

THE HEXPRESS

YOUR FREE HEXTHORPE COMMUNITY NEWSPAPER

No. 120 February 2024

thehexpress.co.uk

‘We are all immensely proud of the children’



“We are all immensely proud of the children who attend Hexthorpe Primary. The community of Hexthorpe is such a rewarding and exciting place to be and we are delighted that the inspectors acknowledged not just the work that we do to support children academically, but also the pastoral work we do to support all of our families.”

These are the words of Mrs Harrison, the Principal of Hexthorpe Primary Academy, commenting on the Ofsted Inspection held in November.

Our Hexthorpe school is designated as being a ‘Good School’. Here are some of the comments of the inspectors:

- * Pupils thrive in the family atmosphere of this nurturing school. They behave well and are safe. Bullying is rare and when it does occur, it is dealt with swiftly and fairly.

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WHO'S WHO

Local Councillors

Sophie Liu Tel. 07981869276

Glyn Jones Tel. 01302 816881

The Kings Cross Church

<https://thekingscrosschurch.org.uk>

Parish Priest

Fr. Richard Hume Tel. 01709 231326

Stronger Communities Officers

Chris Wharton 01302 736930

Chris.wharton@doncaster.gov.uk

Jenny Aimson 01302 736930

Jenny.aimson@doncaster.gov.uk

The Junction

The Junction is temporarily only open for the following sessions:

- Fortnightly on Tuesday:
Migrant Action 10am - 12 noon
- 4th Friday of the month:
Councillor Surgery 11:30am - 12 noon

Telephone: 01302 349341

Email: thejunction20@yahoo.com

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.

WEEKLY EVENTS

The Crossing @ The King's Cross Church

Monday

5.30-7.30pm Mega Cruz - *For School Years 3-6 during term time.*

Tuesday

9.15-11.00am SARA Group (in main building) - *Parents/Carers with children 0-3 during term time.*

Wednesday

1.30pm Line Dancing

Thursday

10.30am Refresh - *First Thursday of the month. Friendship, fun and food for over 60's.*

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

Wednesday

10.00-11.00am Keep Fit with Donna
07979768717

11.00-11.30am Coffee Morning

Thursday

11.15-12.15pm Stretch and Relax with Donna

The Hall is available for hire for parties and other special events. Contact: Joy 07714082643

Services

Wednesday

10.15am Morning Prayer

Sunday

11.00am Parish Mass

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- * The culture of the school and how well it serves the local community were praised. The staff were commended for knowing all pupils and families individually and for taking pride in working together to meet the needs of their diverse community.
- * The staff want all pupils to do well and the pupils enjoy learning and know how the knowledge gained in different subjects will help them in later life.
- * Academic standards have improved. Significant changes to the curriculum have been made, including prioritising maths and reading from the early years to Year 6.
- * Leaders, including, trust leaders, have an accurate understanding of the school's strengths and what needs to be better. They have a clear strategy to ensure that the school continues to move forward.

Mrs Harrison continued,

“A lot of dedicated work has gone into improving Hexthorpe from everyone in our school community from Astrea, our family of schools, to our leadership team and staff and, of course, not least from our parents and carers.

We serve a diverse community here in Hexthorpe and I am very proud that the Ofsted inspectors noted that there are positive relationships between staff, pupils and parents and carers which ensure everyone is valued and included with our pupils showing respect and being accepting of others' differences.

We are also determined to work on the improvements we need to bring the school's early years offering into line with the rest of the school. While recognising strengths of our early years, such as 'children play well together and talk confidently to adults about their learning', the report said there was more for us to do to develop our work, which we are already working on.”



Welcome to our new Stronger Communities Officers

We are Jenny Aimson and Chris Wharton and would like to introduce ourselves as the new Stronger Communities Officers for Hexthorpe.

We work within the area supporting families with things such as housing support, antisocial behaviour, financial help through to signposting services for children and other family members. We work closely with other partner agencies such as South Yorkshire Police, ward councillors, local schools, local churches, charities and community groups to identify issues and offer support and guidance.



Jenny has worked in her current role for over 15 years, however she is new to the Hexthorpe Team having previously worked in the Intake area. Jenny loves working out and about in the community, supporting families and individuals and is looking forward to meeting local residents and establishing new links in the Hexthorpe community.

Chris has only been with the council for six months but brings a wealth of experience from his 24 years working as a Police officer in Leicestershire. Chris has now moved back home to South Yorkshire and is looking forward to building relationships within the community and helping the people he supports to thrive as individuals and families.

Jenny and Chris will be having weekly Community Led Support Sessions, which are nominated locations and times where they will be on hand to advise you on any issues you may have, whilst having leaflets to share or just for a chat over a coffee.

Chris.wharton@doncaster.gov.uk - 01302 736930

Jenny.aimson@doncaster.gov.uk - 01302 736930

Community Led Support

When	Time	Where	Next Date
3 rd Wednesday of the month	11am - 12.00pm	Wednesday Get Together, Travis Gardens, Hexthorpe	21 st Feb
1 st Thursday of month	11am - 12.30pm	Doncaster Bowls Club, Urban Rd, Hexthorpe	7 th Mar

News from The Don Catchment River's Trust

'We go along the river from Hexthorpe Park and collect litter. Anyone can join and get some fresh air, it makes a real difference.'

Hear from Anthony Cox about community litter picking, how Hexthorpe Park is linked to an international environmental scheme, and ways you can get to know your local River's Trust.



Volunteer at October's community litter picking event in Hexthorpe Park.

'It's interesting to see all the different things we collect.' The volunteering officer for the Don Catchment River's Trust (DCRT), Anthony Cox, says about litter picking at Hexthorpe Park. 'We're planning on going every few months, so it would be great to see people there.'

When asked about what the events are like, he says, 'They tend to be really great. We go along the river from Hexthorpe Park and collect litter. Anyone can join and get some fresh air, it makes a real difference.'

Whilst litter picking is a great short-term solution, Anthony addresses the worry that it doesn't work in the longer-term.

'People often say it'll just all get dumped again, but we've found that where we've done litter picking in the past the places do stay cleaner for longer.'



Some quick statistics from the last community litter pick at Hexthorpe

Continuing to look at the bigger picture, Hexthorpe Park is Doncaster's main site for the Preventing Plastic Pollution scheme. This is an international scheme that looks at plastic; see here some of the data that was collected for the scheme.

These litter picking events are run by the Don Catchment Rivers Trust: a local environmental charity that work across South Yorkshire and parts of Derbyshire. DCRT have received funding from the National Lottery Heritage Fund for a Doncaster based project, called All Hands on the Don.

The project's aims are: to realise the River Don's potential as green-blue infrastructure and as a source of health, wellbeing and skills development; to explain the profound transformation of the River Don and drive forward biodiversity gain; to celebrate and promote natural and historic heritage.

The last litter picking event at Hexthorpe Park was on the 19th of December.




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Most of the litter collected at Hexthorpe Park was made of plastic, with metal litter as the second most collected. Data source: <https://data.preventingplasticpollution.com/pages/results>

There is an online events calendar at <https://dcrt.org.uk/events-calendar/> for future happenings.

If you're interested in conservation volunteering and heritage events in Doncaster, please check out DCRT's website or social media.

-  @don_catchment_rt
-  @DonCatchmentRT
-  /DonCatchment

Two Interesting events coming up

Luz Welmans has sent us these two posters of two events coming soon:

Ageism Action Day

Saturday 16th March from 5.00pm to 7.00pm
@ The Crossing, 90 Urban Road DN4 OEP

Hexplorers

A project that offers FREE artistic workshops in Hexthorpe for children from 7 to 11 years old. Only 15 places available.

GOLDEN GALA NIGHT
AGEISM ACTION DAY
FREE ENTRANCE & REFRESHMENTS
Invite your friends and partner to come to celebrate the Ageism Action Day, save the date so you don't miss it

Saturday 16th March 2024
From 5PM to 7PM
@The Crossing - 90 Urban Road DN4 OEP

Special Performances

Music • Poetry • Theatre

Lip Sync • Exhibitions • Retro Fashion Show

For More Info
Voices of Hexthorpe

Logos: Victorious Women Foundation, Arts and Culture Community Centre Hexthorpe

HEXPLORES
A project that offers FREE artistic workshops in Hexthorpe for children from 7 to 11 years old.

Only 15 places available!
Materials & Refreshments included

Activities: PUPPETS, MASKS, PAINTING

IF YOU ARE INTERESTED IN MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE MESSAGE US:
Voices of Hexthorpe

Logos: City of Doncaster Council, Arts and Culture Community Centre Hexthorpe

If you are interested in more information then contact Voices of Hexthorpe - facebook.

The Other Side of the Tracks

Hexthorpe's Role in the Story of Oswin Avenue School

Between October 2023 and January 2024, hundreds of people visited the Danum Gallery to view the *'The Story of Oswin Avenue School'* exhibition. One thing that visitors may have discerned during their tour was that the school could have been described as a signwriter's nightmare. In the eight decades of its existence, the establishment had been known by several names, including *'Balby New School'*, *'Balby Secondary'*, and *'Balby High'*. All these titles however, failed to recognise a significant factor. Whilst the building stood in the suburb of Balby, for several decades during the 20th century it also provided education for the children of Hexthorpe. It therefore seems only fitting that our story of Oswin Avenue School, should acknowledge the contribution to its heritage made by the community of Hexthorpe.

Doncaster Education Committee		Next term begins at 8.50 a.m. on
BALBY & HEXTHORPE HIGH SCHOOL		
Report for.....	Summer	term, 1942.....
Name.....	Tony Armstrong	Form 3 Bawley
(The <u>two</u> set form of <u>5</u> in this year)		
How our 'Ossie' School Reports might have looked had the role of Hexthorpe been acknowledged?		

The aforementioned exhibition represented the culmination of 3 years of work undertaken by the *'Ossie through the Ages'* project to preserve the memory of the school and its people. A Balby lad myself, I will be forever grateful to the people of Hexthorpe for their support and participation in the project. When I first considered the form that our 'Ossie' story should take, I was inspired by Hexthorpe based historian Donald Reasbeck's book *'The Story of the Hexthorpe Schools'*. Regrettably it was not possible to follow Donald's lead closely, as by his own acknowledgement; the Hexthorpe Schools' Log Books were a valuable source of information. Like so many aspects of Oswin Avenue School's heritage, the Log Books for the first 68 years of the school's life have been lost to time.

The process of accessing Oswin Avenue School's remaining records was hampered as the project was launched during a time when Doncaster's archives were buried in the caves of Cheshire. Meanwhile a global pandemic severely restricted the conducting of face to face interviews. With the population seeking sanctuary in their homes, people took to the internet to maintain contact with the outside world. Taking advantage of this trend, initially our pursuit of information took place online. The Facebook based local heritage groups proved rich sources of information. Of notable importance to the project's development was *'Hexthorpe Ron Hewitt Facebook'*, with former 'Ossie' pupils, staff and their family members engaging enthusiastically on the platform.

Separated by a few lines of rail track, Balby and Hexthorpe grew up together during a period of urban and industrial expansion. Whilst the two suburbs have enjoyed a sibling-esque rivalry over the years, the ties between the communities have always been strong. Many people can trace their lineage back to a romance between some Romeo from Hexthorpe and a Balby born Juliet, with quite a few of these first blossoming at Oswin Avenue School.

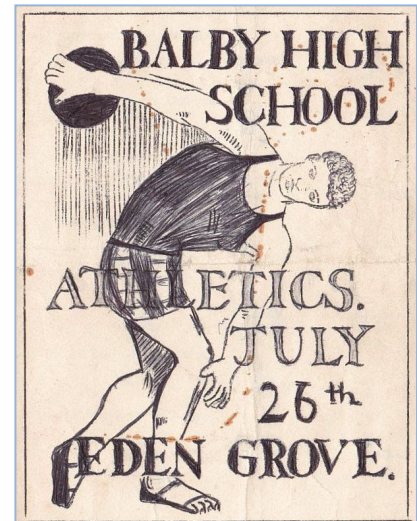
I was reminded of the interconnectivity between Balby and Hexthorpe, when writing a biographical piece about Boxing Champion and former 'Ossie' pupil Bruce Woodcock. Bruce will always be remembered as a Balby icon. Even so he also had an affinity with Hexthorpe, through his job at the Plant works and as a base for developing his early boxing career.

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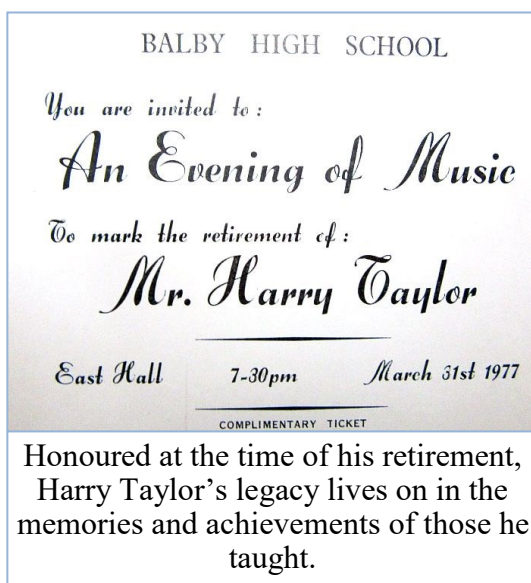
Oswin Avenue School had a rich tradition of sporting success, having benefitted from the pooled talents of sporting youth from Balby and Hexthorpe. Putting aside their rivalry, the sibling suburbs were stronger as members of a family united. Many of the ‘Balby’ school teams’ triumphs took place on the tracks and fields of Eden Grove and Hexthorpe Flatts, whilst the cross country course wound between the two suburbs.

Now demolished and replaced by a housing estate, little evidence remains that a school ever stood in Oswin Avenue. No plaque marks the location of the former school and it appears that nobody in a position of responsibility thought it appropriate to pay homage to the former occupant of the land in the naming of the estate or its roads. Would have taken too much imagination to name a road after a famous pupil - ‘Woodcock Way’ perhaps? Could they not have considered honouring a few of the long serving teachers? Didn’t Harry Taylor’s three decades of service merit commemoration?



A ‘Balby’ School’s event hosted in Hexthorpe (1963).

Harry taught in an age when teachers tended to live within walking distance of their place of work, (admittedly given his legendary proficiency for speed and endurance walking, in his case this could well have been many miles away). As it happened he was one of the ‘Ossie’ staff members who resided in Hexthorpe.



Harry’s walking exploits earned him iconic status amongst the pupils. One of his former colleagues, Martin Bright recounts how the two of them developed the ‘Rambles’ which initially introduced younger pupils to walks in locations such as the Peak District. Occasionally children would ask if they could join the group supervised by Martin rather than Harry, as they recognized just how difficult it was to keep pace with the latter. WWII veteran Harry could often be seen marching briskly in the school playground. The location of the ‘Ossie’ dining halls, across the road from the main body of the school spurred hundreds of pupils to give their own impression of Harry Taylor, speed walking across Oswin Avenue in an attempt to be first in the dinner queue. Surely had any consideration been given for

the heritage of the site then within in the new housing estate, instead of Peakstone Close we would fittingly find “Taylor Walk”.

In response to the underestimated role of Hexthorpe, over the next few months I hope to present a series of articles honoring some of its people of who helped to create the story of Oswin Avenue School.

Written by Tony Armstrong.

(If you have any information about Harry Taylor that you wish to share, or would like to know more about the ‘Ossie through the Ages’ project, please make contact via: tonyarmstrong1959@outlook.com)

A Personal Profile: A Quite Remarkable Hexthorpe Woman

Soup dragons came to Hexthorpe on 23 January to give out funds (and soup) to deserving local community groups. The winner was the Victorious Women Foundation, who received a cheque for £1,390. The Foundation was set up by Hexthorpe resident Josephine, and has now been active for exactly twelve months.

Josephine's story is one which will be familiar to many. Married, with a good job and a family, she had experienced domestic abuse for around fifteen years before she felt able to say anything. She eventually did so when her son told her that he did not feel safe with his father. She confided in her employer, who convinced her that what she was experiencing was an abusive relationship. She found the courage to flee with her children: she was offered a refuge, but in the event came to live in Doncaster, initially with her mother before being offered a property in Hexthorpe in late 2021.



Shortly after her arrival in Doncaster Josephine, a Christian, tells me that she was praying and reflecting on the statistics pertaining to domestic abuse. She realised that these must be inaccurate as this is an issue which is significantly under-reported, with women often feeling that they are powerless in a relationship and that they are trapped. This led to her becoming an activist, believing that she needed to do something in order for the situation to change and to work towards eradicating domestic abuse. Drawing on her own experience, she wanted to encourage women not to be afraid, being aware of how greatly domestic abuse affects a person's self-esteem and confidence, often leading to depression.

With support from the Doncaster Domestic Abuse Hub and a start-up grant from the Ward Members' Budget, Josephine was able to secure premises at Travis Gardens Communal Hall for one afternoon a fortnight. Women are offered the chance to undertake beauty treatments, learning new skills as well as boosting their self-esteem, to have foot massages and pedicures, often needed for those with underlying health conditions, and talks on women's health issues, as well as one-to-one support and prayer. She is planning to use the grant to buy more foot baths and six drums: a drummer herself, she quoted research which showed that drumming helps to improve both mental and physical wellbeing. In addition, she has plans for healthy cooking and eating sessions. She has had referrals from the City Council, and sessions are open to women from the Hexthorpe and Balby area, although she says that she will not turn away any woman who needs the support, no matter where in Doncaster they live.

Eight women have been helped by the project to date: one woman is a qualified solicitor who had found herself unable to cope with work for three years after experiencing abuse, and who has recently been supported into employment. Another had concerns about her immigration status, which was linked to her husband's, from whom she had separated: this woman has just been granted indefinite leave to remain in her own right.

Josephine undoubtedly has big vision and the passion with which to pursue it. The foundation can be contacted through the Facebook page: Victorious Women Heritage Doncaster.

(Our reporter Lynn Petersen)

News in Brief and Letters

A Suggestion

Dear Hexpress

My suggestion is to create a miniature railway at the school featuring the Flying Scotsman in which the children could participate and have this open to the public once a year.

Thank you to "The Hexpress" for highlighting the concerts at St Jude's and the Oswin Avenue exhibition at the Danum Gallery, which sound very interesting!

April Thomas

Hexpress Comment

In our last edition we highlighted the Flying Scotsman and asked how as a community we might have a permanent reminder of our great heritage. We thank April for her suggestion. Any others?

We also said that it is disappointing that the developers of Pulman Green failed to recognise the importance of the Plant Works site in the naming of the roads. Interestingly, Tony Armstrong, in his excellent article on the former Oswin Avenue School, makes a similar point. He is disappointed that there is no permanent recognition that the school was ever on the site. He wonders why the naming of new roads failed to acknowledge this.

If we are not careful new generations to come will have no idea of our rich heritage. Please come forward with ideas.

The Doncaster Choral Society Concerts

April comments on these concerts. There were two of them since our last edition - both were quite outstanding. Many people have commented that the choral society singers have never sounded so good. It must be the Hexthorpe air! The church was virtually full on both occasions. The Christmas Voices and Brass was memorable - the Prince Bishops Brass Ensemble was brilliant. Conductor Matt Beckingham is certainly making his mark in his first season. The next concert is on 16th March at St Jude's Church. It features two well-known works - Vivaldi's Gloria; and Mozart's Requiem. We hope that the Doncaster Choral Society decides to make St Jude's their regular venue in the future.

The State of our Roads

We do like to be positive with our news, but yet again numerous readers have pointed out that the main route through Hexthorpe is becoming dangerous. The potholes on Urban Road and on the incoming approach to Hexthorpe over Greenfield line are getting deeper, particularly with the wintry weather we are having. One reader writes,

"I know that councils throughout the country are short of funding. I suggest that until the holes can be repaired how about drivers reducing their speeds considerably. It would save damage to their cars and more importantly possibly save lives."

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Hexthorpe Boys from the late 1940's

Stuart Green provides this photograph from around 1947. It is of a group of boys on the old school playing fields situated at the bottom of Bramworth Road, where the allotments now are. Some of our older residents or present family members might be able to confirm whether we have the correct names or can identify the unknown boy.



From the left

Back row:

Pat Scholes, David Back,
Melvin Scoles, Ronnie Gillard,
David Trout

Front row:

David Trown, Stuart Green, ?,
Neville Outwin

On the crossbar:

Ray Harper.

A Consultation on PSPO

'What on earth is a PSPO?' you might well ask. PSPO stands for Public Spaces Protection Order.

A PSPO is only one part of the approach used by the City Council and its partners to deal with anti-social behaviour.

There is a PSPO for certain designated areas of Hexthorpe that expires on the 9th August of this year. The Council proposes to extend this for a further 3 years. However, they are adding one more new requirement and they need to know your views on this. The consultation is now open until 10th March. You can give your view at doncaster.gov.uk/services/environmental/public-space-protection-order-hexthorpe or call 01302 736000.

These are the proposed behavioural concerns in the PSPO:

1. Groups congregating
2. Playing street games on the public highway and pavements
3. People making excessive noise
4. Use of play areas on Urban Road from 9.30pm to 7.00am
5. Consumption of alcohol
6. Use of legal highs
7. Possession of opened alcohol containers in a public place
8. **New Requirement** - *presentation and return of wheelie bins within designated time frames. This is to reduce the known impacts such as bin thefts, bin related ASB, eg fires and tipping, unauthorised filling of bins by others, reduced access due to obstruction and increased rodent activity. The Council believes that this behaviour is having an unreasonable detrimental effect on the quality of life of nearby residents' and is likely to continue unless addressed by the proposed PSPO.*

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Large investment in Tennis Courts in Hexthorpe Flatts Park

City of Doncaster Council and the Lawn Tennis Association (LTA) have announced a partnership to invest in and refurbish public park tennis courts in Hexthorpe (Hexthorpe Park) and Bessacarr (Haslam Park).

In total, two park tennis venues will be renovated, with investment of £94,259 helping ensure that quality facilities are available for the local community.

Alongside the investment, City of Doncaster Council will also work with the LTA to deliver a range of activity across the park sites. This will include:

- weekly organised free park tennis sessions for all ages,
- playing levels and experience where equipment is provided,
- meaning that people will not need someone to play with or their own racket.

Local Tennis Leagues will also provide friendly, sociable, opportunities to get active through local competition.

Anyone interested in giving tennis a try can already access fully funded tennis coaching sessions every Saturday at Hexthorpe Park, (10am adult session, 12pm child sessions from age 8-16).

The sessions are suitable for all abilities, whether you are new to the sport or returning to it and equipment is provided. These sessions will continue while the works at Hexthorpe Park take place.



The Opening of a new Feet Clinic

“We would like to welcome you to ‘Healthier Feet Clinic’ (based in the former Dell café).

We will be offering general foot health services for a wide range of foot conditions.

Please contact us for an appointment We will be open from 1st February 2024.”

An advertisement for Healthier Feet Clinic. The text reads: "Healthier Feet Clinic", "The Dell, Greenfield lane. DN4 0JD", "Now Open" (with a small image of feet), "CALL FOR APPOINTMENT 07857 346 011", and "PLEASE KEEP ME SAFE IN A DRAWER TILL NEEDED". There is a small icon of a telephone handset.