

# Old Woughton Parish Council Newsletter

Woughton Park

Woughton-on-the-Green

Passmore



## KEEPING YOU IN TOUCH!

### Welcome to the December 2016 issue of the Old Woughton Parish Council Newsletter.

#### Budget 2017 - 2018

We are proposing a budget roughly in line with that of last year. There will be no increase in the precept (£9,104) which we have kept at this level for the last 3 years. It is also significant that the Allotments will be close to breaking even for the first time. All this is due to our continued attention to maintaining low operating costs and tight control over our expenditure. The downside is we have accumulated over £60,000 in reserves and the external auditors have passed comment on this for two years in a row. Accordingly we plan to create a capital projects list which will be earmarked against the reserves. It will represent a wish list that contains prioritised and costed parish enhancements which we will tackle in the future.

At the January PC meeting we will finalise and agree the budget and launch our capital projects plan. You can have your say in both because the details are on the website and on the notice boards. Do let us know what you think.

#### Possible Devolvement of MKC Non-Statutory Services to Parishes

MKC has a £56m budget funding gap until 2020. It cannot raise its government-capped council tax without a referendum. MKC officers have opened a dialogue with town and parish councils about handing over responsibility for 'non-statutory services', potentially by the 2017-2018 financial year. These services in Old Woughton Parish could include street cleaning (currently £4,646 p.a.), landscaping (currently £12,410 p.a.) and play area maintenance (currently £1,000 p.a.). The implication for us would be a likely tripling of the precept and additional administrative burden. City-wide, the loss of efficient central procurement would result in higher costs to parishes and variable quality across the board.

The consultation process is still at an early stage and so far no evidence of Ward Councillor involvement

has been detected. However, in the next couple of months we will probably be involved in wider discussions with MKC and other parishes. You can button-hole your local parish councillor in the street, email any one of us or give your comments to the Clerk by phone or post. Please don't leave it too long to let us know your view; this matter is important to us all.

#### Grand Union Canal

The Old Woughton Parish canal volunteers have now completed two very successful work days and some litter picking ventures. As there is clearly an interest in keeping our parish in a state of good repair, your Parish Council has agreed to adopt the section of the canal that runs through our parish. This means that we agree to work in co-operation with the Canal and River Trust to maintain, improve and repair that section. We undertake to support their aims and objectives, but they will never expect from us more than we agree to deliver. They will support us by providing material, equipment and training if appropriate and ensuring that in any activity we choose to undertake we are kept safe. Our efforts will include organised litter picking, towpath and hedge repairs. In the future we may also embark on some hedge trimming.

We welcome any more volunteers who would like to join the mailing list, especially from the north end of our parish.

We always have fun doing the work and go

home with a real sense of achievement. Please contact me at [jhowson@oldwoughton.org.uk](mailto:jhowson@oldwoughton.org.uk)

Also the residents of the parish can become the eyes and ears of the C&RT, reporting any anti-social behaviour along the canal at

[enquiries.southeast@canalrivertrust.org.uk](mailto:enquiries.southeast@canalrivertrust.org.uk)

Even if there is no-one available to respond to a situation immediately, C&RT welcome all the information we can give them as it helps them build up a picture of all activity along this stretch of water.



## Message from the Community Car Service

Following a review of the service, MK Council have once again provided monetary support for the Community Car Service for a further year! Part of our future work is to develop an expandable and sustainable service which will work very closely with M K Council Community Transport to identify similarities in services and possible areas of collaboration between the services.

One action from this approach is that the Community Car Service is now taking referrals from MK Council Community Transport Service. These passengers are those who mainly use MKCT for medical journeys and may not have been able to have some of their journeys fulfilled. MKCT is currently identifying these passengers and will be providing them with details of our service. The referred passengers are currently not required to pay the membership charge to allow the transition between services.

## Rats

Residents all over our parish mention that rats are a common problem. Possibly it's fishermen leaving bait, thoughtless people dropping food litter or maybe those who feed the birds a bit too enthusiastically. One or two residents said that their compost bins have been rifled. The vermin have been seen in gardens foraging around as bold as brass. We would ask everyone to ensure that food sources are denied to these pests. You can pay for the services of a pest controller (MKC no longer has a contract) but because it is likely to require long-term attention, this could be expensive. Alternatively, you can buy bait and special boxes that are pet/child-proof from DIY stores.

We all need to do what we can to tackle this nasty problem. One way in which we can improve the situation is to ensure that our food waste is put in the correct receptacle for the bin men – paper, card and most plastics in the pink sacks, all food waste (including bones) in the green bin and any other general waste in the black sacks. The cleaner we make our rubbish, the less the rats will enjoy it!

## Telephone Box

With reference to the BT Phone Box near The Close on Newport Rd., OWPC are thinking about getting it removed because it is always vandalised. Please let us know if you have any views.



### **SAVE THE DATES:**

*January 2017 – December 2017 – Milton Keynes Celebrates 50 yrs.*

*23rd January 2017 – Formally the Birthday of Milton Keynes*

*11th June 2017 - MIKRON THEATRE in conjunction with the  
Mercure Parkside Hotel*

*5th August 2017 - QUIZ NIGHT*

#### **HERITAGE OPEN DAYS EXHIBITION:**

*Saturday 9th September 2017: 10 - 5pm*

*Sunday 10th September 2017: 2 - 5pm*

*Monday 11th September 2017: 10 - 2pm*

#### **We are calling all residents...**

Our next exhibition will focus on the coming of the New Town post 1967

We would love to hear YOUR story

Please contact: [Woughtonheritage@gmail.com](mailto:Woughtonheritage@gmail.com) or  
telephone 01908 679 504

More dates and information to follow in the New Year!



### **Parish Council Meetings 2017:**

Monday 09<sup>th</sup> January

Monday 13<sup>th</sup> March

***All held in St Mary's Church,  
Woughton on the Green***

***The first 15 minutes of each meeting is reserved for the public to address the Council with questions or issues you wish to bring to our attention.***

### **How to contact us:**

Email us through the clerk:

[clerk@oldwoughton.org.uk](mailto:clerk@oldwoughton.org.uk)

Telephone: Landline: 01908 465811

Mobile: 07866 412706

Write to us:

P.O. Box 7575, Milton Keynes, MK11 9GR

For all Email contact details visit our website at

[www.oldwoughton.org.uk](http://www.oldwoughton.org.uk)

Also find us on **Facebook**

Search "Friends of Old Woughton"

**All good wishes for a happy and peaceful  
Christmas and a prosperous  
New Year from Old Woughton Parish  
Council.**

