



Haughley Hoofers North West Morris - Report for Haughley Parish Council May 2023

Haughley Hoofers perform traditional clog dances from North West England. The side was started by Heather Bexon from Stowmarket and has been based in Haughley for about 38 years (no one can quite remember when we started). Membership is drawn mainly from the local area, though we have had members from Haverhill and Hadleigh. Numbers have fluctuated over the years (at one time we had more than 30 members including musicians) but we still have one founder member; nowadays the side numbers 17, including musicians.

Last year's summer season felt as though we were getting back to normal after the pandemic. We began with performances for 2 villages celebrating the Queen's Platinum Jubilee (including a brief appearance for Haughley). We danced at three folk festivals: Folk at the Boat, Ipswich, The Lobster Potty Festival, Sheringham and Ely Folk Festival, also Walsham-le-Willows Open Gardens, Felsham Street Fair and (of course) the odd pub, meeting other sides. Sadly, The East Anglian Music Trust's Traditional Music Day in Stowmarket last September was cancelled by the organisers due to Covid concerns. It is hoped to run it this year on Saturday 2nd September.

The highlight of 2022 came in August, dancing with other sides at the Normandy Morris Festival. This week-long festival takes place every three years and is organised by two dancers who used to be based in Suffolk. Mainly Suffolk dance groups attend, but there are other nationalities too, Morris is a broad church! We tour the local towns, dancing in the market squares, plus in the evening or on the odd afternoon off, there may be sightseeing, a barbecue, a ceilidh or a music workshop. Over the years we have taken part in several of these trips, in France, Belgium and Germany. Always good fun and greatly appreciated by local people.

October to April is normally our practice season, but during the winter we have also taught dances to Women's Institutes, to Brownies and Guides, and joined a dance workshop with Fiddlesticks clog dancers from Norwich. In December we were delighted to take part in Haughley's Christmas Lights celebrations with our friends East Suffolk Morris Men. See: <https://youtu.be/NtP4o1lVUrw>
<https://youtu.be/bBu3AZhk4tU>

Traditionally, the Morris dancing year begins on 1st May, but we have already, with dozens of other dancers, taken part in the Halesworth Day of Dance and Hundon's St George's Day celebrations. We danced between the raindrops and the chilly, wet April days came alive with the colour, movement and joy of dancing.

Why do we do it? We're a group of friends who love the music and dancing and meeting other like-minded people both here and abroad (and it keeps us fit). Come and join us!

Contact us via Facebook

Gill Brett
01449 673518

