

Hawstead 2020: Local History Recorder's Review



Hand written sign at the village boundary

An unusual sight during lockdown

We (re)discovered fine country walks

From the end of March 2020 and right through to the end of the year, life in the UK was dominated by the coronavirus pandemic, causing the disease COVID-19 (C-19). The year started normally enough, and reports of a new disease developing in China seemed distant enough to ignore. However, as we started to hear of it spreading, alarm increased and to cut the story short, the government imposed a 'lockdown' across the country from March 24th. This continued till July 4th: during this period most shops and businesses except those delivering essentials like food, drink and medicines were closed and the population was told to stay at home except for local essential shopping and one period of exercise to be taken close to home each day. We were told to keep two metres away from any other people we might encounter and at a later stage – and after some discussion – to wear a face covering over mouth and nose in enclosed spaces. This was all taken very seriously and for these months the roads – and skies above were

delightfully quiet. Pubs and restaurants could operate a take-away service so The Swan in Lawshall and for a time The Red House in Stanningfield took meal and drink orders for collection.

In March a Hawstead Community



Support Group was established as part of the Parish Council's existing emergency plan and nearly two dozen men and women promptly offered their services to help in particular those who were self-isolating, elderly or otherwise more vulnerable to the virus, with shopping and other support. A WhatsApp online group comprising these individuals was also organised and weekly online meetings using 'Zoom' software got going for sharing information and ideas. A flyer with the contact details of the volunteers was then hand delivered to every household in the village offering support



to all if needed. The next initiative was the arrangements for food deliveries and this got going straight away. Early on there were 25 vegetable orders, 14 bakery and 'lots' of meat orders.

The playground on the Green was closed and there was a suggestion of closing off the car park to discourage visitors, but that idea was abandoned: indeed there was a sense that 'common sense' should prevail and we shouldn't necessarily be bound by government regulations clearly designed for more urban locations.

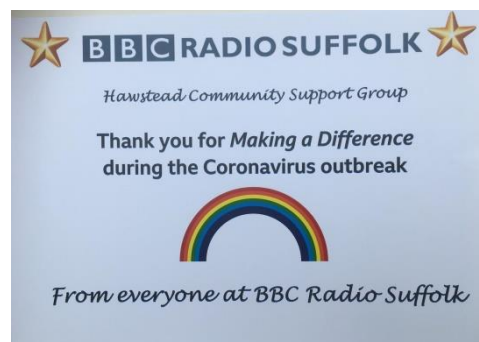
Via the WhatsApp group we became aware of (eg) plant sales being available in Nowton Park and elsewhere, that there was an increase in nuisance phone calls and 'scam' texts and emails to beware of: and that booking in advance would become essential to visit National Trust locations like Ickworth Park when reopened.



A weekly national ritual developed during the lockdown period in support of the NHS – every Thursday evening people went out in the road and clapped or made a noise using whatever they had as a sign of support for

the hard-pressed health care workers in hospitals and elsewhere.

In June our Parish Council Chairman was interviewed by Radio Suffolk in recognition of the proactive attitude taken within Hawstead.



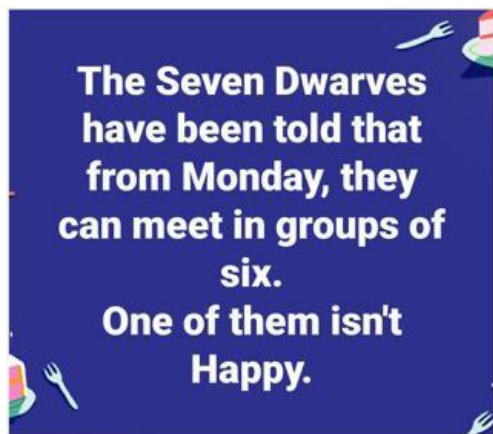
In July restrictions were eased and eventually the Zoom meetings were dropped down to fortnightly for a short while. In September it was established that we had 14 vulnerable people in the village (without the support of family or friends) and each was allocated a volunteer to keep in touch with them.



Fran Evershed volunteered as a lockdown rider for the Bury St Edmunds Rickshaw. Before Covid, the Rickshaw took vulnerable and isolated people for rides around the town. When this was no longer feasible the use was changed to the delivery of groceries and medication from local shops and pharmacies as well as getting food to and from the Bury Food Bank – all very necessary for those no longer able to get out and about.

Things took a turn for the worse and a 'second wave' of infections developed: so a second lockdown was imposed nationally from November 5th – December 2nd and indeed in early December we heard that three Hawstead residents were suffering from C-19. By the end of the year it was known that at least a couple more had contracted the disease, but all had recovered.

During this pandemic year jokes flew hither and thither through email and social media channels:



Hawstead Parish Council (PC)

The PC met 11 times during 2020; of these, 7 were 'remote' meetings via Zoom, starting with the March 26th meeting. The first two of these were recorded and loaded on the village website. There are normally 6 PC meetings each year: the extra 5 were called to discuss planning applications.

It was noted that a Facebook page had been set up in December 2019 called Hawstead Journal Online. During 2020 this gradually gained increased numbers of postings as another means of communication regarding the spread of C-19.

The weekly bus service to and from Bury St Edmunds that was heralded in last year's report got off to a flying start in January with a full bus on Jan. 15th. The service continued during the year.

At the March meeting the theft of 30 mole traps from the Village Green was noted and deplored.

The PC reported that it had been told by Suffolk County Council that it didn't have the authority to erect safety signage at the dangerous bend at 'The Wash' (by 'Larkfield' on Bury Rd.) and that in the absence of accidents the County Council wouldn't erect signage itself.

The PC agreed to support the volunteer initiative set up in response to the pandemic and to continue with virtual meetings during the C-19 crisis. Members of the public would be able to attend via application to the PC Secretary for a link and password. In May there was a meeting but no Annual Parish Meeting took place due to C-19 restrictions. Councillors responsibilities for the coming Council year were confirmed: it was also noted that the Local Government Act 1972 allows a certain expenditure on items for which PCs have no other statutory power. The amount for 2020/21 was £2180.

During the Summer the PC conducted an online survey to ask villagers for their opinions about what could be done to improve our community. The results were collated and the PC will endeavour, where possible, to action some of the suggestions.

An interesting minute from the November meeting concerned quotations from West Suffolk Council for mowing the village greens. A quotation of £2398 had been approved in the Spring by the PC but this turned out to be for 2021. The quote for the current year was received after the mowing had been completed. As it was for the lower sum of £1791 + VAT it was immediately approved!



Hawstead Community Council (CC)

No social events were put on by the Community Council prior to the lockdown that commenced at the end of March – and none were planned for the rest of the year. Although restrictions were eased during the summer it was nevertheless decided to cancel the annual fete and flower show which always takes place at the beginning of September.

The CC was successful in other ways in 2020, working alongside the PC, in helping to support the village during the pandemic. At the very beginning a newsletter called 'Village Voice', edited by Pinford End resident Anne East, was created and this appeared fortnightly to begin with. From July it was decided to continue to produce it as a monthly



publication, effectively as a replacement for the Hawstead Journal which had ceased publication about 18 months previously. Village Voice averaged in excess of 20 pages per issue and by the end of 2020 had appeared 12 times. It gave advice about how to cope with C-19 and indicated what services

were available locally. There were articles on gardening, health and other subjects of potential interest. There were recipes, descriptions with maps of local walks – including two which were offered by Rupert Brown taking in boundaries of fields within his farm which aren't normally public footpaths. There was a 'kids section', quizzes and crosswords devised by villagers, information about arts programmes available online and collections of locally-taken photographs submitted to the editor. Village Voice was produced and distributed electronically and this latter was assisted by a determined effort to persuade all who had the facility to join the existing village email group.

Above is a photo looking across "Long and Short" field towards the Dutmoos Woods (Rupert Brown farmland walk)

Fruit/Veggie Delivery to Hawstead
MARKSMAN PRODUCE LTD

Starting 8 April, Villagers collect WEDNESDAYS and SATURDAYS from outside Hawstead Village Hall 10.30-11.30am • BYO bags Self isolating or NHS/essential worker? Place your order and ask a Community Volunteer to collect and deliver on your behalf.

To order, email marksman.orders@gmail.com. They will confirm the price, email an invoice and you pay via BACS. There is a maximum of 20 orders for each delivery day, so if the date has reached its limit, your order will be moved to the next day/date. Make sure you say your order is for the **HAWSTEAD VILLAGE HALL DELIVERY**

Fruit Box £10 6 Pears 8 Apples 6 Bananas 8 Satsumas 5 Plums 500g Grapes 6 Oranges	Salad Box £6.50 1 Iceberg Lettuce 1 Cucumber 1 Bunch of Celery 1 Red Pepper 1 Bunch of Spring Onion 6 Tomatoes 1 Vine of Cherry Tomatoes 1 Packet Beetroot	Vegetable Box £12 10 Carrots 1 Cauliflower 1 Broccoli 6 Baking Potatoes 500g New Potatoes 1 Green Cabbage 1 Swede 3 Parsnips 4 Leeks 2 Brown Onions 2 Red Onions
---	---	--

Extras
Asparagus £3 per bunch
Salted or Unsalted Butter £1.40 per 250g block
Cheese (2.5kg block £13; 5kg block £26)
Pre-grated Cheese (2kg) £10
Mixed yogurts £4 for 12
30 Eggs (Caged) £3.95
30 Eggs (Free Range) £4.50
Sack of Potatoes £9.00
Medium/thick sliced White or Wholemeal Bread £1.10 Each
2 litres Whole/semi-skimmed/skimmed Milk £1.10

Order before 9am Tuesday for a Wednesday delivery, and before 9am on Friday for a Saturday delivery
DO NOT LEAVE THE VILLAGE UNLESS ABSOLUTELY NECESSARY

Meat Delivery to Hawstead
ERIC'S PRIME CUTS

Starting 1 April, Villagers collect Wednesdays from outside Hawstead Village Hall 10.30-11.30am • BYO bags Self isolating or NHS/essential worker? Place your order and ask a Community Volunteer to collect and deliver on your behalf.

To order, phone Eric's team on 01284 705567 and place your order. They will then prepare the order and call you back with the price and you can pay with a credit card. Make sure you say that your order is for the **HAWSTEAD VILLAGE HALL DELIVERY**.

Chipolatas Sausages Mince beef Back bacon Streaky bacon Casserole beef Rump steak Sirloin steak Fillet steak Topside Leg of pork Shoulder of pork Belly pork Pork casserole Pork steak Pork chops	Pigs liver Pigs kidneys Lamb kidneys Lamb chops Leg of lamb Shoulder of lamb Minced lamb Whole chicken Chicken thighs Chicken breasts Pork pie Scotch eggs Cooked ham Mature Cheddar cheese Black Bomber Cheddar Stilton cheese
--	--

Order before 4pm Tuesday for a Wednesday delivery
DO NOT LEAVE THE VILLAGE UNLESS ABSOLUTELY NECESSARY

Food Delivery to Hawstead
THE FRIENDLY LOAF

Starting 1 April, Villagers collect Wednesdays and Saturdays from outside Hawstead Village Hall 10.30-11.30am • BYO bags Self isolating or NHS/essential worker? Place your order and ask a Community Volunteer to collect and deliver on your behalf.

Menu

Semi-skimmed Milk (2 litres)	£1.40
Butter	£1.70
6 Eggs	£1.70
BREAD (NOT SLICED)	
White	£3.10
Wholemeal	£3.20
Granary	£3.20
Sourdough	£3.60
French Stick	£1.60
Hot Cross Buns	90p each or 4 for £3.40

Call **07502 164894** to place your order using your **credit card** for payment
Make sure you say it is for the
HAWSTEAD VILLAGE HALL DELIVERY

Order before midday on Tuesday for a Wednesday delivery, and before midday on Friday for a Saturday delivery
DO NOT LEAVE THE VILLAGE UNLESS ABSOLUTELY NECESSARY



At the beginning of lockdown the CC explored the possibility of getting food deliveries to the village. This was very successful and in early April we had the ability to order meats, fruit and vegetables and bread/milk/eggs from three providers. Boxes of ordered produce were delivered to the Village Hall once, or in the case of bread, twice per week. When lockdown came to an end these services were withdrawn. However, towards the end of the year a fish and chips van was booked to come to the Village Hall on a couple of Fridays before Christmas to serve pre-ordered meals.

The CC manages the Village Hall. At the beginning of the year – before things went pear-shaped – it organised a ‘deep clean’ of the Hall and volunteers pitched up to help in the 22 tasks which had been identified. In the summer a fresh layer of shingle was laid on the car park and volunteers returned to freshen the Hall up with some painting and decorating. Fortunately the Treasurer secured a grant from West Suffolk Council amounting to £10,000, there being no income this year as the Hall was ‘out of bounds’ to potential hirers. Other grants had boosted this figure to £16,478 by the end of the year. The Hall was made C-19-secure and was one of few locally that reopened in 2020 as soon as conditions permitted. Several weekly yoga and fitness sessions were hosted.



Committee meetings were held online during the year, and like the PC an AGM was cancelled. Other activities of the CC included launching a new-look Village Hall website in May and distributing chocolate coins to all village children (approximately 48) just before Christmas, with the CC’s best wishes.

All Saints Church

From the start of lockdown through to the end of the year the church remained closed – no visitors and no services except for a couple of Saturday afternoons in December when it was open ‘for private prayer’; and a socially-distanced carol service with the traditional 9 lessons, shared with Nowton church. The usual Lent Lunch was held in the Village Hall on Saturday March 7th (soup, bread, cheese, fruit) and raised £321 for the Women’s Refuge in Bury St Edmunds. There were no other events during the year and an article appeared in the December issue of Village Voice appealing for financial support from villagers, there having been expenses but no income at all.



The Parochial Church Council’s Annual General Meeting was postponed from March to October, when there were fewer restrictions on meeting other people. At this meeting Lesley Carey announced that she had resigned as Church Warden. It was also revealed that the Rector, Jeremy Parsons would be reducing his hours of work for the first half of 2021 and then also resigning.

The St Edmunds Way parish magazine appeared for the first three months of the year but then ceased publication for the remainder of the year. It did announce coffee mornings to be held in the Village Hall, once a month during January, February and March.

Having informed that they would only be coming every other month in the future, the ‘payback’ maintenance team did not appear at all in 2020. Attempts were made by individuals in the village to help keep the grass under control; the strategy used was to mow or strim around the gravestones and keep the paths clear.

There was some progress in respect of the Chancel monument which needs restoration. Dr David Carrington of Skillington Workshop visited twice to examine it and his report will be delivered early in 2021. The cost will be borne by a grant from Church Care (£1800), the Parish Council (£600) and church funds (£550).

Arthur Bailey, who lived opposite the Green, died at the end of 2019. A funeral service was held at Great Whelnetham Church.



Other Topics

Several enterprises operate in Hawstead.

Suffolk Barn, at Hawstead Place is a venue for weddings and other events including parties, corporate events and music recordings. Such activities couldn't take place once lockdown had been announced. During the first lockdown period the walls of the barn were insulated and the outside re-clad to provide a warmer interior during the colder months. A quote from the Barn's website at the end of the year states: *"Throughout 2020 we were bombarded with different sets of rules and regulations around weddings. One minute we were allowed 30 people, the next it was 6 guests only with no receptions allowed and only under exceptional circumstances. Confused? We were too!"*

At **Great War Huts** in Bells Lane lockdown time was used partly to create a series of videos. A YouTube channel was established in April and nine films ranging in length from 14 to 51 minutes long were produced. Several of these were in a series called "Hutted Histories". Then, leading up to Christmas a set of 25 short videos depicting artefacts in the Great War Huts collection appeared, one each day as a "HutVent" series (cf. Advent!)



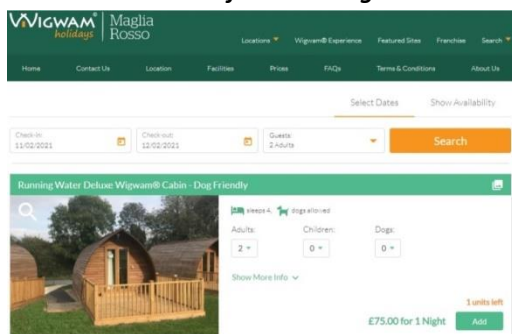
The entrance sign: now "Brook Farm Camp"

The Khaki Devil uniform store building was improved with wood cladding

Maglia Rosso cycle shop, in common with cycle shops nationwide, was allowed to remain open all year, in order to encourage cycling for transport and recreation. This was an initiative that worked splendidly with record sales of bikes across the range. However, their café was obliged to close during the first lockdown. Before lockdown descended on us there had been a 'Lightning Talks' event in January (5 minute talks on a range of topics) and the annual winter Mille Maglia CX Sportive. This took place on a wet and windy Sunday, 23rd February with 50, 75 and 100km options. All other events planned for later in the year were cancelled: but during the summer it was possible for the Wigwam cabins, located in the adjacent field in 2019, to be open for visitors. A note on the Maglia Rosso Facebook page in mid-August stated that *"our first summer has been a success with the cabins being full throughout July and August with full contactless arrival, stay and departure"*.



***Aerial photos of the field belonging to Maglia Rosso showing their cycling track and the Wigwam cabins
Below: from the Wigwam website; and the staff – from the Bury Free Press website***



Sarah Bivall, cabins manager, Sonia Hood cafe manager and Andy Stevens Picture by Mark Westley

Maglia Rosso and Wigwam Holidays featured in a Bury Free Press newspaper (BFP) article under the headline “Wigwams provide Indian Summer”. There was also an article in May celebrating 6 years of Maglia Rosso operation; and a colour feature in the “Bury and West Suffolk” magazine in March.



The BFP of 17th July had a full double-page spread describing the research done by aviation historian Robin Hill into the crash in September 1943 of the Focke-Wulf fighter plane in Hawstead. It was thanks to lockdown that he was able to find time to collate the information he had gathered some years previously.

Elsewhere in the BFP three entries in the ‘See it, Snap it, Send It’ section involved Hawstead. One in January had been sent in by Andy Parrett; others in February and September were not by residents but were entitled “Sun rises over the fields at Hawstead” and “Harebell and yarrow on Hawstead Village Green”.

In early March a group of some 15 villagers gathered at the Millennium Field to help establish Hawstead’s Community Orchard (which had been approved and financed by the PC in 2019). A couple of dozen fruit tree saplings had been delivered by specialist nurseries over the previous weeks: they – a collection of apple, pear, plum, damson and gage varieties – were duly planted in a morning, together with



stakes and rabbit guards. All but one survived, with blossom appearing in the Spring. By Autumn one or two apple trees had produced fruit – quite unexpectedly in their first year!



Early in the morning of April 8th residents were alarmed to hear emergency vehicle sirens. A fire had developed in the chimney at Hawstead Hall and had spread in the night to the roof. All occupants were safe but had to re-locate to a rental property in the village for the rest of 2020, restorative work not having been completed by the end of December.



8th May had been designated 'VE Day' in celebration of Victory in Europe at the end of World War 2, 75 years ago. Because no official events were permitted we were encouraged to make patriotic decorations and have tea parties, if possible in our front gardens.

The Village Green was cut for hay on July 11th

In December the former phone box at Pinford End was upgraded from housing a defibrillator to having a second role as a book exchange, thanks to shelves having been erected inside by a volunteer.



Weather during 2020

Monthly weather reports in the BFP were viewed and the following highlights noted:
a) May was the driest in our area for 100 years
b) in direct contrast, 2020 was the 6th wettest year in the past 70 years. This was



certainly contributed to by deluges in mid-November and the weekend on 3rd/4th December. On both occasions Bells Lane was flooded by the swollen Hawstead Brook.

Crime Statistics 2020

10 crimes were registered by Suffolk Police as having been committed in Hawstead:

- Burglary (1)
- Other Theft (1)
- Violent/Sexual (3)
- Vehicle (2)
- Criminal damage/Arson (1)
- Anti-Social Behaviour (1)
- Other (1)

In 2020 Suffolk as a whole recorded the 10th lowest number of crimes out of 43 police forces in England & Wales and the second lowest in the East of England.

Hawstead Book Club

During 2020 the Book Group read and discussed the following titles (mostly via Zoom)

- Leaving Before the Rains Come by Alexandra Fuller
- Chemistry of Tears by Peter Carey
- The Seven Deaths of Evelyn Hardcastle by Stuart Turton
- Sweet Caress by William Boyd
- Normal People by Sally Rooney
- The Librarian by Sally Vickers
- Mr Mac and Me by Esther Freud
- Nine Perfect Strangers by Lianne Moriarty
- The Mermaid and Mrs Hancock by Imogen Hermes Gower
- The Spy and the Traitor by Ben Macintyre
- The Hunting Party by Lucy Foley

Hawstead Appreciation and Tasting Society (HATS)

The wine tasting club was only able to meet properly twice in 2020:

- January: 4 pairs of the same grape variety: guess the variety and from which country it comes.
- February: Wines from Marks and Spencer

After lockdown was imposed the group continued to meet via Zoom mostly for a bit of chat, but also to share information about the wine they were drinking that evening (it wasn't always wine!)

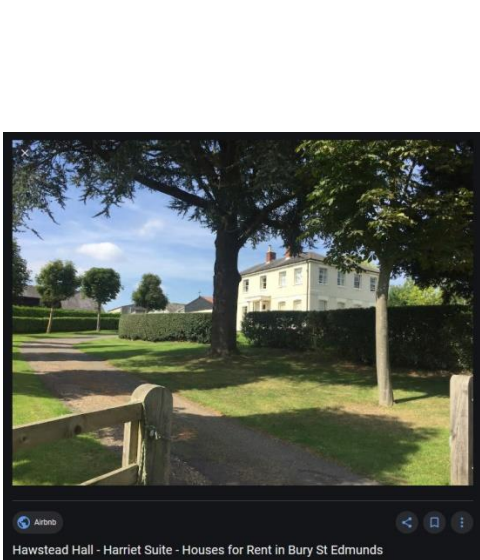
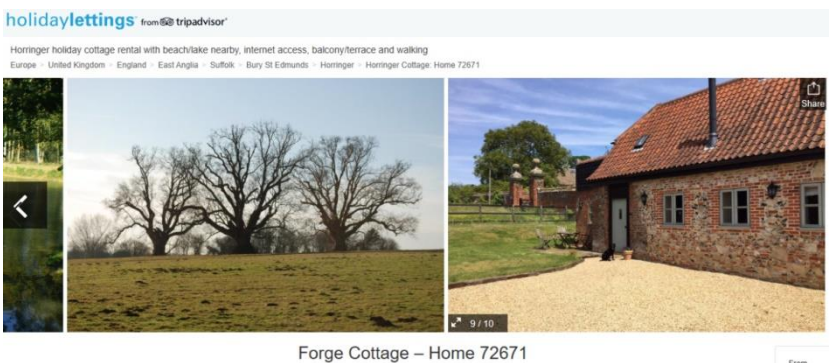
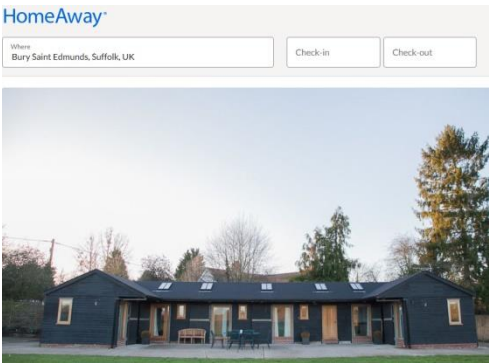
Property in Hawstead

Two houses were sold during the year. One, Atherstone House (left, below) had been on the market in 2018 for £450,000. It had remained empty since then but was sold in July 2020 for £435,000. Pye House, Lawshall Road had also been previously advertised. Most recently it was on offer in June at a 'guide price' of £795,000 and it sold right at the end of the year.



A third property, Church House was marketed with a guide price of £630,000 and although seemed to be ‘on offer’ at one point, it remained unsold at the end of December.

A trawl of the Internet in early 2020 revealed that there are 5 properties partially or completely available as holiday lets:




A total of 10 planning applications were either decided or posted with West Suffolk Council during the year. Of these, one was refused, 6 were approved and 3 were pending at the end of the year.

Postscript

A service the Internet search engine Google can perform is that of a regular search for new Internet posts containing specific words or phrases. A request for notifications advising of new data containing the word 'Hawstead' has revealed that there are other Hawsteads, not only in England but in other countries – notably Canada – as well. It tends to occur as a road name rather than a settlement and notifications have turned up mostly because of properties that are for sale in that named road. Here are two examples from 2020, one in Winnipeg, Canada and one in South London.

62 Hawstead Road
Winnipeg, MB, R3T 5H2 Listing ID: 202016203
\$409,900 Est. \$1,588/mo

5 Bed 3 Bath 1595 Sqft House Type




End terrace house for sale in Hawstead Road, London SE6

£750,000

End terrace house for sale - 5 bedrooms 5 2 2

Property details Floorplan Map & nearby



These two properties are quite different in both age and appearance, but they're comparable in that they both have 5 bedrooms. However, you'll see that there's a significant difference in the prices: \$409,900 Canadian equates (today) to about £233,200 !

Andy Parrett 13/02/2021
Hawstead History Recorder