

THE HEXPRESS

YOUR FREE HEXTHORPE COMMUNITY NEWSPAPER

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thehexpress.co.uk

The rebirth of the Flatts Park **Exciting Developments at our Local Park**

Real progress is being made on the renewal of one of our community's greatest assets, the Hexthorpe Flatts Park. We want to report on the exciting work that is being done to bring fresh life to it. That life can be seen not only in its appearance but also in the number of events that have been planned.



There have been a number of false dawns. In July 2002, the Hexpress headline was ‘**THE DELL BACK**’ and in March 2011, ‘**2011 to be an Exciting Year for the Flatts**’. However, now in 2023, there are strong indications that real permanent progress is being made. The Friends of Hexthorpe Flatts Park are not only working hard in practical ways but have linked up with other groups to arrange imaginative events.

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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

Hexthorpe Community Engagement Meeting

This meets on the last Thursday of each month at 6.00pm in the Community Hall, St Jude's.

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.

Any letters, articles, adverts contact:

thehexpress.co.uk or Donald 01302 852521

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

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

6.00--7.00pm HCE 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

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

Their report says -

'Regular users of the park may have noticed further improvements inside parts of The Dell in the form of newly planted areas. This has been a collaboration between our fantastic volunteers, Street Scene and the Community Payback team who have cleared and then planted over 3,000 bulbs. These include Snowdrops, Tenby Daffodils, Wood Anemone, Winter Aconites and Lily of the Valley which should provide an impressive display in future years.'



Our group is planning further planting sessions and so if you would like to join in. please let us know!

The Future Parks Project is progressing and we were pleased to learn at our last meeting about the suggested improvements to the park. This is to include new lighting, benches, landscaped area, gates, signage and interpretation boards. We are hopeful that these will be undertaken quickly.

*The next Friends Group meeting will be on **Monday 15th May** (delayed by the Coronation holidays) at 6pm. This will be held in the former Dell Cafe at the park gates and we may wander into the Dell itself if the weather is good. All are welcome to attend, or you can contact us with any ideas, questions or suggestions online @hexthorpepark or at hexthorpepark@gmail.com.'*

Here are some new developments.

- * **Petanque** - a pétanque court is being installed. This is being delivered by Street Scene. It is hoped that a formal Petanque Club will be formed.
- * **Solar Lighting** - Town Fields has just had them installed. A scheme is being drawn up for Hexthorpe Solar lights in the park and also looking to trial Solar Bollards on the route down to the Boat House.
- * It is hoped that restoration work will begin on the entrance gates to the park.

Here are some of the events to be held this summer

- **Coronation Picnic in the Park on Monday 8th May.** There will be some stalls, games and other events. This is being arranged by Hexthorpe Positive Action Group and all will be welcome. Some banners will be put up in the park with details.
- **Get Doncaster Moving 16th June** - there are quarterly Networking event. The summer networking event will be in Hexthorpe Park. It is likely to include petanque, pickleball and other things. See pictures on page 9.
- **Hexfest on the weekend of 8th & 9th July.** This will be the first Hexfest since the pandemic. Full details will be announced soon.
- **Picnic in the Park Sunday 20th August.** 'An event that brings joy and celebrates the natural environment at a local level.' This will be a major family event. It will include a family friendly film screening on LED screen van; craft activities; performances of 'Out of the Deep Blue'.

How it all Began - Over 100 Years of Hexthorpe Flatts

In the 1850s the famous landscape architect Mr Robert Paxton visited Hexthorpe Flatts, at the invitation of the Town Council, to assess its suitability for use as a public pleasure ground, but he recommended that the Council should concentrate instead on the provision of a cemetery and the improvement of the local waterworks!

With the coming of the Great Northern Railway in 1849, and the subsequent completion of the South Yorkshire Railway in 1850, many new trades were set up and the consequent rapid expansion of population at Hexthorpe by the end of the century demanded the provision of more recreational space.



Improvements began in 1902, heralding the development of Hexthorpe Flatts as a popular holiday centre for local families in the Edwardian period. These improvements included the provision of a tea house, toilets, and new planting. Boating on the River Don was popular, with boats available for hire by 1903 and the building of a boathouse in 1904. The bandstand was a popular centre for music and dancing, and there was ample provision for children's play.

In 1914 Hexthorpe was incorporated into Doncaster and further expansion and improvement of the recreational facilities followed. Hexthorpe Flatts was officially declared a public park in 1928. As part of the expansion, plans were drawn up by the Council Estates Surveyor to create a garden in the northern quarry, north of the main path through the park. The aim was to create a focus of horticultural interest, with proposed water and rock gardens.

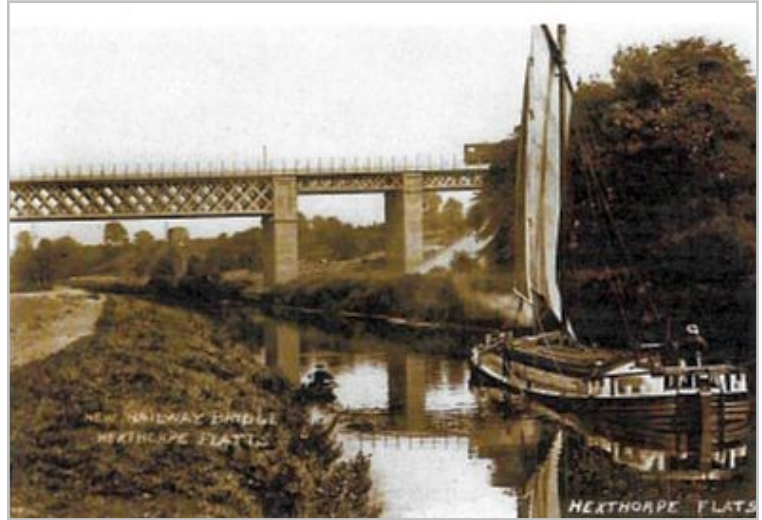


The Dell, as it was named, opened in April 1929 and from the 1930s to the 1950s was a popular venue both locally and regionally, offering elaborate planting schemes, water features, rock gardens, and a bandstand in an unusual and unique setting. It was also noted for its illuminations, for which it became famous, and as an occasional setting for musical productions.

With a fine collection of specimen trees and the surviving features of bandstand, rock and water gardens, The Dell retains much of its original character.
(From the Register of Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest).

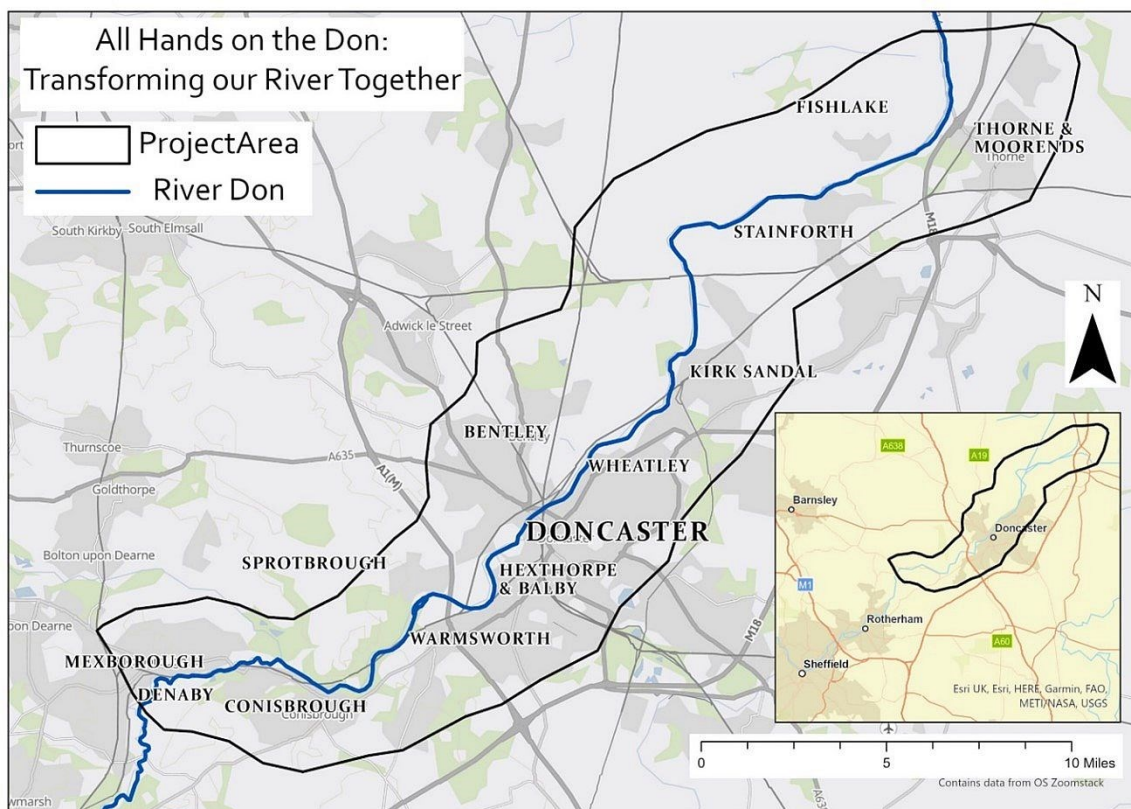
All Hands on the Don: Transforming our River Together

The following is of immense interest to us all. It means that we could see initiatives that would enhance the area around the River Don as it flows through Hexthorpe. Friends of The Hexthorpe Flatts Park have been in discussions with the Trust.



The Don Catchment Rivers Trust has been awarded funding from the National Lottery Heritage Fund to develop the All Hands on the Don project, which is based around the natural, historic and cultural heritage of the Lower River Don between

Mexborough on the upstream end and Thorne on the downstream end. The river, which has been radically transformed and engineered over the course of centuries, is central to the long and complex history of the area, being the main reason why Doncaster and a string of settlements that line its banks exist.



Our project has the following aims:

- To help realise the enormous potential of the River Don Corridor as green-blue infrastructure and as a source of health and wellbeing by making connections between the river, its historic and natural heritage, and people.

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- To tell the story of the transformation of the lower River Don and the wider landscape and to raise awareness of just how profound this has been.
- To drive forward biodiversity gain in the river corridor.
- To celebrate and promote the natural and historic heritage in the river corridor.

An imaginative programme of volunteering, community engagement and work experience, apprenticeships, and training opportunities will seek to increase health and wellbeing, foster community action, inclusion and community cohesion, increase skills and employability, improve access to the river, celebrate river heritage and foster understanding of the river and river issues

Project development

The project development started spring 2022 and will be concluded when the Trust is able to submit a full application to the National Lottery Heritage Fund for funding to deliver the project. During the development phase the Trust will consult local communities and organisations to gain a more complete understanding of existing plans and aspirations and get feedback to inform our own project.

Get in touch

If you would like to find out more or share information that will help the project then please contact Ed Shaw at ed.shaw@dcrt.org.uk

The Dell - a new facility

Dell Function Room for hire at Hexthorpe Flatts Park

- Room for up to 25 people,
- Has balcony and garden space
- Ideal for christening/funeral/kids' parties etc

Contact TheDellHexthorpe@gmail.com



Celebrate the King's Coronation at Hexthorpe Park!

Monday 8th May, 12–2pm.



Bring your own picnic and blanket. Games and prizes on the day - including prizes for best dressed royal outfit, hat or crown.

All welcome!



News From the Junction



This will be my last report as Manager of The Junction, although obviously the work will continue and develop. I have enjoyed the opportunity The Junction affords to build up relationships right across the community, and will very much miss seeing the people I have got to know over the last eight and a half years.

I am delighted that we have continued to welcome the men who are cared for in Spansyke Street all through my time as Manager (Covid lockdowns of course excepted) and for the way in which we are recognised throughout Hexthorpe as a place to come for support, advice and specific help, as well as a friendly place for a cuppa and a chat.

I am as usual grateful to the Stronger Community Officers for their input, and to Migrant Action for their fortnightly visits, which are much in demand. The Friday openings (incorporating the Councillors' monthly surgeries, 11.30am to 12 noon on the fourth Friday of each month) have, after a slow start, attracted a good number of people, and the midwife reports that her use of the premises on Wednesdays has been very successful.

In the last issue I mentioned "Warm Welcome Wednesdays" at The King's Cross Church. These will come to an end at the beginning of the school summer term, but have proved a good opportunity to meet and serve more people within Hexthorpe during the winter weather.

I need, in signing off, to pay tribute to the tireless work of the Junction Management Committee and our willing volunteers; you may not be aware of all the hard work which is done behind the scenes to allow The Junction to function and indeed flourish. I wish them well in the years ahead as the work grows and moves forward.

Contact details are: telephone: 01302 349341, email: thejunction20@yahoo.com, Facebook: The Junction - TKCC.

Lynn Petersen (The Junction Manager)

Hexpress Comment

Lynn became the Junction manager in 2014. Since then, there must be hundreds of people who have benefited from her advice, care, and expertise in so many areas. Lynn has made herself available to serve the Hexthorpe community in so many ways. She often has gone beyond the call of duty in a most selfless manner. Why? It is because it has not just been a job for Lynn, she has a genuine deep concern for the social, physical, emotional and spiritual needs of the people she has served.

The Junction opened its doors in 1994. Lynn was only the third manager. It must have been a daunting task to follow John Crawford, who for the previous 15 years, had been such a successful manager. We are sure that we can speak for so many in the Hexthorpe community when we say thank to Lynn for the past years and wish her a fulfilling retirement.

Two Hexthorpe Legends

We are sad to report the death of two senior Hexthorpe residents - Joyce Hewitt and Liz Boardman. They both were very different characters, but loved by all who knew them.

Joyce Hewitt

Joyce died in the December of 2022. She was 98 years old, having been born in Hexthorpe in 1924. There are two area of her life that some local people remember well.

Those attending Doncaster Grammar School in the late 1940's and early 50's knew her as the lady who cooked their school dinners. Joyce eventually moved up the ladder until she was running the catering services for Doncaster College. It was while working there that Joyce received the MBE from the Queen for her services to catering. She was thorough in all she did and expected all those who worked with her to hold to her high standards. After retirement, when she was 61, she continued to use her catering skills by holding weekly Luncheon Club at St James Church. Joyce continued to be involved with this right up to the beginning of the pandemic in 2020, when she was 96!



Every Sunday morning until shortly before her death, Joyce could be seen standing outside her flat opposite Hexthorpe School waiting for her lift to St James Church for the morning service. She was an active member of St James Church virtually all her lifetime. When she was 14, she became a Sunday School teacher there. She and her friend Jean were both keen Christians and often rounded up Hexthorpe children to take them to the church of St James. In the 80's, she was still involved with children taking them to Pathfinder courses at Cliff College in Derbyshire.

Liz Boardman

Liz was a 'Hexthorpean' through and through This was true even though she was born in Scotland. Who can forget her strong accent that revealed her place of birth? There are two areas of her life that we want to emphasise.

Liz had a strong sense of community, along with a desire for justice. She was present at most community meetings - these included, Tenants and Residents, PACT, Parents Associations, Community Engagement, consultations. She was a valued regular attender at the TKCC Luncheon Club and latterly Refresh. Liz always had questions to ask and kept Councillors, Council Workers, Police Officers, Transport officials on their toes! However, the strong firm questioning was always out of a desire to improve the life of the Hexthorpe community. She was well known because she was always willing to talk to all she met.

There are two cuttings here from past issues of the Hexpress - both refer to her commitment to involvement in community activity.

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Liz meets Prince Charles



Liz Boardman of Old Hexthorpe let Prince Charles into one of the secrets of success in local fund raising - the pea and pie supper.

"Are you one of the teachers?" he asked her as he arrived at Balby Carr School (on his recent visit). Liz explained she was one of the "Friends of Balby Carr" involved in raising nearly £1,000 in the past year. "Jolly good! Keep up the good work!" the Prince said as he moved on.

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It was obvious to us all that Liz was a real family person, upholding the values of family life. She was a proud mother, grandmother and great grandmother. She was often seen out with members of her family. It is significant that members of her family have also shown their commitment to community life. We send our sympathy to all members of Liz's family and want them to know that we all share in their sense of loss.

Get Doncaster Moving



Petanque

petanque-england.uk

Mam Tor Conquered for Charity



Well done to Liz Boardman for raising £1,810.55 for The Children's Hospital Charity. How did she do it? 75 year old Liz was sponsored to climb Mam Tor (the shivering mountain) at Castleton in the Peak District. This was a great achievement and we give her our congratulations. In the picture are Lucy from the charity, Kenzie a granddaughter and Liz herself.

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Pickleball

pickleballengland.org

Letter and News in Brief

A letter concerning the Crimpsall

Dear Editor

I am writing in response to the article in the last edition of the Hexpress regarding the Crimpsall and its biodiversity. All of the points raised were very valid and I would like to see its biodiversity increased.

However, there is one factor that may prevent this happening and that is the issue of dog walkers and their dogs on the site. Wild-life and dogs don't mix, to the detriment of the wild-life. The RSPB recognised this on their Wombwell Ings site across the road from their Old Moor reserve. Dogs were in constant opposition to wild-life.

This was solved by there being dog designated paths for dog walkers and their dogs. The wild-life was fenced off from them with the resulting increased bird population at breeding and fledgling time. Whether this could be achieved on the Crimpsall is anyone's guess but it needs serious thought if an increase in the biodiversity is to be achieved and preserved for the future.

Martin Towers

Visit Doncaster

We are pleased to see that the Dell and Hexthorpe Flatts Park has been mentioned in the 2023 edition of the Council's 'Visit Doncaster' booklet. It was omitted from the 2022 edition. We hope that more visitors will be encouraged to pay Hexthorpe a visit during the coming summer. We have still much to be proud of and local people are doing their best to make the park even more attractive. Perhaps we all could help by visiting there more often ourselves. We have a great asset.

A thank you to our Councillor

A number of residents have recently paid tribute to Councillor Glynn Jones for the way he has helped them with their requests for assistance over a number of issues.



Glynn was elected to be a councillor for Hexthorpe 19 years ago and is now Deputy Mayor of the city.

Opportunity to have your say

Here is news of two meetings that give you an opportunity to make an impact on the life of our community.

Hexthorpe Positive Action Group

This group needs you!

Would you like to find out about other groups and activities in your area, share information and find out about funding opportunities, or even be part of setting up something new?

Why not come along to the Positive Action Group?

It meets on the first Thursday of each month, 5.30pm. at Travis Gardens Community Centre, Hexthorpe.

Hexthorpe Community Engagement Meeting

In attendance at this meeting are Councillors Sophie Liu and Glyn Jones, Stronger Communities Officers - Jo Evans and Neil Marshall and the Inspector of Police, Lisa Bird.

Here you are able to ask questions to the above about issues involving the community. This meets on the last Wednesday of the month at 6.00pm in the St Jude's Parish Hall.

Hexthorpe Action Day

Recently, Doncaster Council and partners - including St Leger Homes and South Yorkshire Police - were on the streets of Hexthorpe looking to help solve a variety of day-to-day issues which affect local residents.

Many of the teams are here to help and provide positive outcomes. Here is a selection of how they got on in your area.

Environmental enforcement

We have issued 17 Fixed Penalty Notices directly to people for littering and submitted 2 cases to court for prosecution for environmental offences.

Eight notices and 10 Community Protection Warnings have been issued to people/properties for environmental issues.

There are also currently 52 ongoing investigations in the area for the following which can lead to formal action -

- 4 - Noise nuisance
- 24 - Housing disrepair
- 16 - Fly tipping
- 8 - Waste in gardens

Please keep reporting issues to nuisance. Team@doncaster.gov.uk to enable action to be taken.

Housing enforcement

We targeted 30 domestic houses located on Abbott Street, Stone Close Avenue, Ellerker Avenue and Spansyke Street. These 30 houses were properties we had identified from intelligence received as properties that were likely to require a Selective Licence but are not so licensed.

- 18 properties were found to be occupied without a licence (60% of the targeted properties)
- 7 properties were found to be either empty or otherwise exempt from requiring a licence.
- The remaining 5 we were unable to gain access.

The landlords of the unlicensed properties will be investigated further with the possibility of financial penalties of up to £30,000 being issued.

In addition to the targeted work, we also identified a dangerous structure on the corner of Spansyke Street. This has subsequently been assessed by Building Control and requires urgent remedial action to remove the risk of collapse. The dangerous structure is not occupied but is situated in the garden of an occupied property and is located adjacent to the public footpath and alley.

Street Scene

We had a productive day with twelve members of staff in attendance helping to remove 12.7 tonnes of waste from Hexthorpe. On the day we exchanged a bin outside of



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Angie's Café to better monitor the level of waste being produced in that area.

Other activities included:

- All of the waste located within the alleys and in front of the homes throughout Hexthorpe was removed.
- A litter pick of the full area was carried out including in front of the shops on Hexthorpe Road.
- The quad driver also was in the area spraying for weed control.

A reminder to residents that waste left at the side of bins will not be collected and could be considered fly tipping.



Stronger Communities

We engaged with 22 members of the public, discussing various topics and giving verbal advice. We identified a family who we are able to offer more in depth support to and also spoke to residents about their wellbeing and if any wider help could be offered to keep people feeling happy and independent at home.

Officers also took part in an assembly at Hexthorpe primary where 110 children at the school were spoken to along with two police officers. The topics we were discussing included all forms of anti-social behaviour and the public space protection order, littering and graffiti.

We also assisted Street Scene colleagues and two enforcement officers undertaking home visits to around 55 properties. Various issues were identified linked to housing condition, waste disposal and waste storage and these will be followed up by the enforcement team.

Waste and Recycling

A total of 23 misused blue 240 litre bins were removed, along with 4 misused green 240 litre bins the day before the event from all the streets in the area.

On the day, the team were present for 8 hours in total ensuring that the bins were in fit and working order.

Thirty-three properties received letters with regards to leaving bins presented outside of the allowed collection times and their details then passed onto the Enforcement Team. This means that contact has been made with the owner / residents of the properties in question and should bins continue to be left out then they can be served with notices for incorrect presentation of bins and boxes and subsequently fined for further breaches.

Bins must be presented by 7.00am on the day of collection and taken off the street or alley way once they have been emptied.

Thirty-one properties were issued with bin removal orders within 48 hours of the action day.