



Haughley Hoofers North West Morris - Report for Haughley Parish Council May 2024

Haughley Hoofers perform traditional clog dances from North West England. The side was started by Heather Bexon from Stowmarket and has been based and practising in Haughley since (we think) autumn 1984. 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 performers number 18, including musicians. That sounds a lot, but people have other commitments and sometimes it is a challenge to get enough dancers and musicians together for a booking.

Last summer's dance season began in May 2023 with a performance for Coney Weston's Celebration of the Coronation of King Charles III – a change from the previous year when we had helped celebrate Queen Elizabeth II's Platinum Jubilee both there and in Haughley. In June we were also pleased to take part in the 850th anniversary of the siege of Haughley Castle – a great village event bringing both longstanding and new villagers together.

In July, we had a lovely day dancing at the wedding of one of our members.

During the summer we also danced at 2 folk festivals: St Neot's Folk Festival and, in September, Stowmarket's Traditional Music Day (postponed from the previous year because of Covid concerns). It is hoped that this event organised by the East Anglian Traditional Music Trust, will become an annual event in Stowmarket celebrating traditional music and supported by local dance groups and musicians.

An unusual booking for us was a day at the County Guide Camp in Trinity Park where we taught dances to Guides, Brownies and some Guide Leaders (one of whom we were very pleased to welcome later when she decided to join us as a member).

In addition to all these events Haughley Hoofers have of course met other dance sides at local pubs.

October to April is normally our practice season, but during the winter we have also taught dances to Women's Institutes and the British Legion Ladies Group (one of them joined us

too). In December we were delighted to take part in Haughley's Christmas Lights celebrations with our friends East Suffolk Morris Men.

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 – both very cold, but colourful, lively and the dancing warms us up!

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 Haughley Hoofers official page – Facebook where you can also see videos and photos of some of the events mentioned.

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