OLD WOUGHTON

Serus









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Milton Keynes

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Who's Who in the Parish

OLD WOUGHTON PARISH COUNCIL

The Parish of Old Woughton is divided into 4 small wards. Details of your local Councillors are listed below.

Woughton on the Green North



Rob Grindley Planning, Projects, Liaison for Woughton Playing Fields/Pavilion, Transport

rgrindley@ oldwoughton.org.uk



Roy Kenyon Allotments, Finance & Budget, Projects, Liaison for Transport

rkenvon@ oldwoughton.org.uk



Phil Nash Allotments, Communications, OWIS/IT, Projects

nnash@ oldwoughton.org.uk

Woughton on the Green South



Ray Brown Planning, Projects. Village Greens/ Rights of Way

rbrown@oldwoughton.org.uk



Charlotte Hall CHAIR ELECT Finance & Budget,

Planning, Projects Lead, Liaison for Parks Trust, OWPC Representative - Welfare Trust, Communications

chall@oldwoughton.org.uk

Woughton Park



Vanessa Freeman Gwynn VICE CHAIR ELÉCT Planning, Projects, Liaison for MKC Consultations, Parks Trust, Communications

vgwynn@oldwoughton.org.uk



Vacancy

Passmore



Mary Major Dog Bins, Noticeboards, Projects, Finance and Budget, Liaison for MKC Consultations, Liaison Canal & River Trust' mmajor@oldwoughton.org.uk



Jeremy Morrison

Liaison for Canal and River Trust, **Communications Projects**

jmorrison@oldwoughton.org.uk

The Borough of Milton Keynes is divided into larger wards, OWPC is part of the Campbell Park and Old Woughton Ward. Your ward councillors are:





Julian Vischer Finance & Budget Environment, OWIS/IT, **Data Protection Office** clerk@oldwoughton.org.uk



Terry Baines terry.baines@milton-keynes.gov.uk T. 01908 730314 / 07846 697237



Paul Trendall paul.trendall@milton-keynes.gov.uk T. 07793 080425



Ric Brackenbury

ric.brackenbury@milton-keynes.gov.uk T. 01908 691691 Civic Offices

Our Next Parish Council Meetings Are On Monday:

11th January 2021

8th March 2021

VENUE: to be advised

TIMES OF MEETINGS: 7.30pm

CONTACT US



https://oldwoughton.org.uk



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clerk@oldwoughton.org.uk



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Friends of Old Woughton PC



Can you believe that we're on the home stretch to the festive season! So many of you have expressed the opinion that given how restricted our activities have been for much of the year, it is guite unbelievable how the months have flown by.

Here at OWPC we've have focussed, as much as possible, on keeping business as usual and we thank you for all the lovely feedback about the centre spread in the last edition about OWPC initiatives 'on your doorstep.' We have all come to value, if we did not before, what a special place we have here at Old Woughton both in terms of community spirit and environmental quality. Long may that continue.

Speaking of length, Andrew Humphries has announced his retirement both as Chair of the PC and as a councillor for the Woughton Park ward. Thank you, Cllr, Humphries, it has been a doughty campaign to get us established and immediately effective. It is an interesting read to follow Andrew's recollections through our early terms as a completely new parish council (read at p6) and maybe it will stir some of you to consider standing in the elections in May 2021, when all nine parish council seats will be up for election. Something to talk about with family and friends over the mince pies, surely!

In other breaking news, our Clerk - Julian Vischer - has also decided to saunter into the sunset with Andrew and we very much appreciate the way our two colleagues have synchronised their departures. Cllr. Charlotte Hall, as the current vice chair will take the helm with immediate effect with Vanessa supporting as interim vice chair. These arrangements will be in place until the AGM on the 10th May, which will vote in the office holders for 2021/22. Do feel free to come along then and see local democracy in action.

Meanwhile, life goes on in the 'real world', and we're delighted to use this month's centre spread (pp 4/5) to showcase the tenacity of some of the parish's businesses in continuing to offer valuable local services to residents. Please do make contact with them and help our local non-domestic rate-payers to thrive.

Finally, a big thank you to those residents who help to continually refresh our photo library - you would not believe how many images we use in every Newsletter since all material is locally sourced. So too with the Old Woughton calendars and the last call for the 2021 edition is on page 8. Remember that this year you must opt-in to receive your complimentary copy, so contact **communications@oldwoughton.org.uk** now before copies run out!

2021 itself will start with the long-outstanding MKC decision of who has the privilege of living in the Woughton Conservation Area, but not withstanding that outcome, we at Old Woughton PC have the privilege of wishing you all the most peaceful of seasons.

THE COMMS TEAM



OLD WOUGHTON PARISH COUNCIL



Despite the long lockdown and recent 'bumps in the road' we are all still here brandishing our stiff upper lips. Having confidence in our common sense and the determination to beat this thing are the great defining characteristics of all of you, our residents.

Every parish has its local heroes who go above and beyond the call of duty to do their bit for the community and Old Woughton is no different - we have NHS Responders, Parish Gardeners and unofficial 'wardens', who keep their eye out for suspicious activities. Perhaps it's invidious to name names, but the following worthy people have really come to our attention: Brian Baldwin who, rain or shine, regularly picks litter in Passmore and Susan and Norman Pugh, who do the same in Woughton Park. Norma Jamieson who founded and leads the very popular Woughton Walkers of a Wednesday. Linda Mason, who has led the bluebell and wild flower planting, hosted landscape meetings and written articles for the Newsletter. Peter MacDonald who, as well as a long spell as an OWPC councillor, was our amazing ward councillor and achieved so much for our community. Our parish is definitely stronger through the dedicated contribution of its residents.

It's time to present our draft budget for 2021/22 for your perusal and your chance to comment ahead of our meeting in early January when we 'set it in stone'. As usual, we look at our operating costs to ensure they are set at the very minimum. Then we consider our project costs to ensure they are relevant and provide value for money. Our precept income (still one of the lowest in MK), together with a contribution from our reserves (that we are still aiming to reduce to an acceptable level), must then balance our costs. The details are shown on all four noticeboards, as well as the website. As you will see, we are following our long-held policy of being extremely parsimonious in spending your money, but if you have any other ideas and views, please let us know.

I must also announce that Julian, our outstanding Clerk since November 2013, is retiring at New Year. He has been an invaluable, stalwart member of our team whose timely minutes, detailed accounts and audit reports have aided our development and most importantly, kept us on the straight and narrow. Julian deserves our sincere thanks and will be sorely missed.

Finally, many of you will be aware that I retired as a parish councillor at the 9th November meeting (see page 6). Charlotte the current Vice Chair will take over pro tem with Vanessa as the new Vice Chair and at the 11th January meeting the council will formalise those elections. So it is for the last time that, on behalf of the whole council, I wish you all a peaceful and happy Christmas and a New Year where the end of the pandemic will be clearly in sight.

Happy New Retirement!



After a first career as a landscape gardener, Julian became a popular parish clerk, serving five councils simultaneously at one point. Julian Vischer joined OWPC in 2013, so not long after its creation, and has stayed the course these last seven years, helping us to become a well-ordered tier of government serving local people in a timely and approachable manner.

We will miss his droll humour and kind chivvying. We wish you all the best for your latest retirement, Julian, however you wish to spend it! All at Old Woughton

Back in Business

This issue we look at how the parish's non-domestic rate-payers are managing their way through the pandemic. There are only eight business premises in the parish and here four of them offer you very different insights into how they have responded to this extra-ordinary challenge. If their stories interest you, why not make a point of supporting them this festive season, as we all try to keep looking out for each other.

Ye Olde Swan

It is universally acknowledged that the hospitality sector has been very hard hit by the impact of COVID-19 and for The Swan, as with other public houses and restaurants across the country, the March lockdown brought with it immediate and significant logistical issues: managing staff; closing down the kitchens; handling valuable stock, whilst keeping waste to a minimum; and ensuring premises were safe and secure.

Making best use of this time - the weeks and months that followed gave the opportunity for maintenance and in-house repairs. The company was highly active here and refurbished the cloakrooms and carried out other decoration and site improvements. The staff also looked rather smart in their new uniforms!

July - The 'New Normal' - Greene King went to extraordinary lengths to keep staff and guests safe. All staff underwent extensive training and before each shift an on-line mandatory 'Health Survey' had to be completed. On arrival to work staff underwent temperature checks. Despite the fact that face masks had only more recently become mandatory in this sector, all staff in Ye Olde Swan were wearing face-coverings since the first lockdown was eased.

Each site reviewed how their spaces could be used allowing social distancing with room between tables; dedicated table bookings and table service and numbers control; one-way systems; bar shielding; dedicated staff to clean; and safety monitoring. Hand sanitisers; disposable menus; track and trace measures; and a managed environment meant that customers felt safe and confident to return. The large car park and garden area allowed outside dining and drinking during the summer months - a welcome change of scene!

Tiers - new regulations and a second lockdown! This has led to new curfews and continued mask wearing as guests move from their tables and around the premises, as well as regulations on drink and food consumption; family groupings; and changes to opening times. With winter now here and less access to the garden possible, trying to balance the books, manage stock and having staff and a workforce to deliver the service with highly volatile demand is extraordinarily difficult. We have to thank our new General Manager - Ahmed and his team- for keeping our pub alive and kicking and as Christmas approaches bookings are already well advanced and planning is in place to ensure the best possible dining experience through these very difficult times.







service and 'Click and Collect' To order go to: Chefandbrewer.com/pubs/ Buckinghamshire/ye-olde-swan

Breakfasts are newly available at the weekends between 9.30-11.30am. Don't forget that you need to book a table call: 01908 679 489. Happy dining!

"The dome at Woughton on the Green played a pivotal role..."

In this incredibly challenging time for everyone, sport has felt the severe impact of Covid-19. From the beginning of lockdown there were months where sport ceased completely, having a huge impact on the mental and and Education Trust (SÉT), had to be creative and innovative during this difficult time to find ways to still engage with the community.

Thankfully, towards the end of June, the FA gave the green light for

recreational sport to continue with no more than groups of six. The dome at Woughton on the Green played a pivotal role, hosting small group coaching sessions for anyone that wanted them. Nearly 300 young people across a seven weeks programme engaged with the SET, providing much social relief and structure for the players.

As the weeks went by more normality started to kick in. From August, the guidance from the FA changed again meaning up to 30 people could meet up for sport. This included the participation of fixtures. As such, the MK Dons SET Advanced Centres returned, providing elite structured coaching to the boys and girls who participate just outside of academy football in preparation for the start of the season. Utilising the green spaces at Woughton, players from U7s through to U16s were able to receive two hours a week

Woughton House Hotel

You may have seen the fence panel across the entrance to these grounds over the past months, as the hotel advised that it could not meet the COVID-19 secure requirements. Unfortunately, during November, the London Gazette announced that liquidators had been appointed for the hotel business.



L'Béau room

When Lisa MacDonald, a business woman from Bletchley, needed more space for her activities she looked no further than to Woughton village for room to expand. 'I immediately fell in love with the area', said Lisa, 'and I can say that after three years (on 16th November), I still really enjoy my drive into work seeing all the beautiful scenery, the rabbits and squirrels and, if I'm lucky, a roebuck deer or fox too - it's the most beautiful village in the middle of Milton Keynes.'

Yet that routine was seriously interrupted by the March to July lockdown and re-opening required some serious planning to make L'Beau's premises Covid secure. Business is quickly building back, however, so now is a good time to book your pampering experience in the run up to the festivities and it's right on your doorstep. L'Beau Clinique is tucked away in Turpyn Court with ample parking 'allowing our customers whether far or near to arrive stress-free and always privately, so little chance of seeing that unexpected neighbour' added Lisa.

COVID SAFE

- √ we are on an appointment only basis
 √ we ask that clients do not bring any guests to appointments
- √ we have a maximum of one client per therapist/ hairdresser in a correctly spaced and private room
 √ cleaned & sanitised work space area
- ✓ we have the track & trace on the door and clients are scanned on arrival
- we take your temperature on arrival and ask that you wash and use hand sanitiser
- √ masks are worn for most services

TREATMENTS

As a result of all the Covid secure procedures L'Beau is now able to offer the full range of treatments again.

- √ Aesthetic non-surgical and beauty treatments
- √ Eye beauty treatments with training; lash extensions
- √ Hair dressing and colour technician for men, women and children
- √ Massage nine types including relaxation, pain management and pregnancy care

Stop Press: L'Beau Clinique would like to offer all readers a 10% discount on all services during January 2021 – that's one treatment from each of the five members of the team. Please call 01908 587833 and remember to bring this article with you.

Moving into October we were delighted to be able to relaunch our community football offer. Based on the outside astro turf, football sessions are delivered throughout the week aimed at anyone who wants to get involved with the SET and take their first footsteps onto the club's player pathway.

Information on these programmes can be found here www.mkdonsset.com.

Due to the brilliant work of everyone inside the organisation the SET are as strong as ever and look forward to a time where even more restrictions are lifted to allow us to serve the community.

Drilling Down -

RAPPORT DENTISTRY

An interview with Simon Aranha, the practice manager at Rapport Dentistry no. 1, Turpyn Court, highlights some of the difficulties in providing services in close personal proximity in what is now the new normal.

After the initial lockdown from March 23rd, the Rapport Dentistry, was allowed to offer an emergency service only, on a skeleton staff and operating with reduced opening times (ie like all dental practices across the UK, Rapport was not allowed to physically treat patients, only to offer antibiotics and little else other than guidance for self-help or to direct patients to an Urgent Dental Care hub).

Since the 1st July the practice started seeing patients again, with new hygiene measures in place. Gradually expanding its services, all Rapport staff had come off the government furlough scheme by the end of September and were using some form of Personal Protection Equipment (PPE). Clinicians are fully kitted out with masks with a respiratory function, full gowns and even hoods, where necessary. See the before and after photos showing the pre- and post-COVID attire. Similar to tales from NHS staff wearing similar protection, the clinicians have facial imprints by the end of the day.

The enhanced PPE is only a small part of the changes required to welcome patients back. Patients have to fill out an online form answering what are now fairly standard COVID screening questions; they must have their temperature taken on arrival; must wear a mask whilst waiting; and, of course, wash their hands. There are restrictions on the number of clients that can be in the premises at any one time and must wait on chairs that are both socially distanced and that can be easily wiped down and cleaned before the next patient comes in. Patients' belongings are placed in sanitised bags whilst under-going surgery.

Dentistry work has many aerosol-generating procedures and aerosol droplets have to be allowed to settle in the surgery before cleaning all the surfaces down to make it available for the next patient. In order to speed up this process, Rapport have invested in industrial extractor fans which manage 80 air changes in about 1 hour. You may have seen the white tubing exhausting through the surgery windows during the day.

All these additional procedures have affected the number of patients that can be seen per day, but they have allowed the practice to be able to offer a full range of services again. However, the backlog that built up during lockdown and the lower throughput means that priority must be given to the most pressing dental work. Hygienist services were re-started in the last week of September and they are accepting new patients. Indeed, they have found demand from new patients, because not all dental practices are yet able to offer the same range of services.





Maybe the upgraded face masks the dentists are now wearing will make it harder for them to ask you questions whilst in the middle of working on your teeth.

A retiring Chair writes...

It all started in mid-2009, when several of us went to a MKC public briefing in the City Church on the forthcoming Parish Boundaries Review. This triggered a debate between our residents which` in early 2010 resulted in a campaign (later named Small is Beautiful), to create our own parish. I was its first co-ordinator and later Lorraine (King) took the reins. Through many ups and downs we eventually triumphed and held our first Parish Council meeting in May 2012 with me as Vice Chair and Lorraine as Chair and, when she moved house, I took over in January 2014.

It has always been tremendous fun working with a team of professional, dedicated enthusiasts to create a beautifully organised, forward-looking, dynamic organisation that is responsive to its 'customers' - you the residents. It now has one of the lowest precepts in the 48 Milton Keynes parishes. We have invested in the allotments infrastructure and encouraged it to become self-governing, so that it has become a thriving concern with its own management team. We have run a strategy to protect our green spaces, which has resulted in three Village Greens; and the incorporation of the paddocks and water garden into the Linear Park. We are close to having the footpaths over the playing fields designated as a public right of way and we still have areas such as the Orchard in our sights. Finally, when it comes to communications, from a single A4, back-to-back news bulletin, we now produce an information-packed newsletter; we have noticeboards prominently in each ward; and a website that has drawn praise from as far afield as the US!

One of our most satisfying objectives has been to promote community spirit. Local projects in each ward have fetched people out to plant bulbs and wild flowers, erect bat boxes and make 'green' plans. I see lots of regular litter-picking going on and through partnering with the Canal & River Trust, the canal towpath is slowly being transformed from a host of puddles to a veritable walkers' highway. On top of this, the heritage events at St Mary's are immensely popular and not only draw large numbers of locals, but also people from all over MK and the Mayor too. Such demonstrable pride in our parish is amazing to see and our cover shot with the new fairy lights makes the case perfectly.

Now it's time for me to see the parish council through its 2021 budget-setting exercise and to retire. My plan is to take more holidays and tramp more Napoleonic battlefields – Covid-19 permitting – but, inevitably, I will join the ranks of our volunteers and wheel yet more barrows of gravel along the towpath!

Andrew Humphries



St Mary's in Lockdown

Like all other places used for public gatherings, St. Mary's church at Woughton on the Green has been greatly affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. Kim Weston, the Chair of District Church Council part of the Woughton Ecumenical Partnership provided Old Woughton News with an insight into St. Mary's reaction to the events of 2020 and what is now the "new normal."

So how did they respond? In order to keep the St. Mary's community together they moved contact online to the virtual world and groups where formed via

WhatsApp or other media. They also showed great enterprise in starting to produce video recordings during the week, which are posted on the Vimeo hosting service to make them available over the internet for the regular service time on Sunday. Using this technology all the words to the hymns being sung could be displayed on the video, allowing virtual



attendees to sing along, whilst a transcript of the service could be printed off and delivered to those not able to access the internet. See screenshot of video.



Once the lock-down restrictions were eased in September, St Mary's set a limit of 20 worshippers, based on the social distancing requirements and the space available, we have to have a booking system in place which Kim manages. It was also necessary to put in place many other hygiene procedures, including the mandatory wearing of face coverings; the chairs being sanitised after each service; no singing; entry



by the south door and exit by the north door; sanitiser in the porch; signing in to record contact details; markings on the path to the church to ensure social distancing whilst queuing to enter. It is, perhaps, a blessing that with the pews long-removed, chairs are both easier to arrange and also to sanitise after use (see past and present photos).

Video services are still being produced by recording the services from one of the five churches in rotation in the Woughton Ecumenical Partnership, which enables those who are not ready physically to return to church to enjoy a local service. St. Mary's has also been open on Saturday mornings for individual prayer, again with social distancing in place sadly no refreshments but is still a time to meet socially.

The pandemic has meant that hosting the usual events - not least the Old Woughton PC meetings - but, even more importantly, things like the annual Strawberry Fayre, have not taken place, with the consequent loss of income and no reduction in regular costs and outgoings. The Christmas Fayre, usually held at the end of November, has also been cancelled, as it would not be possible to maintain social distancing. With regret weddings were cancelled about 20 and this was because of restrictions in numbers and many have been re-arranged. We hopefully have one going ahead in November.

St Mary's was able to stage a Flower Festival "missed Celebrations" on the weekend of the 19th & 20th September, which was well attended with 116 visitors from all over Milton Keynes. Entrance was free, as this was intended to be an event for the community, though fortunately, many visitors made donations. Hygiene restrictions applied with a one-way system through the church and only 6 people allowed in at any one time and the magnificent weather meant that waiting in the queue outside was a pleasant friendly experience with lots of laughter and smiles.

So, what does the future hold in "the new normal"? Now that the broadband cable has been laid to the church, wi-fi will soon be available. We ask that people refer to the woughton.org website for forthcoming events and be aware the Covid regs may change things at the last minute.

We wish you all the best of health and hold you in our prayers during this time.

Parish Clerk Vacancy Could you manage the parish in 7 hours a week?

Have you grown to appreciate Old Woughton even more during the lockdown - the open spaces, the quality of the natural environment, the opportunity to still get around and talk with neighbours, because there's plenty of room to maintain social distancing?

If you've been reflecting on how you can get more involved, then how about applying to be our next clerk following Julian Vischer's retirement at the end of the year? The post is the only paid employment at the parish council and is very part-time, enabling the successful candidate to fit duties around other commitments.

If you would like to talk through what's involved in the role then please contact Julian (clerk@oldwoughton.org.uk) or Jeremy (jmorrison@oldwoughton.org.uk), who is organising the recruitment process.

The job summary is below and accredited training is available. **Please contact us by the end of December**, as we will interview early in the New Year.

- To provide full Clerk service to the nine councillors of Old Woughton Parish Council
- To manage the parish finances as the Responsible Finance Officer.
- To advise the Chair and Members on procedural and other matters relevant to the operation of the Council
- To liaise with other Clerks in neighbouring councils
- To maintain own professional CPD so that the Council receives up to date advice and procedures are continually updated
- To be responsible for the management of the day to day business of the Council
- Any other duties that may fall to the Clerk from time to time

Wonderful Woughton Park - next steps

Further to the centre page record in the last edition, current progress revolves around activity on the new village green, where MKC has given its permission for our Bio-diversity Plan to be implemented using its preferred contractor: SERCO. At its meeting on 9th November, therefore, OWPC agreed the allocation of the W. Park ward budget to support hedge management and tree canopy lifting works from Newport Road to the towpath hedge behind Castle Rose and Medland; the grubbing up and re-seeding of the two redundant rose beds; and the clearing of the bed behind the park bench.

For the full list of the existing and proposed works view SERCO's submission use the QR code here



or contact Vanessa:

vgwynn@oldwoughton.org.uk

Further updates on the projects in all wards will appear in the next Newsletter.

Well done ...!

... to those of you who correctly identified the last edition's cover shot. It was indeed a view over the bird hides at Walton Lake looking west towards Newport Road.



Have you spotted one yet?

MK Council has recently posted up wayfinding markers, which promote five differently-themed cultural routes of approx. 10 miles each around the Redway network:

Blue route theme - Ancient and modern Milton Keynes Cornflower theme - Woods, frogs and a Toot Green route theme - Rivers, lakes and dinosaurs Iron route theme - Romans, rivers, trams and trains Yellow route - Cars, boats and trains

The parish is included in the Green route and, by now, you should have spotted the new green direction signs, which helpfully include a short-cut route, reducing the distance by roughly half.



For information on the detailed routes follow this link https://www.getsmartertravelmk.org/cycling/cultural-routes
or use MKC's QR Code (here).

UK Last Posting dates - don't be late

18th Dec. 2nd Class and 2nd Class Signed For 21st Dec. 1st Class and 1st Class Signed For

and Royal Mail Tracked 48

Royal Mail Tracked 24 22nd Dec. 23rd Dec. Special Delivery Guaranteed

For more info:

https://royalmail.com/christmas/ last-posting-dates





If you would like to view an electronic copy of the newsletter just scan the code

Old Woughton News is produced by 01234 720 105 bespokemedia www.bespokemedia.org



Revised Waste Collections Christmas 2020

Normal Date Wednesday 30th December Wednesday 6th January Wednesday 13th January

Revised Date Saturday 2nd January Friday 8th January Thursday 14th January

Normal collections resume Wednesday 20th January.

For more info: www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/collectiondays

Household waste centre opening hours not yet available



Milton Keynes recycles



2021 and all that...

Thanks to all those replying about copies of the new calendar. Don't forget you need to opt-in to receive a complimentary copy of the 2021 edition by e-mailing your request to communications@oldwoughton.org or phoning Charlotte on 07885-330797.

Wall-hanging and measuring 30cm x 60cm (when fully open) this year, printing is underway and so if you'd like to buy further copies as festive gifts remember they are £5.99 each or £15 for three.

