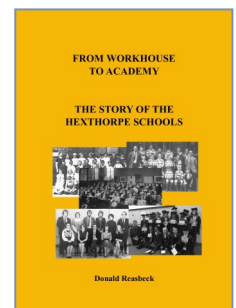
Monday 12 December 6.00pm	Family Christmas Celebration at TKCC
Saturday 17 December 11.00am	Christmas Celebration at The Junction
Sunday 18 December 6.00pm	Carol Service followed by mince pies at TKCC
Christmas Eve 6:30pm	Carol Singing around Hexthorpe starting at TKCC
Christmas Day Service 10:30am at TKCC	

An Ideal Christmas Present!

From Workhouse to Academy – The Story of the Hexthorpe Schools

This book has sold so well that there has had to be a reprint. Therefore, there are now more copies available to purchase. The book has been bought by former Hexthorpe pupils from around the country and even from around the world - Canada and New Zealand.

Copies can be purchased from the Dell Café, Donald 07935326626 or via the Hexpress website: thehexpress.co.uk. The book is priced at £6.00 (£9.00 post and packaging)



Update From Friends of Hexthorpe Flatts Park



- **First the good news. We held two free summer music events in the park in August** and both proved to be very well received and attended and so we hope to do more next year. The performers also all stated how much they enjoyed playing in the bandstand in The Dell and thought it was a special place for good music. We agree.
- **We were also selected to receive a sapling from the Tree of Trees sculpture** that was erected outside Buckingham Palace earlier this year as part of HM The Queen’s Green Canopy Platinum Jubilee celebrations. The sapling, a Whitebeam-sorbus aria, was planted by our group working with Don Catchment Rivers Trust and with Vice Lord-Lieutenant John Holt and the former High Sheriff of South Yorkshire Carole O’Neill both attending. We will be working on completing the Jubilee Orchard around this sapling in December with the planting of 15 fruit trees which, when mature, will be open to anyone wanting to pick apples, pears and plums.
- **Finally, we held a very successful fireworks event on 4th November with around 3,300 people attending a fantastic firework display in the park.** This is a showpiece event and it was wonderful to see all parts of our community enjoying it. Thanks go to our amazing volunteers, Doncaster Council Central Communities Team, SY Police and The Roman Fireworks Company based in Balby.
- **Sadly, now for the bad news.** There will be no fireworks event in 2023 or beyond. This is entirely due to a new Council policy which restricts displays on Council owned land to “low noise or silent” fireworks which are much more expensive and make our event unviable. We normally strive to remain positive but the Chair of our group states -
“The new policy is so utterly self-defeating. Our event is professionally organised with insurance and all risk assessments undertaken and has been a regular feature for the last 7 years. It is held in a field some distance from houses on a known date and time and proves to be very popular with all parts of our community. It is supported by SY Police and the Council’s own brilliant Central Communities Team and is a feature of their annual Anticipate Project. Without it some people are highly likely to set off fireworks in their own back gardens instead - being closer to animals and vulnerable people and making the night worse for them. There is no benefit at all for Hexthorpe and Balby from this new policy, only downside. It is a classic case of good intentions being poorly thought out and actually making things worse”.

As ever, if you have any ideas, questions or suggestions or are interested in helping in the park you can contact us online @hexthorpepark or at the Hexpress contact on page 2.



Members of The Armthorpe and Elmfield Brass band playing in The Dell.
Photo by our resident photographer, William Bell.

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Hexpress Comment

COULD THIS HAVE BEEN THE LAST FIREWORK EVENT?

A council proposal seeking to ban fireworks on council owned land has been approved by the Full Council.

Another very successful fireworks display was held in the Flatts Park on the 4th November. (Please see the report of The Friends of Hexthorpe Flatts Park.) This included people and families from the various ethnic groups that our community includes. The Friends are to be congratulated for yet another well organised display.

However, this could be the last one. The proposal before the Doncaster Council says

- we must ensure that all firework displays on Council land organised by Doncaster Council or its partners utilise low noise or silent fireworks as a positive alternative.*
- we must encourage people to attend professional organised displays, where fireworks are set off in the safest possible way and fully insured.*
- we shall actively promote a public awareness campaign about the impact of fireworks on animal welfare, veterans and vulnerable people.*
- we shall encourage Town and Parish Councils in the Doncaster city to consider using low noise or silent fireworks has an alternative.*

There are other clauses concerning the use of silent fireworks.

On the surface most people could agree that there needs to be safety measures and consideration for animals and vulnerable people. However, it is the first clause regarding what appears to be a ban on the use of fireworks on Council land that is causing controversy.

The organisers of the Hexthorpe event have made their views known.

What do you think about this issue? Please use the contact information on page 2.

Sapling From ‘the Tree of Trees Sculpture’ in the Dell

In collaboration with the Don Catchment Rivers Trust (“DCRT”), the Friends of Hexthorpe Park Flatts were delighted to receive a sapling, a Whitebeam - *Sorbus aria*, gifted from the Tree of Trees sculpture that was erected outside of Buckingham Palace earlier this year as part of HM The Queen’s Green Canopy Platinum Jubilee celebrations.

It was planted in Hexthorpe Flatts Park this week with Vice Lord-Lieutenant John Holt and former High Sheriff of South Yorkshire Carole O’Neill both attending, along with volunteers from both groups.

Ed Shaw from the DCRT said “we wanted to plant the tree somewhere close to the River Don, in a location that had some meaning to the Trust. Hexthorpe Flatts Park seemed the perfect place, so we were delighted when the ‘Friends of group’ agreed and helped make it happen.”

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Steve Reasbeck, Chair of Friends of Hexthorpe Flatts Park said “we are honoured to have been chosen to receive a sapling from the Tree of Trees. We thank Vice Lord-Lieutenant John Holt for coming to the park today for what was a wonderful occasion. We have worked in collaboration with DCRT and look forward to doing so again in the future. The tree will form a centrepiece to the Jubilee Orchard that is being created in the park and stands as symbol of optimism, regeneration and hope.”

Part of the award also included a message from HM The Queen and an aluminium pot embossed with Her Majesty’s Cypher. Both can be viewed in the Dell Café at the Park.

Letters

A big thank you to a local resident and a challenge to the Council.

Dear Editor

As a mobility scooter rider in Hexthorpe I find the plain tarmac pavements a pleasure to use. However, many of them are in a quite dangerous condition and give an uncomfortable ride.

There are lots of lowered kerbs, but few are really suitable, and some are real bone shakers. I have found four pavements with no lowered kerb. On one I got off my scooter to manhandle it on to the road, without my weight on it. I forgot to turn the speed from fast (hare)) to slow (tortoise) and so as I touched the control it shot forwards and threw me to the road.

There was only one person in sight, and he sprang towards me, lifting me up as though I was no heavier than a pillow. He popped me back on my scooter. The whole event took no longer than a minute.

I wish to thank this Polish gentleman for his swift and kindly action and his comforting words. He must surely be one of the strongest men in Hexthorpe! Certainly the kindest!

Sincerely yours

*Hexthorpe Resident, aged 90+
(name and address supplied)*

Editor’s note

Our reader here tells us of the perils of mobility scooter riding on some pavements. We have received a number of comments about cars being parked on pavements.

Understandably, they say, some roads are so narrow that it is unavoidable, However, on some main routes there are cars parked either partly or fully on pavements.

“On occasions”, says one reader, “I have to drive my mobility scooter on to the road, where there is no dropped kerb, because cars are blocking the way.”

A Request

A local reader has contacted us asking for information about the Plant Works.

He has video footage of the site before the demolition of the old buildings. He quite rightly describes some of them as being 'iconic'. He hopes eventually to produce a DVD of the changes that have taken place on the site, from its earliest days until the new housing development.

If any reader would like to share their experiences of working at the Plant or has any information regarding its history, then he would be pleased to hear from you. If you have such information, please use the Hexpress Contact found on page 2 and then we can pass on whatever we receive.

Latest News - The Crimpsall

Two visits have been made by the editor alongside two members of the Council Ecological team to the Crimpsall. The Hexpress has highlighted the Crimpsall in recent additions. (see numbers on our website) It is a wonderful compact wildlife area on our doorstep.

The first visitor was Melissa. We walked through the entrance from Bramworth Road on to what once a raised footpath. On the left there is still the wide dyke, which like the path is overgrown and also mainly inaccessible. This took us alongside the river. The river could hardly be seen from the path because of the undergrowth. We then followed the path past the two ponds that led to the entrance on Old Hexthorpe. Melissa was particularly interested in the wet areas, the ponds and dyke. There could be the possibility of creating a safe pond area where pond dipping could be experienced by local children. It would be a wonderful place for the school to utilise.

The second visitor was Martin Nowacki, the ecological officer for the Council. Again, we went through the entrance from Bramworth Road. We stood about fifty yards down the main path and Martin then gave a short fascinating description of what we could see and an insight into what might be. He said that it has the appearance of a primeval site – although it obviously was not that old! He described the various trees and fauna that were there, for example, he noted the various types of willow trees that were established. He talked about the possible birds that could well inhabit such an area. There were well established trees where colonies of herons might nest.

What of its future? It was suggested that it would be ideal if the pathways were cleared, along with access to the river and dyke. It should not be overdeveloped but left basically undisturbed by too much intrusion. It would be good to have information/interpretation boards at the entrances.

How can this be done? That is really up to us. If there is any reader who can see the possibilities of what could become a valuable asset for the community, then please get in touch with the Hexpress through the contact on Page 2. If there is enough interest we can then arrange to meet and see if there is a way forward.

News From the Junction

- The Junction continues to thrive, with a variety of people attending. Some come for a game of pool or cup of coffee and a chat, others for more specific advice and help.
- The Migrant Action sessions once a fortnight are very well used. We are continuing to benefit from the presence of the Stronger Community Officers and from our Thursday afternoon sewing and crafting group - unfortunately the lady who started it is no longer free at this time, but the group seems to have taken on its own momentum.
- The councillors, of course, hold their surgeries on a monthly basis (11.30am on the fourth Friday of the month - not between Christmas and New Year).
- We have continued to cook with the vegetables from the garden and greenhouse, and have recently harvested our crop of potatoes. There are still some onions to come for this season.
- In the New Year, a Lifeskills Course will be offered through Christians Against Poverty - more details to follow, but do contact me if you would be interested in an eight week course thinking about how to live on a budget and how to cook healthy, economical meals while getting to know people within a small group - contact details as above.
- Due to the demand for "warm spaces", the decision has been taken to open The Junction for a further day per week, on Fridays, starting at the end of November. This will hopefully be supported by staff from various council departments.
- We would be delighted to see you then, or indeed on Mondays, Tuesdays and Thursdays, as now, between 10am and 4pm (with a half hour lunch break). You can contact us on 01302 349341 or email thejunction20@yahoo.com.
- "Warm Welcome Wednesdays" are being held throughout the winter in The Crossing, the hall at the rear of The King's Cross Church, from 3.20 - 5.30pm. We have hot and cold drinks, soup and a roll, laptops, books and board games (all free); so do feel free to come and join us there.

Lynn Petersen (The Junction Manager)



The sapling from The Tree of Trees Sculpture is planted in the Dell' (see page 7)

Partners Come Together to Celebrate Award Winning Pullman Green Site in Hexthorpe: Next Phase of Former Railway Works Celebrated

Countryside, the UK's leading mixed tenure developer welcomed partners to the former Doncaster Railway Works to celebrate the next phase of work at the award-winning Pullman Green development in Hexthorpe, central Doncaster.



(L-R): Lee Catterall (Senior Project Manager, Sigma), Rizwan Khan (Head of Partnerships, Sage), Chris Penn (Managing Director, Countryside), Cllr Sophie Liu (Ward Councillor, Doncaster Council).

Countryside is working with Sigma Capital Group, a leading provider of build-to-rent properties, as well as Sage Homes, England's largest provider of newly built affordable homes, to create a broad mixed-tenure offer at Pullman Green - a development that was recently recognised as the best large development in Yorkshire at The Yorkshires Residential Real Estate Awards.

All three organisations were joined by representatives of Doncaster Council to officially mark the next phase of the project that is set to continue with the transformation of this brownfield site and the wider area.

Councillor Glyn Jones, Portfolio Holder for Housing and Business at Doncaster Council, commented:

"It is fantastic to see the site and see the scope for development on what is an exciting project - one of the biggest brownfield regeneration sites developed. This is a massive boost for the Hexthorpe area and will regenerate an area so close to the city centre. Building quality homes for Doncaster residents is central to our five-year Housing Delivery Plan and we're looking forward to seeing the progression of this particular scheme."

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Countryside is re-purposing the former railway works to create a thriving community of 671 homes, 266 of which will be for open sale, 209 for rent, managed by Sigma Capital, and 196 affordable homes, which will be managed by Sage Homes. Countryside has already handed over some homes to the partners, with 226 of the affordable and rented properties currently occupied. Work will now commence on the open market plots.

The site also includes land designated as greenbelt which will form part of over ten acres of public open space and ecological areas for residents and the wider community to benefit from. This will include a beautifully landscaped footpath along the River Don. Countryside will also be investing over half a million pounds into local education provision, as part of the legal agreement with the Council.

Lee Catterall, Senior Project Manager at Sigma, commented:

"We are thrilled to announce that we will be delivering an additional 39 units to this development. We have worked in strong partnership with Countryside for over 15 years to supply homes to areas that have an undersupply of high quality and attainable properties to rent. We have no doubt that Pullman Green will provide an excellent hub for a growing community amongst residents and will be an asset to the Hexthorpe area."

Rizwan Khan, Head of Investment and Partnerships at Sage Homes, commented:

"Every one of the 196 affordable homes we're providing at Pullman Green is going to families in housing need from Doncaster Council's waiting list. We look forward to continuing our work with Countryside to deliver even more brand new, quality and energy-efficient affordable homes for the local community in Hexthorpe."

(Source: The Doncaster Council website, <https://www.doncaster.gov.uk/News>)



Lizzie has a busy day at the Dell Cafe

We wish all our readers a very Happy Christmas and a peaceful New Year.