

Hawstead 2023: Local History Recorder's Review

Alan Messem (a local meteorologist) sends a report each month to the Bury Free Press (BFP) describing Bury's weather over the previous four weeks. This year I managed to save each one. The headlines were:

- January: "It really was 'Dry January'"
- February: "Record-breaking dry month"
- March: "Days of rain bring a record"
- April: "April ends a cold, wet spring"
- May: "Wet start to May, then drought"
- June: "A very dry start to summer"
- July: "Five wet days dropped 65mm"
- August: "Warm but averagely wet month"
- September: "Sunny and warm despite Agnes" [a named storm on 26th]
- October: "Babet [another storm] brings a deluge ..."
- November: "More rain means a wet autumn"
- December: "Very soggy end to a wet year"

Hawstead is of course near enough to Bury St Edmunds for us to be able to say that the weather is very similar, if not exactly the same. In total there was 749mm of rain in 2023, nearly 30 inches, more than 10 inches greater than in 2022.

2021 saw the regular (ie every 10 years) national Census, and in 2023 some results and analysis started to become available. So we now know that on 21st March 2021 the population of Hawstead was 320

Hawstead



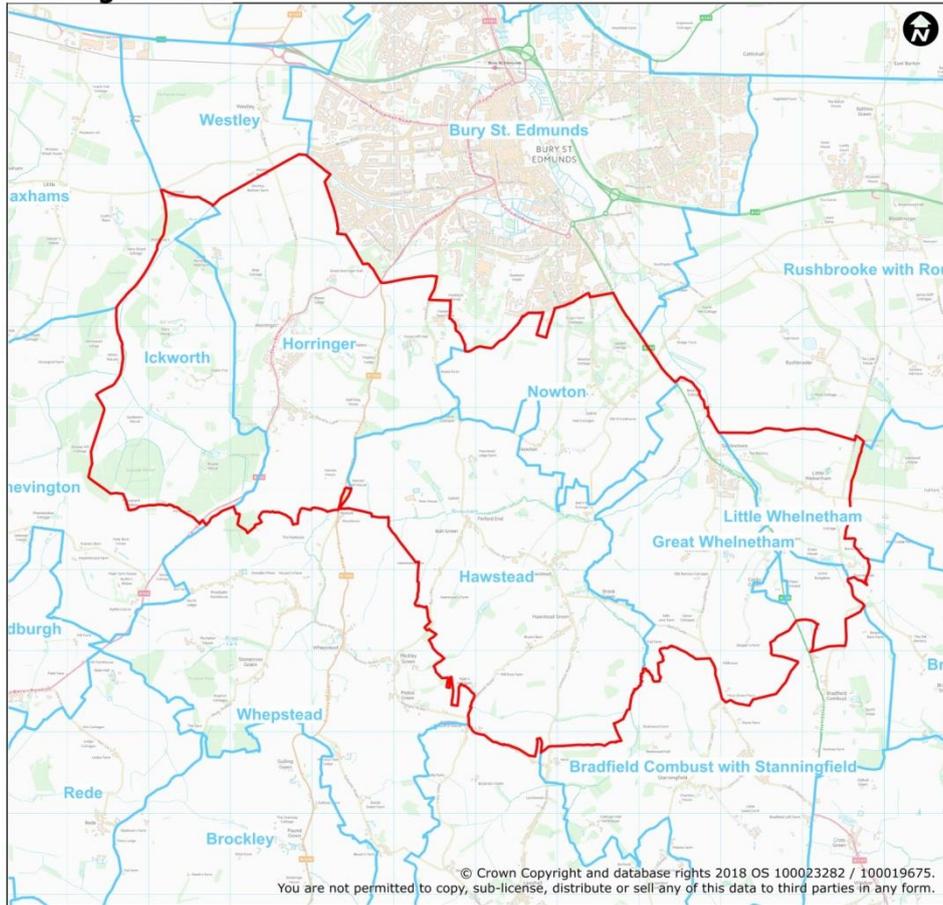
Source: Office for National Statistics - Census 2021

The age profile is interesting, clearly showing that, in contrast to the national picture, our village is weighted towards the elderly with a higher percentage for all but one 5-year bands above the age of 50.

Parliamentary Boundary changes.

It is important to try to keep the country's constituencies as even as possible in terms of voting population numbers, so every so often the 'Boundaries Commission' recommends changes. This was done and accepted in 2023, meaning that the next national election, due to take place in 2024 (or possibly January 2025) the new constituencies will be in place. There is a knock-on effect down to local Districts, and Hawstead is now in a district ward named Horringer.

Horringer Ward



Hawstead Parish Council (PC)

As usual, the PC met on 6 occasions during the year: the May meeting also included the Annual General Meeting at which Ros Alexander was elected Chairperson. There was one extra meeting in April for a Planning Application decision. At the end of the Financial Year (March 31st) the PC had £16,893 in the bank.

The PC pays for a village-wide website: in May it was decided to commission a second website specifically for PC data in order to comply with the Council's statutory publicity requirements from an 'accessibility' point of view. Due to the volume of material on the existing website it was agreed to keep this going.



There is currently an attempt throughout England to reinstate public footpaths that existed in the past but were excluded when definitive maps were drawn up in the 1960's. Using evidence on old Ordnance Survey maps, a small sub-group of the PC had prepared a summary of paths in the Parish that could be considered for revival and landowners were consulted. Although in March it was minuted that "the possibility of attempting to engage with local landowners to encourage the creation of permissible paths in the area" was discussed, at the May meeting it was agreed to discontinue the project.

The orchard in the Millennium Field is still young but some of the trees were starting to produce fruit this year.



An informal group of volunteers from within the village undertook various projects as well as the monthly maintenance of the Churchyard (March to October). Activities included painting the old swings on the Green, creating a path through Brook Green woodland on the right hand side of Bells Lane, constructing a handrail to assist access to the Hawstead Brook area on the left side of Bells Lane and clearing weeds from the Village Hall carpark. (Photo left shows your compiler cleaning the village sign at the entry to the village)

5 Planning Applications that had carried over from late 2022 were discussed, with recommendations to the Local Authority at the January meeting of the PC. There were 5 further submissions concerning a variety of projects that required permission. Of all these 10 applications, one was still pending with West Suffolk Council at the end of the year; three had been refused and the remaining 6 had been approved. There were also two appeals against earlier refusals, the

outcome of which are unknown at the time of writing.



“Four Bells Glamping” , situated in Pinford End was given planning permission in the Spring and started operating in July.





This plan for a new house adjacent to the glamping site, itself a re-submission, was refused permission.

Local elections were held on the 4th of May: insufficient candidates for our PC meant that there was no Parish election (and later in the year a villager was co-opted to make the numbers up) but there was an election for a District Councillor. This was won in a three-cornered fight, by Karen Soons, Conservative (already our County Councillor) with 418 votes (Mark Ereira-Guyer, Greens, 249 and Quentin Cornish, Labour, 172). Turnout was 40.7% of eligible voters.

Hawstead Community Council (HCC)

Activities sponsored by the Community Council included:

- An authentic Indian Curry evening, hosted by the Surti family on 1st April. This raised over £1000 which was shared between St Nicholas' Hospice and HCC
- The Coronation Party on 8th May
- A Plant Fair on 13th May
- The Village Fete on 10th September
- A performance by "Shanty Folk" on 21st October (Raised £147 for Royal National Lifeboat Institution)
- The annual "Triple-20s" Christmas Lunch on 9th December



**Authentic Indian
CURRY NIGHT**
Cooked and co-hosted by the Surti Family
Saturday 1 April
6.45pm for 7pm, Hawstead Village Hall
BYO drinks

Tickets £15 each (12 and under £8). Book by 25 March.
Numbers limited. Takeaway service also available.
For tickets, contact bookings@hawsteadvillagehall.co.uk
confirming whether meat or vegetarian diners

Fundraising for St Nicholas Hospice and Hawstead Village Hall

*You are invited to attend the Hawstead Village
Coronation Tea Party
Free To All Hawstead Residents*

*Date: Monday 8th May 2023
Place: Village Hall
Time: 2pm until 5pm*

*Children's Fancy Dress competition with a king/queen theme,
afternoon tea with a glass of fizz, family games.*



*RSVP by Saturday 29th April to:
bookings@hawsteadvillagehall.co.uk
Giving adult and child numbers please.*



The Coronation Tea Party in the Village Hall. (High number of attendees meant there was a marquee as well)

The Village Fete raised £623 which would in due course go towards funding the Triple-20s Christmas lunch, presents for children from the Christmas Elves and the New Year's Drinks Party. This last would be held in January 2024 rather than as a Christmas party because the wood floor of the Hall was to be replaced during December following the discovery of water having seeped below the floor from the heating system and caused damage. There was a cost of £26,000 attached to this job, thankfully covered by the Hall's insurance policy.

The village consultation last year included significant interest in new clubs to be started up in Hawstead. The May issue of Village Voice suggested that two might get going – one for gardening and another for cribbage.

All Saints Church

From the beginning of 2023, Rev. Canon Max Osborne was Rector of All Saints Church, Hawstead without the official change in Benefices which had been planned for during 2022. This was eventually completed on July 21st and we became part of Horringer Benefice. Earlier, on July 1st Rev. Max's Curate, Mel Takac was formerly 'priested' at a ceremony in St Edmundsbury Cathedral. Unfortunately, and for personal/family reasons, just before Christmas Rev. Max announced that he would be leaving. This means that soon into the New Year we will again be in a period of interregnum.



Rev. Mel Takac is seventh from the left hand side of this photo taken outside St Edmundsbury Cathedral

Church services during 2023 were at 11 am on the 2nd and 4th Sundays. During the year there was one wedding, one renewal of marriage vows, the funerals of Peter Smith and Nancy Dawson (both late of Pinford End) and the interment of Doug Dainty's ashes.

There was a Lent Lunch in the Spring as usual which raised £300; also some villagers contributed 'Lent boxes' of goods for the needy in town. The 100 Club operated during the year. From a payment of £24 per person, prizes of £20 and £250 were announced each month, leaving £1000 for church funds.

The Easter service was shared with Nowton and there was an egg hunt. At the other end of the year, an informal Advent service in the Village Hall on 2nd December was accompanied by the switching on of the Christmas tree lights, both inside and outside the Village Hall.

In October, trees which had been growing in wooden tubs either side of the porch were deemed to have grown too big and were cut down:



The Churchyard continues to be maintained by volunteers as part of the 'Jammie Dodgers' programme. This mostly involves mowing and strimming, plus getting rid of brambles and nettles with the occasional hearty bonfire!



A group of volunteers at the end of the final churchyard maintenance session in November (I think that's an oversized poppy that Bob is holding!)

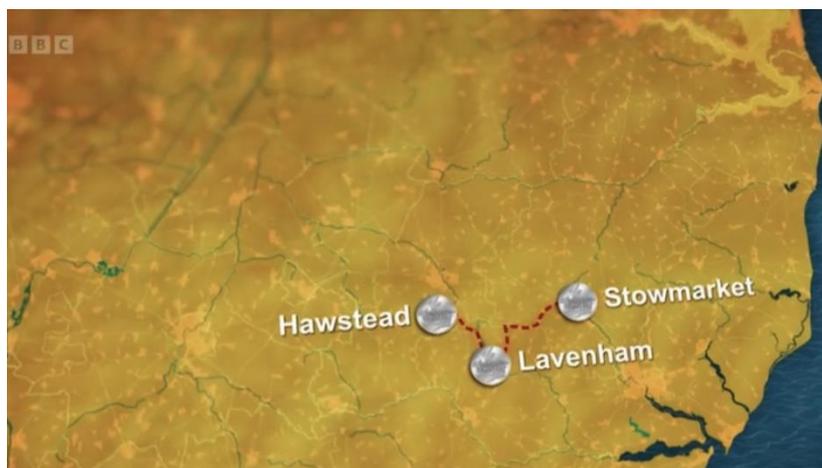
Great War Huts, Bells Lane (GWH)

A lot of activities took place during the year. There were school visits and groups came from as far away as Southampton and Scotland; the annual Heritage Open Days when a special exhibition 'creative conflict' displayed artefacts made by service people, POWs and civilians during wartime and two volunteer weekends, one in the Spring

and another in the Autumn, each attended by more than a couple of dozen people. There was a Summer activity for 7-12 year old children in August called 'Training for Trenches' and in November, to coincide with disability history month, a group of deaf children from Bury St Edmunds took part in a project at GWH in conjunction with the Suffolk Record Office.



On March 3rd the BBC-TV series "Antiques Road Trip" visited Brook Farm Camp to see the trenches and huts: there was also an interview on site with the historian Dr Vivien Newman, (a specialist on WW1) about the role of women in that war and the clothes they wore.



In early June a screening of a film "Battle of the Somme – the Battle of Ancre" took place, together with piano accompaniment and in November Robert Lloyd Parry returned to recite two more ghost stories by M.R. James.

Then there were the 'Hutted History' talks, a series of monthly evening talks on various subjects:

- Creating Cinematic War Memorials
- Identifying the War Dead
- A Brilliant Bundook [slang for 'rifle'] – the .303 Lee Enfield rifle

- The True Story of the Women of SOE
- Hut of the Antarctic – Conserving the Legacy of the Heroic Era
- Kitchener’s Mob – the Raising of Kitchener’s Army 1914-15
- A Century at the Cenotaph
- Winning With Laughter (WW1 cartoonists)

Maglia Rosso

This was an active year for Maglia Rosso, and not only in connection with cycling. To speak of these first, in the Spring there was a series of about half a dozen ‘Guided Rides’ taking those who signed up for a 10-15 mile ride in the local area. On 19th February the annual “Mille Maglia CX Sportive” took place. According to their Facebook page there was a ‘great turnout’ with riders completing 50 or 100 kilometres. Then in July there was an “Edge Sportive” when over 200 riders took part, being sponsored for riding anything between 15 and 100 miles, and raising over £12,000 for St Nicholas Hospice in Bury St Edmunds.



Barry and Matt Denny – owners of Maglia Rosso, and cyclists setting off on July 9th

Other events included several evening fun quizzes, including a special Christmas one, two ‘Lightning Talk’ evenings, when volunteers could talk for 5 minutes on any subject they chose (and very varied topics they were!) and between April and August there were monthly ‘Classic and Hot-Rod’ car meets, also in the evenings.





Three other special occasions are also worth mentioning: A) During April in the café visitors were able to see the custom bicycle that Neil Campbell used to gain an entry in the Guinness Book of Records as the fastest man on a bike, having reached an amazing 174.3mph in the slipstream of a (very fast!) car. On 14th April he gave a talk about his experience. B) On 6th June what was billed as “the world’s first cycling theatre company, The Handlebards” came and performed ‘A Midsummer Night’s Dream’ to an audience on the grass area outside Maglia Rosso. C) On 11th July there was a visit from a helicopter called ‘Helipaddy’. The Maglia Rosso Facebook Page said “we are now registered with [Helipaddy](#) to have private helicopters land on site”



Finally, mention should also be made of the half dozen holiday cabins located on the adjacent field. These are operated under the Wigwam franchise banner, and they have been very popular throughout the year. Visitors really appreciate the quietness of the village and the area in general, and several wedding parties have found it ideal when holding their reception in the Village Hall, as have many family groups.

From the Bury Free Press (BFP)

In February 2023 the newspaper reported difficulties at Pinford End Nursing Home: a Care Quality Commission inspection in January had found that “its service was not always safe or well led”. Fast forward to November and the

paper announced that the home would close on November 15th. There had been a further CQC visit over 5 days in September which found that “the provider remained in breach of regulations” and that the home would be placed in special measures as it had been rated ‘inadequate’. By the time of publication of the newspaper it was stated that all residents had been moved out.

In a special ‘Nostalgia’ page right at the end of the year, a collage of photos of pubs in the area from the BFP archives was published: they included a photo of former landlord/lady Nigel and Elaine Chadwick who managed the Metcalfe Arms 1994-7.



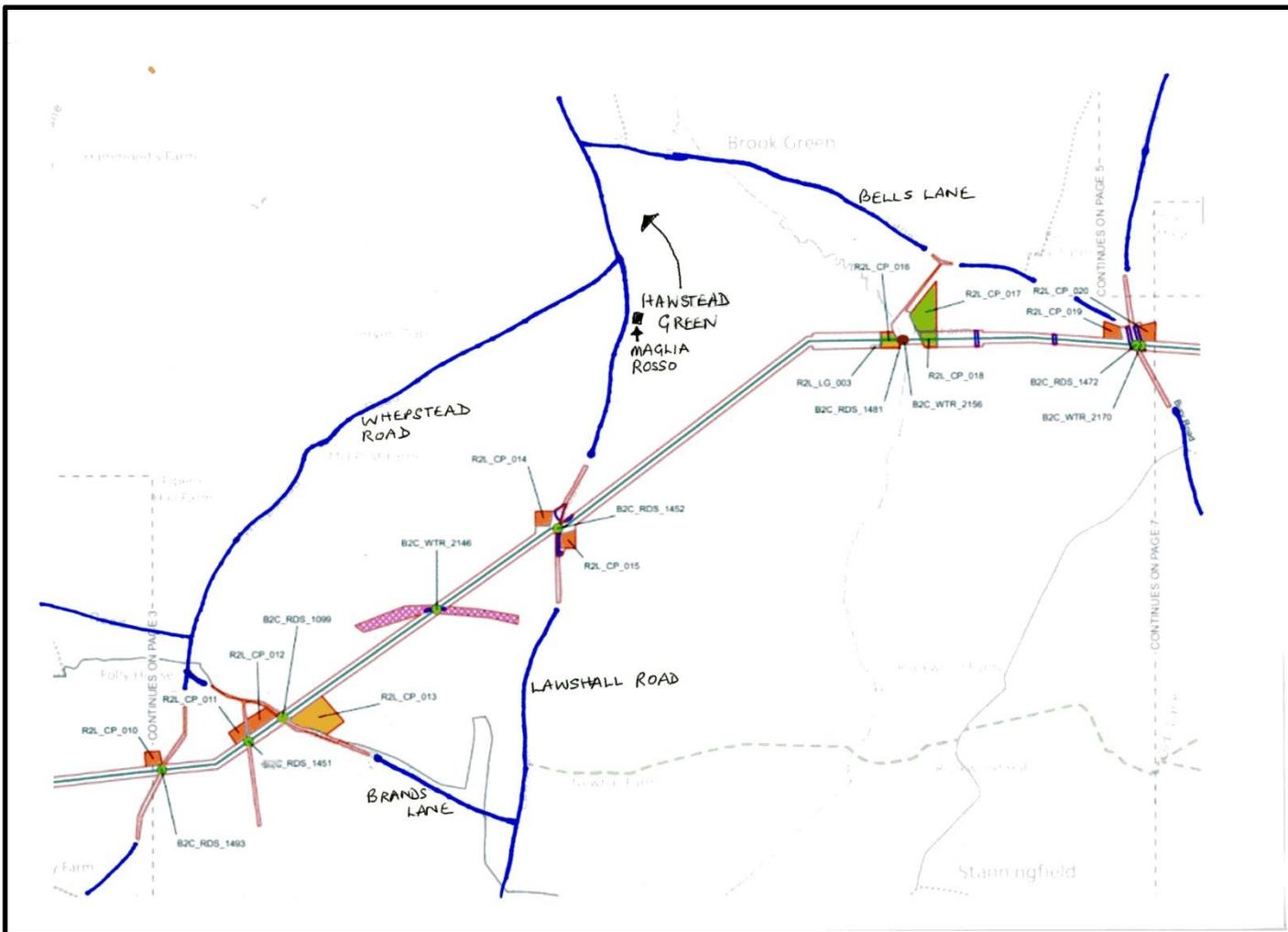
Your compiler had his photos printed in the paper twice during the year (June and December) Taking part in the weekly “See it, Snap it, Send it” competition.

Some Other Events

There was the regular Macmillan Coffee Morning on 7th. October which raised a total of £1,128 for Macmillan Cancer Relief.



Anglia Water has been planning to lay down a pipeline during 2024 which will cut across Hawstead . They are “building hundreds of kilometers of underground interconnecting pipelines that will stretch from North Lincolnshire all the way to Essex, allowing water to be moved from ‘wetter’ areas in the north to ‘drier’ areas in the south” (letter to households, 20/10/23) Planning permission was obtained from West Suffolk Council (one of those listed in the section about Hawstead PC) and some initial work was started straight away in October off Lawshall Road to the south of the village.



A map from the Anglia Water website shows where the pipeline will cut across fields and roads in Hawstead

The Village Green was cut for hay in late August which was baled and removed on September 7th.



Hawtead Book Club

In 2023 the Book Club choices were:

The Essex Serpent by Sarah Perry
An Equal Music by Vikram Seth
The Appeal by Janice Hallett
Behind the Scenes at the Museum by Kate Atkinson
The Secrets We Kept by Lara Prescott
The Wild Silence by Raynor Winn
The Beekeeper of Aleppo by Christy Lefteri
Cutting for Stone by Abraham Verghese
The Family Upstairs by Lisa Jewell
The Surgeon of Crowthorne by Simon Winchester
Away with the Penguins by Hazel Prior

Cutting for Stone was the favourite; The Surgeon of Crowthorne was the least liked

Hawstead Appreciation and Tasting Society (HATS)

Led by members of the society, themes this year included:

Pinot
Grape Varieties that may be Unfamiliar
Wines Offered During a Cruise Around Japan
A Jane MacQuitty Evening (ie the Times wine correspondent)
Blended French Wines
Obscure Grape Varieties
“Co-Op Irresistible”



A HATS evening under way in Hawstead Village Hall

Property in Hawstead

Four properties were offered for sale during 2023:

- 1) **Brook View, Bells Lane.** This was in June and offers in excess of £799,950 were asked. “An individual 1970s house situated in an exceptional rural setting surrounded by undulating open countryside, located on the edge of this well-regarded village close to Bury St Edmunds. Situated in an exceptional secluded rural location close to the village green and surrounded by undulating open countryside, Brook View is an

interesting and unique house, likely to have been built in the mid-1960s, of traditional block-and-brick construction with mono-pitched rooflines, as well as a further flat roof over the garaging.”



- 2) **Old Forge Cottage**, opposite the Village Green. This was in May and £600,000 was the asking price for a house with three bedrooms and two bathrooms and an outdoor swimming pool.



- 3) **Willow House, Bull Lane, Pinford End.** This property has 4 bedrooms and one bathroom and was on the market in September for £675,000. It was “an opportunity to purchase a detached family home situated in a sought-after rural location just 3.5 miles from the very centre of Bury St Edmunds. Willow House stands in attractive gardens that extend to approximately ¼ of an acre (STS).”



- 4) **Martins, Whepstead Road.** With 4 bedrooms and 2 bathrooms, this house was on sale in September for £475,000. The key features, according to the estate agent included “great sized gardens to front and rear”, “superb field views front and rear”, “the opportunity to extend” and “great access to Bury St Edmunds”.



In addition to these, in March a house at Hawstead Place was offered unfurnished as a long-term let for £2,750 pcm. and in the Summer 'The Red Shed' on The Pound became available via AirB&B.



By the end of the year the reviews were really excellent!

5.0
Guest favourite
One of the most loved homes on Airbnb based on ratings, reviews and reliability

21 reviews Most recent

Search reviews

Michaela
United Kingdom
★★★★★ - 1 week ago
Second visit, lovely secluded places, but very close to Bury. Rebecca makes you feel very at home, love it

Response from Rebecca
2 days ago
Once again Michaela thank you for coming to stay..sorry I missed you this time. I do hope you managed to get your Christmas shopping done?
Hope to see you next year.....
[Show more](#)

Bridget
England, United Kingdom
★★★★★ - 1 week ago
The Red Shed certainly lived up to expectations - with absolutely no problems

Jason
Urmston, United Kingdom
★★★★★ - 2 weeks ago
I absolutely loved my stay at the red shed. Rebecca was an amazing host. It was beautifully decorated and immaculately kept. It was nice and warm with the option of using the log burner. I took my earplugs in case of any noise. I need not have bothered. The red shed is placed in a beautiful rural location and the only noise I heard was the resident owl occasionally hooting! I will definitely be paying another visit

Response from Rebecca
1 week ago
Thank you very much for choosing to stay and for your lovely review. I'm so glad you were happy with everything, including the owls!

Overall rating

5	████████████████████
4	██████████████████
3	██████████████
2	██████████
1	██████

Cleanliness	5.0
Accuracy	5.0
Check-in	5.0
Communication	5.0
Location	5.0
Value	4.9

[Learn about reviews](#)

Finally, as a result of the sale of Church Farm in 2022, the house was demolished and a striking new building was erected in its place during 2023. It was occupied by a family new to the village late in the year.



Crime Statistics 2023

During 2023 there were 7 offences committed in Hawstead, according to Suffolk Police. 5 were categorised as 'violence/sexual', one was a case of theft and one was a public order offence.

Postscript

In 2020 I reported that, having signed up with Google to an alerting service regarding new Internet entries for 'Hawstead', I found that there are other Hawsteads . I continue to find new ones. There are Hawsteads in Orpington (Hawstead Lane), Lewisham, London SE6 (Hawstead Road), Chelmsford (Hawstead Medical Centre), Winnipeg, Canada (Hawstead Road), Whitby, Ontario, Canada (Hawstead Crescent), West Vancouver, BC, Canada (Hawstead Place), Utah, USA (Hawstead). There's a Grade2 listed house in the High Street, Broadway, Worcestershire called Hawstead House, and near Winchester, Hampshire there's Hawstead Farm where periodic pheasant and duck shoots are held. Quite a number of these Internet postings are showing adverts for houses for sale and I was quite surprised to see this one in February 2023: a 3-bed, 6 guests house to rent in Brisbane, Australia. There's 2 acres of land and a pool, but only one bathroom.



Andy Parrett 22/04/24