Hatley Website Group

2018 / 2019 annual report

The main effort during the year was to bring the new Hatley village website (www.hatley.info) to fruition – while keeping the old site up to date.

The new site, launched on 6th April 2019, is 'powered by WordPress' – the most popular base for modern sites; it replaced the original site created in 2004 with Adobe's Dreamweaver software.

Unlike the old site, the new one is mobile friendly, meaning it adapts to the size and shape of the device visitors are using.

'Hatley-dot-info' remains a site devoted to the parish of Hatley – East Hatley and Hatley St George. Many of the old pages have been carried over, but reformatted, updated if necessary and, wherever possible, now include more photos with 'thumbnails' linked to larger versions; on pages were there are a lot of photos, a 'gallery' has been created to display them.

As with the old site, the new one has over 100 pages – currently it's 123 pages plus 23 event / news posts; finding a way to make it easier to navigate was the number one priority (while taking into account the May 2016 village survey about the site).

This has been done through a grid system – the home page has a grid of nine links, each with an appropriate illustration: clicking on a link takes the visitor to another grid set relevant to that link. Depending on the subject, the next click will go either to a text page or, if more detail is involved, another grid page – like all the other grid pages, each link has an appropriate photo or graphic.

To make photos and graphics on the site work properly, and avoid uncontrollable cropping, each image is sized according to where it is going to be used, with up to five size variants of each image. As of 20th May, there are 956 photos and graphics plus 424 PDF type documents – each one captioned and categorised for ease of retrieval.

A new feature is an 'availability' page in the section on Hatley Village Hall to give everyone a quick-glance appraisal of when it's free to hire. Kim Wilde is inputting this information via a specific Google calendar.

In deciding what to include on the new site, we recognised many people will search Google for things not wholly connected with Hatley – so rather than include swathes of information on our pages, which can date all too easily, we've put single links to the appropriate websites for things like vets, eating out, places to visit and so on.

There are more pages on the history of Hatley and our two churches than before – including, for the first time, specific pages on St Denis' church and Hatley St George church with galleries of photographs.

Like all good websites, 'Hatley-dot-info' is, as it always has been, a living entity and welcomes comments and contributions so it can be improved and made more useful and interesting. Contact in the first instance should be with Kim Wilde, our Parish Clerk.

And being a 'living entity', design aspects of the site will continue to evolve to improve its appearance and, importantly, usability.

The site was also designed so it no longer has to rely on one person to look after it and add new material. Parish Councillors are urged to fix dates for training.

Acknowledgements

Thanks to Peter Mann of Buzz Associates in East Hatley for designing and populating the site – with much help and advice from Parish Councillor Nicola Jenkins and to Margot Eagle for updating the 'factual pages' in the 'Practical matters' section – and Steve James and his team at Federation Design for their patience and engineering expertise to realise Peter's design.

Thanks, too, to everyone, past and present, who has contributed articles (without those contributions, this would be a very uninteresting and far less informative site) and to Hatley Parish Council for appreciating the need for a more modern site and to Kim Wilde, the Parish Clerk, for obtaining grants from South Cambridgeshire District Council and the National Association of Local Councils' Transparency Fund which enabled the work to be done.

The Parish Council pays the annual hosting cost of running the site – everything else is through unpaid volunteer work.

Cost of new site – and going forward

The one off cost for the creation of the new site was £1,500 (excluding VAT) – an expenditure authorised by the Parish Council last year and paid for through grants. (£1,800 with VAT.)

For 2018 / 2019, the Council has paid two sets of hosting costs: to Clara for hosting the original site (annualised at £141/year) and Federation Design for the new site (at a special rate of £57/year) plus £72 for an SSL 'safe site' certificate. This amounts to £225 for the year (excluding VAT). (£270 with VAT.)

For 2019 / 2020, this was looking to be Clara £141, Federation Design £143 and £72 SSL certificate – totalling £297/year excluding VAT. (£356 with VAT.)

Clara's cost includes the domain (hatley.info), which would continue to be an on-going expenditure with 'someone' as Federation Design does not offer this service. It was hoped with the new site being hosted by Federation Design, the Clara contract could revert to the original site minimum pricing of around £35.00/year.

Two weeks ago, Clara changed their entire 'small business' package costs – upping the minimum cost to £100/year (excluding VAT) for its 'Bronze' package, effective from the end of current contracts – 11th September 2019 for hatley.info, potentially making the entire running cost £280/year (excluding VAT). (£335 with VAT.)

> There is a further complication – the Federation Design server has proved to be a huge disappointment, slowing the site from 'instantly' popping up (as it always used to with Clara) to anywhere from an eight to 12 second delay, even with the super-fast broadband we now enjoy in Hatley.

It is therefore proposed the site is switched to Clara's new 'Silver' package, which costs £250/year (excluding VAT – £300 with VAT and paid annually, which saves £50). It includes the SSL certificate and (unlike the 'Bronze' package) sufficient web space (8 GB vs 500 MB) and, importantly, the database vital to running a WordPress website. In addition, it is proposed paying Federation Design a fee of £100/year (excluding VAT) to continue with the excellent 'engineering' work they do behind the scenes as the site evolves. **The total cost to the parish for the site will therefore be £350 for the next 12 months** (excluding VAT – £420/year with VAT).

Peter Mann, 21st May 2019.