

OLD WOUGHTON

Autumn 2021

# News

The Newsletter of Old Woughton Parish Council



*By Walton Lake*

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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,  
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& Budget, Projects,  
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### Woughton on the Green South



**Ray Brown**  
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**Charlotte Hall**  
CHAIR  
Finance & Budget,  
Planning, Projects Lead, Liaison for Parks Trust,  
OWPC Representative - Welfare Trust,  
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### Woughton Park



**Vanessa  
Freeman Gwynn**  
VICE CHAIR  
Projects,  
Liaison for MKC Consultation and Parks Trust,  
Communications  
vgwynn@oldwoughton.org.uk

**Geoff Long**  
Dog & Litter Bins, Projects, Green Spaces,  
Liaison for Canal & River Trust  
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### Passmore



**Mary Major**  
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**Emma Wilson**  
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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:

### Clerk



**Charlie Davies**  
Finance & Budget,  
Environment, OWIS/IT, Data Protection  
Office, Responsible Financial Officer  
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**Terry Baines**  
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**Charlotte Hall**  
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Our Next Parish Council  
Meetings Are On Monday:

**8th November 2021**  
**10th January 2022**

6th December Annual Parish Meeting

VENUE: St. Mary's Church

### CONTACT US

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Friends of  
Old Woughton PC

# Editorial

OLD WOUGHTON PARISH COUNCIL

## So, how are you – we hope that you have been able to manage a break of sorts whilst dodging the worst of the showers?

OWPC has been strangely busy over the summer break this year and you will see a flavour of that as we announce the arrival of our new Clerk: Charlie Davies (see page 6) following a sudden change in personal circumstances of our last appointee – we wish you all the best for the future Jackie. We also welcome a new councillor for Passmore – Emma Wilson has been co-opted into Jeremy Morrison's vacancy.

Emma's arrival means that this parish council has all nine councillors in post once again and she hits the ground running with a personal piece on the Food Larder (also on page 6). On the back page, we salute the way our community mobilised through July to make around 70 representations to the Planning Authority on the 5G mast proposal on the edge of the Conservation Area in Newport Road. Charlotte talks in her Chair's column about how rewarding it is to represent a parish that is so light on its feet when passions are roused!

This strength of feeling was also on display through the responses that came into the team through the Parish Survey 2021. Although the number of returns wasn't high, the feedback you did give us was clear and very helpful (though we personally regret that one reader finds Old Woughton News 'dull' and this reminds us to try and keep local governance issues accessible, if not fun). We were particularly taken by remarks about providing something of interest for our younger residents and so, in future issues, we'll be trialling a colouring page for our smallest parishioners.

However, a key focus of the Survey was to pull together the series of pieces we have been running about how the parish council is maturing as the 10th anniversary of its creation approaches in 2022. In particular, we wanted to get a better understanding of your relationship with the local Precept, which funds its activities. As you will see from this month's centre-fold article, there was a very wide range views, which councillors will have to weigh carefully in producing next year's draft budget.

**Spoiler alert** – you are all invited to the Annual Parish Meeting on 6th December at 7-8.30pm in St. Mary's where the draft budget proposals will be on display. Mince pies will be served for sustenance!

But, before all of that, enjoy the Autumn, it's a lovely season here in Old Woughton.

**THE COMMS TEAM** - Charlotte, Phil & Vanessa

Electra, based at the Campbell Wharf marina, is a brand new, 100% electric canal narrowboat - one of the first in the UK - she was handed over to the Bedford and Milton Keynes Waterway Trust for use earlier this year. Electra is operated by volunteers, all fully trained, and her mission is to be an educational and recreational resource for the city.

OWPC made a small contribution towards the cost of building Electra, as did other parishes through which the canal passes, and OWPC was offered a complimentary place, which Cllr. Long took up as our Canal & River Trust link. Geoff reports that Electra offers a most comfortable and relaxing ride gliding along the canal, even if the quietness is a bit uncanny. One expects noise on a canal boat but the electric motors are totally silent, something which he never quite got used to in the course of 2-hours.

# The Chair

OLD WOUGHTON PARISH COUNCIL

## The last few months have been busy to say the least...

...and what has struck home, at this time, is the key role volunteers play in so many organisations, not least within our own parish council. This has, of course, been amplified during COVID as amazing networks of people have come forward to support their neighbours, communities and services – a positive legacy indeed!

As Chair, it is my role to ensure that we both continue to grow our own volunteer base and to ensure that we have as many possibilities and opportunities for community activity and interest, which in turn might foster future parish councillors, future volunteers and is a natural 'investment' into our parish. These last months have left us all disconnected in many ways and so bringing people together, when we can, would seem a positive priority and focus. Thanks to all those of you who have completed the Parish Survey 2021 and shared your thoughts and ideas.

We welcome our very own latest volunteer Emma, who has now been formally Co-opted to Passmore Ward. Emma has already been busy see page 6 for her first article. She is also keen to engage with the younger members of the parish - so watch this space!

I wish to note here our huge gratitude to Vicky Mote PSLCC (Clerk and Responsible Finance Officer, Broughton & Milton Keynes PC), who has already and is again supporting us during our new Clerk inductions as a Mentor (for the second time!). I would also like to thank her personally as she has guided me so brilliantly as I have had to pick up and complete the Parish Council Audit submission this year. I look forward to handing back those reigns to our new Clerk Charlie Davies, who I know will do a much better job! Welcome to the team Charlie! To close - watch out for some of the events listed on page 8 taking place in September and I hope you are able to keep the 6th December free in your diary to come along to our Annual Parish Meeting, which is a much more informal session where neighbours and friends meet face to face – which would be very nice – and review how parish matters are advancing over a mulled wine and a mince pie or two (or is that the other way around?!).

**Charlotte Hall**



Electra is equipped to take up to 12 passengers (though currently, in these Covid-dominated times, the maximum is 8no.) and is set up in tables for two. She has a galley offering soft and alcoholic drinks and a selection of cakes etc.

Private hire charters are available (though not on a self-drive basis). Currently these run from Campbell Wharf to Linford Wharf, a two-hour return trip costing £120. A range of "special" cruises is also offered covering different interests including art, l-spy, fish-and-bubbles evening dinners and even cream teas!

Bookings, and more detailed information, are on Electra's attractive website at: [www.bmkwaterway.org/mkcommunityboatelectra/](http://www.bmkwaterway.org/mkcommunityboatelectra/)

# We asked you and this is what (some) of you said...



Welcome to the third and final instalment in our mini-series on how OWPC operates. We have previously looked at how the parish came into being and how it is financed and last time we looked again at our ethos and how we communicate that in everything we do. We then asked you to let us have your feedback in a short survey and this is what you said.

**Many thanks to those of you responding to the Parish Survey 2021 in our last edition** – a 6.5% response is on the low side, but not at all unusual for this type of exercise and we are grateful for the spread of household responses – including the one that sent in two separate responses – respect to you!

Now it may be that certain types of people like questionnaires, but there was certainly a notable commonality in the replies, as you will see below.

## Q1 – OWPC's 'ethos'

You all liked this, with just a couple of suggestions made around brevity and more emphasis on community (as well as efficiency). OWPC does not propose to make any changes as a result of the strength of support shown.

**Qs 2 - 7** were about the output of the **Comms. Team** (Charlotte, Phil and Vanessa) and we shared a blush at how flattering you all were – you had saluted that we were on a journey of continuous improvement and also receptive of new ideas going forward. There is a debate to be had about frequency of the Newsletter (ie quarterly (4) or termly (3)), which we need to weigh as we set the budget, but one kindly respondent actually asked for more frequent issues and others also pointed out the gap left in the local media news market, but don't worry, there are no plans for expansion by this group of OWPC volunteers!

You especially seemed to like the visual image being captured for our parish, but we hear your nudge about including material for younger readers. Also, you want us to be responsible for any material being produced, especially where there may be wider contributors in the future, though

there was little immediate excitement about neighbours providing their own articles at this point. Advance offers of photographs for any new calendar are noted.

## Q8 – the OWPC Calendar

We seem to have a bit of a 'Marmite' situation here with those of you who love it wanting to order early as gifts, whereas others felt that life had moved on for printed calendars. OWPC will consider as part of the budget-setting to see whether we can produce something self-funding. £10 per copy was the most often mentioned price, with a small discount for multiple copies.

## Qs 9 & 10 were about OWPC's website

usage, where most respondents said they 'rarely' had cause to use it, especially since the Notification Service has got into its stride. Seventeen users agreed it projected a positive image of Old Woughton, with one remarking on its 'very professional look and feel' and being easy to navigate.

The next batch of **Qs 11-13** were about **voluntary activity** in the parish, where there was good recognition of the towpath and litter-picking opportunities. Ideas for new work coalesced around environmental works: hedge trimming, weeding and footpath clearing were specifically cited six times, with other mentions for Neighbourhood Watch; bollard maintenance; a community fête; and 'Speedwatch'.

**Ward Projects** were the focus of **Q14**, where there was good recognition of works undertaken to-date with 85% of respondents ticking that they were aware. There were also new ideas coming forward including: further tree planting; public bench seating; traffic calming; and a 'Food Larder'.

## OWPC will debate all these suggestions and consider allocating a small budget.

There was also good recognition of the **Band D** (with all its imperfections) parish precept locally, with 18 respondents ticking **Q15** to indicate that they were aware it was £21.83pa. Interestingly, one questionnaire also recorded that it was something to be proud of, whilst another offered that it wasn't - so plenty of room for debate there!

Your ideas for further **efficiencies** in the OWPC budget were sought at **Q16** and here are all the suggestions that OWPC will need to reflect upon:

- Reducing the bi-monthly parish meetings
- Reducing the Clerk's hours (from 7)
- Produce the Newsletter electronically
- No Christmas lights
- Fewer Noticeboards
- Fund-raising for costs

We understand that this was a difficult area for the lay reader (eg 'What is OWIS?') and welcome all the ideas and we will try and address this in the draft budget before we issue it in the Autumn. We also very much appreciated those who commented that OWPC appears 'tightly run' and 'frugal'.

Finally, **Q17** asked 'How much, if at all, would you be prepared to increase **the Parish precept**...'. This is much harder to summarise, because of the range of replies from: 'Not a penny more' at one extreme to 'I'd happily double it' at the other, however, 73% of survey responses chose to record tolerance of a small increase. Where there was a clear consensus was that people would like to know what any increase would actually be used for, and so OWPC will make this explicit in any budget proposals when the draft 2022/23 is consulted upon in the winter Newsletter.

Q17

Better to not have reduced it in the first place?

10%+

22%

Happy to pay an additional %

Increase to £50

Annual CPI uplift

An additional £2-3 pm

I would support for capital investments

£12/Yr would be fair

Reasoned increases acceptable

Increase in line with inflation

Depends on the proposals

Concentrate on strategic projects

Content with a modest increase

Happy for (it) to be increased

I don't understand this at all

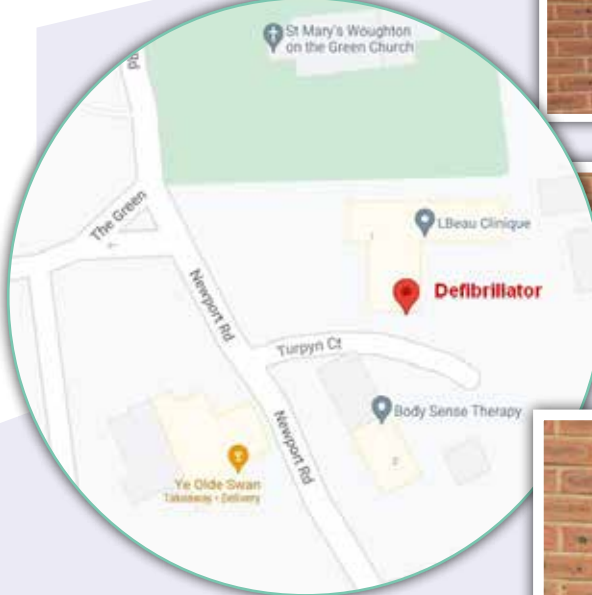
I would be happy with £25

### STOP PRESS....

Some further issues have also been raised in the village after this article was written and the Woughton-on-the-Green South Ward members will be responding in due course. Contact has been established with Orbit and there has already been a site meeting.

### So, in closing...

You had already given us plenty to think about, but some kind remarks were also left, thanking councillors for their efforts through the year and for the opportunity of this survey. We thank you all for taking the time to respond, but our clear favourite is that resident's plea that OWPC does not 'follow the craze of 'seeking the views/approval of our customer who is very important to us' frequently'. That is a deal!



## Accessing the Defibrillator!

(A defibrillator is a device that gives a high energy electric shock to the heart of someone who is in cardiac arrest)

**Last year, we purchased a community-accessible defibrillator, as one of OWPC's ward projects.**

Available 24hrs a day, it is located on the wall of 'Rapport Dentistry' at Turpyn Court (opposite the pub) and we thank them for their kind support with both the location and the power source needed to heat the cabinet in low temperatures.

When the details can be settled, OWPC will be promoting community awareness training and guidance sessions for residents, should it be necessary to use or retrieve this equipment in an emergency situation. Meanwhile, here are basics:

1. the defibrillator is secure in a locked cabinet.
2. to open it ring 999, explain the emergency and get the access code for the box key pad. By ringing 999 you can also be directed to the nearest defibrillator.
3. by making this call you will also be alerting the emergency services and mobilising the ambulance
4. use the access code to retrieve the defibrillator kit and take it to the patient (or other personnel if you have been sent to get it for them).

The equipment is designed to be used without training - instructions are given when in use - but if you would like advance information then view a very helpful training video at:

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

# You're welcome!

In this issue we say hello to our new Clerk: **Charlie Davies**

Charlie was born at MK hospital and lived and worked in the area ever since. Although she has never clerked before, she has held a variety of posts working for both local charities, as well as MK Council and so has lots of experience of working with parish councils as partners in community engagement.



We will hear more from Charlie in the Winter edition.

At its Summer meeting, OWPC also greeted **Emma Wilson**. Cllr. Wilson was unanimously Co-opted into the Passmore vacancy created by Jeremy Morrison's proposed move from the area following retirement. Every best wish Jeremy! Emma and her family moved into the parish in



2020 and she has lots of ideas about community activities and making OWPC more open to younger residents – She has already created a colouring page for the next issue – we are impressed!

**Another of Emma's interests is the Food Larder movement and here she briefs us on what it's all about.**

# The Food Larder war against waste



**A food larder isn't just a place to buy amazing food that would otherwise go to waste its many things.** It can be a place to go to see your friends and neighbours. Maybe even take a neighbour to get them out of the house now that the risk of covid is less. It could be a chance to try food you may not risk purchasing, through a fear of wasting money. Since joining i have created recipes that will go on to become a family favourite with ingredients you have never used before. Silly but I have never tried a fig. **HAVE NOW.**

The main reason is stopping good food going to landfill and to save money on your weekly shopping. I paid £10 to join. There are a few set up around Milton Keynes on different days so look on [www.sofea.uk.com](http://www.sofea.uk.com) for one that suits you. I then pay £7 each week for the family pack by direct debit and this is what I got. None out of date some are ok till 2022.

My friend got the single pack which is £3.50 a week for 10 items and as much veg as you want, choose what suits you. Each week is different, this week I got.

**COFFEE HALL** is the one which I attend as the day and time suit me.

This is set up and run by volunteers and councillors at the hub. I've heard great things about Downs Barn and Water Eaton sites. Once set up you can also have access I believe there are other benefits like discounts off energy bills.

**Join me and let's save some food!**

For more information e-mail Emma at [ewilson@oldwoughton.org.uk](mailto:ewilson@oldwoughton.org.uk)



# SOFT PLASTICS: SO HERE IS A SOLUTION TO ONE OF THOSE CONUNDRUMS!

It is really great to see our local stores enabling and helping us and trialling ways for us to recycle even more!

All you have to do is make sure items are clean, scrunch it up and pop it into the bin!








**Good news** for those of us who have four legged friends and use pet food pouches and indeed so many more food coverings and wrapping materials (Sweet wrappers; crisp packets; bread bags....)



**Netherfield and Monkston Park Co-op are currently implementing this scheme**

## Lid on or lid off? And other recycling conundrums

We all try to do our bit to get recycling right, but some items can be a bit problematic. Check out the list below to find the answers

- **Animal waste, including cat litter, dog poo, hamster/gerbil bedding, etc.** ➡ black bin bag or home compost. Do not put in the garden waste bin as unsuitable for our composting processing 
- **Biscuit wrappers /crisp packets / sweet wrappers** ➡ black bin bag or see \*Terracycle info below
- **Black plastic** ➡ clear recycling sack. Here in MK we accept black plastic in the clear recycling sack
- **Broken wine glass** ➡ black bin bag, wrapped for safety. This type of glass cannot be recycled 
- **Kitchen towel** ➡ black bin bag (see Tissues for explanation)
- **Nappies** ➡ used or unused, disposable nappies always go in the black bin 
- **Old clothes** ➡ take to local charity shop, do not place in clear sack
- **Pet food pouches** ➡ black bin bag or see \*Terracycle info below
- **Pill packets** ➡ take to your local pharmacy 
- **Plastic bottles with triggers or pumps** ➡ clear recycling sack. They are shredded when recycled so the different plastic types and metals can be separated
- **Plastic bottle lids** ➡ Wash, squash and lid back on. This way they take up less space in your clear sack. It is helpful to re attach the lid, but not essential and are also accepted loose 
- **Plastic carrier bags, bread bags** ➡ at the supermarket, not in clear sack
- **Shredded paper** ➡ clear recycling sack. Only shred the security part of the letter, as the fibres are cut reducing the number of times paper can be recycled
- **Tissues** ➡ black bin bag. Paper can be recycled up to 5 or 6 times. Its last life is as tissue 
- **Window envelopes** ➡ clear recycling sack. Over the last few years envelope manufacturers have changed to cellulose windows which are recyclable 

\* Terracycle is a business that accepts unusual items for recycling that councils are unable to process. They work with charities, community groups and schools who fundraise by being drop off points. See [www.terracycle.co.uk](http://www.terracycle.co.uk) for a list of items and local drop off points.

# Road Noise in Old Woughton

For several years the PC has been voicing concerns to MKC about the impact on residents from increasing traffic on the adjacent grid roads. A survey conducted in 2017 revealed that a number of households adjacent to Standing Way (H8) and Marlborough Street (V8) were being adversely affected by excessive traffic noise, especially along the elevated section of Standing Way.

Despite several meetings with MKC Highways, no progress was made to implement any mitigating action. Then the pandemic struck and peace and tranquillity returned to our semi-rural parish. Now traffic is back to near pre-Covid levels and it is timely to revisit this issue. The PC believes we should canvass again the current residents.

## Key considerations to bear in mind are:

- road traffic will continue to rise (the electric vehicle revolution is in its infancy)
- the H8 (A421) will remain the key East/West highway artery across the region with major housing and employment expansion along its route, now that the Oxford to Cambridge Expressway has been cancelled.
- the 70mph speed limit on the grid road dual carriageways needs urgent review
- there is a clear correlation between speed and noise and air pollution and, of course, safety
- MK aims to be a Green and Healthy City and reduce carbon emissions
- an evidence based approach is needed to establish current traffic volumes and associated noise levels and carbon emissions starting with the H8

**Please help us by giving your feedback.** Do you think there is an issue with the level of road noise and pollution that requires addressing? If so, please contact the Communications team on [communications@oldwoughton.org.uk](mailto:communications@oldwoughton.org.uk) or use the Contact Us page on the website <https://oldwoughton.org.uk/contact-us/>, and let us know how it affects you and what steps you feel might help mitigate the situation.

## EVENTS CALENDAR

Date	Event	Time	Location
18th Sept	<b>Festival of Flowers &amp; Heritage displays</b>	10-5pm	<b>St. Mary's Church</b>
19th Sept	<b>Festival of Flowers &amp; Heritage displays</b>	2-5pm	<b>St. Mary's Church</b>
16th Oct	<b>Litter Picking</b>	10-11.30am	<b>Woughton Park (meet by noticeboard)</b>
14th Nov	<b>Remembrance Service</b>	10.45-11.15	<b>War Memorial</b>
11th Dec	<b>MK Winter Half Marathon</b>	10am-noon approx.	<b>The Green and canal towpath</b>



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

# Use your Community Voice - again!

Further to the leaflet we delivered to all households and also the email through the OWPC Notification service, the outcome of the planning application for the installation of an 18.0m (60 feet) high 5G Mast and associated cabinets and works opposite the entrance to Baskerfield Grove on Newport Road was refused.



A big thank you to the almost 70 residents who took the time to make their views known and submitted comments to Milton Keynes Council. This volume of community response certainly had a bearing on the outcome.

CK Hutchison Networks (UK) Ltd **have now submitted another planning application, this time for a 15m mast instead of an 18m mast in the same location.** If you wish to make a comment it needs to be made to MKC via its Planning portal or to Tamlin Barton; [tamlin.barton@milton-keynes.gov.uk](mailto:tamlin.barton@milton-keynes.gov.uk) case officer, directly by the **30th September 2021**. The planning application reference is **21/02588/PANOTH**. We will keep you updated!

## TIME FLIES - CALENDAR 2022 RESERVE NOW!

**Thanks to those responding to the parish survey** (results on pp 4/5). As you see Question 8 about the OWPC calendar produced a split decision in a number of ways – firstly, between those of you who have gone completely on-line and those who still like a paper version and then in this latter group about the price you'd be willing to pay.



An executive decision has, therefore, been made to print two different sizes for 2022. The slim version (ie like 2020) will be available for £7.50, whilst the larger version like this year's with space for notes will be £10. To ensure that there is no on-going cost to OWPC, only 25no. of each size will be available. So, tempus really does fugit – reserve your copies now by e-mailing back to: [communications@oldwoughton.org.uk](mailto:communications@oldwoughton.org.uk).



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