

OLD WOUGHTON

Summer 2024

News

The Newsletter of Old Woughton Parish Council



Woughton House Hotel now re-opened

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Who's Who in the Parish

OLD WUGHTON PARISH COUNCIL

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

Woughton on the Green North



Rob Grindley
Planning, Green Spaces,
Transport

rgrindley@oldwoughton.org.uk

Ryan Gillies

rgillies@oldwoughton.org.uk

Phil Nash

Allotments,
Communications,
OWIS/IT

pnash@oldwoughton.org.uk

Woughton on the Green South



Ray Brown

Allotments, Planning,

rbrown@oldwoughton.org.uk

Charlotte Hall

CHAIR

Finance & Budget,
Planning, Liaison for Parks Trust,
Communications

chall@oldwoughton.org.uk

Woughton Park



**Vanessa
Freeman Gwynn**

VICE CHAIR

Liaison for MKCC and Parks Trust,
Communications, Planning

vgwynn@oldwoughton.org.uk

VACANT

Passmore



Mary Major

Liaison for Parishes Forum,
Noticeboards, Finance & Budget

mmajor@oldwoughton.org.uk

**Roshini
Wickramasinghe**

Liaison for Canal & River Trust

rwickramasinghe@oldwoughton.org.uk

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

Clerk



Vicky Gladstone

clerk@oldwoughton.org.uk

Graham Eaton

graham.eaton@milton-keynes.gov.uk

T. 07941 394783

Nana Oguntola

nana.oguntola@milton-keynes.gov.uk

T. 07478 115668

Paul Trendall

paul.trendall@milton-keynes.gov.uk

T. 07793 080425



Our Next Parish Council
Meetings Are On Monday:

8th July, 9th September
& 11th November
at 7.30pm.

VENUE: St. Mary's Church

CONTACT US

<https://oldwoughton.org.uk>

01908 465811

clerk@oldwoughton.org.uk

OWPC, PO Box 6548,
Milton Keynes, MK10 1AB



Friends of
Old Woughton PC

The Chair

Defining Boundaries and Taking Boundaries Down ...

Whilst trying to find a theme to my rhetoric I have endeavoured to try and draw in as many current matters relevant to our Parish at this time.

There are many consultations taking place, not least on the City Ward Boundaries and indeed the New City Plan and it does feel a heavy weight at times. However, it is so very important that all of our residents have the chance to have their views heard and understand what is going on! In our edition here (centre pages) we try to deliver and signpost the information, links and guidance for your 'voice to be heard' should you wish to participate!

Anyone who knows me will know that I have a bit of a passion about our prickly friends! and so on pages 6 & 7 share some thoughts and practical actions that we can all do to help our hedgehog at risk communities. Our own homes and gardens can present boundaries that hinder the natural movement of hedgehogs as they move through green spaces to feed, define territories and mate. So do please see if you can help extend 'hedgehog highways' across our parish by leaving a gap in your fencing or perimeter.

We are so fortunate to have such amazing green spaces on our door step and so we also touch on some issues that might be of interest: from the work being carried to manage our waterways and indeed protect our bird life and things we can do to keep our parklands and grazing stock safe. Thank you for the wonderful photographs that we share on this occasion.

Here we say welcome to our newest Councillor, Ryan Gillies who has joined the Woughton on the Green North team! We say thank you and reflect on the service of two longstanding Councillors Roy Kenyon and Geoff Long. Further, we thank our current interim volunteer Clerk Vicky Gladstone for stepping forwards to help us deliver our Council duties.

I look forward to reflecting on our Residents Meeting in the next edition, but in the meantime my thanks to all of those who turned out on the night to fill St. Mary's again. Please don't forget to turn to page 8 to see what is going on locally over the next few weeks.

I would like to express my sincere gratitude to my colleagues and I look forward to working with you in this new term.

Charlotte



Coverage and highlights of the year in the next issue

UPDATE FROM JAMIE ROSSITER, GENERAL MANAGER AT WOUGHTON HOUSE HOTEL

Woughton House Hotel is now open for business.

We now have a fully operational kitchen, restaurant and bar. and will be offering an afternoon tea service from July.

We are looking forward to welcoming all of you to our beautiful Hotel and Bar

The ethos in the restaurant is to focus on local produce and traditional British cuisine. We would be very happy to host organised local events in the hotel grounds and want to be an integral part of the community.

Please let us know if you want to make use of the spaces we have for meetings, weddings and dinners.



Big Help Out collection before setting off

The mini Big Help Out 2024 - Lucas Place

On Saturday 8th June residents and parish councillors gathered in a collective effort to get a truck load of bulky waste off to the tip (also known as the Household Waste Recycling Centre).

The star of the show was Councillor Ray Brown's mark 1 VW Caddy which was fully loaded with hard to move items. All shifted in around 1 hour. A great testimony of what you can achieve if you lend a hand and work together.

This tied in with The Big Help Out national event. The objective of The Big Help Out is to raise awareness of volunteering throughout the UK and provide opportunities for people to experience volunteering and make a difference in their communities.

Editorial

This issue of the newsletter has something of a Groundhog Day feel to it: the latest parish elections came and went (results at p.4); on 4th July there is to be a General Election on the new parliamentary constituency boundaries that we briefed about back in Spring last year; and now there is yet another review of the City Council's ward boundaries underway (the last review in 2014 created our own ward of Campbell Park & Old Woughton, which could be changed again) – see page 5 for your opportunity to join in about future arrangements.

In addition, the programme of Citizens Advice surgeries returns, partnering with Simpson & Ashland PC (p8) and, especially pleasing, the Woughton House Hotel re-opens – now under new ownership, the manager Jamie Rossiter, is looking forward to seeing us all calling in to say hello and is promoting (his offer).

Finally, Twiglet and friends make a return in a remarkable number of sightings locally – Old Woughton is clearly home to a growing variety of wildlife and long may we continue to be able to provide the necessary habitat to enable them to thrive - excellent to see the reinforcing works to the banks of the River Ouzel by the O.U., therefore (pp 6/7).

What is new is that we have our first 'volunteer' Clerk, due to the challenge of hanging onto good people when we only offer 7 paid hours a week, plus we're now a councillor down for Woughton Park, unheard of – please rally!

So, life goes on Old Woughton very much as it has in more modern times, but there are always new ways for you to engage in local issues and we very much thank all of you who currently do!

Have a great summer,

Charlotte, Phil & Vanessa

communications@oldwoughton.org.uk

News from the May 2024 local elections

Every four years, the whole of the parish council retires and all nine seats go up for election. We are very fortunate in Old Woughton to benefit from so many neighbours willing to give their time to look out for our special locality. Behind the headline numbers, however, are personal changes and here we celebrate three of them: we say goodbye and thank you so much to Geoff Long (Woughton Park) and Roy Kenyon (Woughton on the Green North) and welcome to Ryan Gillies, who has been Co-opted into the vacancy created by Roy's retirement.

Geoff Long



WOUGHTON PARK

Our thanks to Geoff, another long serving parish councillor who stepped down at this election. Geoff was a councillor on the Woughton Community Council for 12 years, where he served for a time as chair of the Finance team before returning as a parish councillor for OWPC in 2021. His most recent role with OWPC was as liaison with the Canals & Rivers Trust, involving much patrolling of the canal towpaths. He has also represented both Councils on the historic Woughton Welfare Trust, as their nominated Trustee, serving over the years as Chair, Secretary and Treasurer.

Milton Keynes did not always have parish councils and Geoff is a firm believer in their benefits, providing a focal point for residents' concerns, improving quality of life and promoting a sense of community. Something to bear in mind when the parish boundaries come up for review in 2025.

Roy Kenyon



WOUGHTON on the GREEN (NORTH)

Our thanks also go to Roy who, like Geoff, saw through the transition of our parish from part of Woughton Community Council to the wholly separate Old Woughton Parish Council in 2012 after prolonged campaigning. At OWPC, Roy has been a chair of the Finance Team and an important link with the Patch Allotment Association, where he helped deliver the devolved management arrangement between the two bodies.

However, even after more than 20 Years of unbroken public service, Roy will still lead on the local 'Speedwatch' initiative – so not a complete brake in service even now, Roy!

Ryan Gillies



WOUGHTON on the GREEN (NORTH)

A self-professed "born and bred" Milton Keynesian, Ryan was among the first children born in MK Hospital with family on both sides stretching back generations through the towns and villages which now make up our city. He attended Giffard Park Primary school, Stantonbury Secondary and Sixth, MK College and the (then) University College of Northampton majoring in Education Studies. Ryan spent close to a decade in Taiwan before returning to the UK with his wife and three children in 2020, subsequently moving to Woughton on the Green in 2022.

By profession Ryan specialises in data and digital transformation and works for Willen Hospice. He previously served as a Councillor in the MK & Broughton Village Parish and has a keen interest in non-profits and volunteering, with interests spanning the arts, heritage, youth engagement and environment as well as a passion for real ale!

Vanessa needs a friend!!!

The eagle-eyed amongst you will have spotted that the above results still leave one vacancy at Woughton Park and we are very keen to hear from any resident who would be interested to explore what the role entails. Please e-mail: clerk@oldwoughton.org.uk to express an interest. We rarely have a vacancy at OWPC, so this could be your moment!

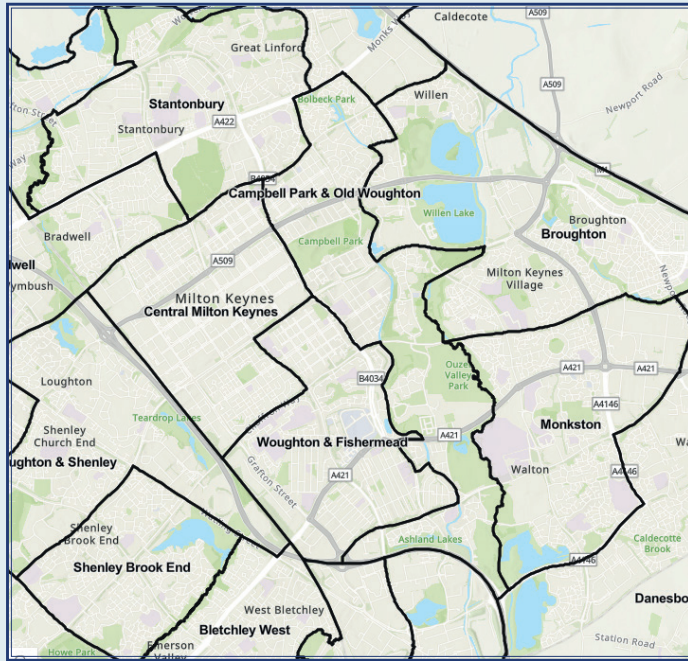
Boundaries, boundaries everywhere!

“A review of the number of councillors, wards and ward names for Milton Keynes City Council”

It seems like only yesterday that MK Council, as it still was at the time, conducted the Community Governance Review that resulted in the creation of Old Woughton Parish Council. In fact, OWPC held its first meeting in May 2012 and MK has grown significantly in that time. Unsurprisingly, therefore, now that the new parliamentary constituency boundaries are settled, the Electoral Commission for England is back in town to conduct a review of the city's ward boundaries, so that the number of electors per MKCC councillor remains very roughly equal. The revised boundaries will apply from all-out elections in May 2026.

The Commission has already initiated discussions with MKCC and current thinking is that the number of city councillors for the entire borough increases from 57 to 60, but that the number of councillors remains at three per ward, which results in the need to create a completely new ward.

At this stage in the process (see timetable below), the Commission has opened the first round of public consultation, which runs until July 15th



Current MKCC Ward Boundaries

2024 and everyone is invited to submit their thoughts at (<https://www.lgbce.org.uk/all-reviews/milton-keynes/feedback>). There are no structured questions to be answered, just an opportunity to share thoughts about what are the important points to be weighed in the Commission's draft proposals.

- **7 May - 9 September 2024** We carry out an initial public consultation on communities
- **29 October - 20 January 2025** We carry out a public consultation on our proposals
- **1 April 2025** We publish our recommendation
- **TBD** We ask Parliament to approve our recommendations
- **May 2026** New arrangements apply to local elections

When these proposals are finalised around 2025, there is a possibility that the next review will be of the parish boundaries including Old Woughton, so future Newsletters will carry updates on these reviews. If you have particular issues that you wish OWPC to address in these articles please e-mail: communications@oldwoughton.org.uk or raise them with one of your OWPC councillors (see p2.)

clerk@oldwoughton.org.uk

This could be your new address! If you are interested in exploring the opportunity to support your community for 7 hours a week, then come and be part of Old Woughton parish council and join the team of nine newly-elected local councillors. It's a varied role and the only paid position at OWPC (councillors are volunteers). You provide advice to the PC's meetings, monitor the finances and help with public questions and queries. If you would like to talk through what's involved in the role please contact our Chair: Charlotte Hall or V. Chair: Vanessa Freeman Gwynn for an informal chat. Alternatively, e-mail us at – yes, you guessed it! – clerk@oldwoughton.org.uk. A high-level job summary is below and accredited training is available.

- To provide a full clerking service to the nine councillors of Old Woughton Parish Council
- To advise the Chair and Members on procedural and other matters relevant to the safe operation of the Council
- To liaise with other Clerks in neighbouring councils

To maintain learning so that the Council receives up to date advice and procedures are continually reviewed

- To be responsible for the management of the day-to-day business of the Council

Meanwhile, we are hugely grateful to Vicky Gladstone, who has stepped forward to help in the interim whilst we search for our permanent candidate. Many of you will already know Vicky from our recent community events in the hotel grounds, where she could be found in the arts tent. Here she introduces herself in the clerk role:



Thank you so much, Vicky!

What do you think they're doing?

Many of you have been intrigued to know what has been happening with all the activity on the Ouzel recently. We are grateful to have been kept informed by Peter Barnes, councillor for Simpson Ward and here we share his report to his own parish:



January 2024

'In parallel with all of this, a team from the Bedford Internal Drainage Board has been carrying out a major operation around the Ouzel. Not only have fallen trees been removed, but the vegetation on both banks has been severely cut back and the bottom of the river has been scoured.'

A team from the Environment Agency has been following in the wake of the heavy machinery and disposing of the spoils of their work in an environmentally responsible fashion. Once that stage of the work is complete and as the teams work their way northwards, we understand that Parks Trust will be attending to the paths, in some places diverting them further from the river.



April 2024

The overall effect on the Ouzel is stark. It will restore itself over time but the implications for the ecology – birds, fish, otters, insects, plants etc – remain to be seen. As does the outlook for flooding in the future.'

Our Four-legged Friends!

As the weather improves and we head on out to enjoy our wonderful green spaces, it seems a timely reminder to see how we can help The Parks Trust (PT) and support their work looking after the parklands, paddocks and livestock.

There is no doubt that there is an increase in visitor numbers to our parish and it is haven for dog walking and many other leisure activities. We are very lucky to have grazing animals, which as the PT state: '*are great for helping to graze our land as they do it far more sensitively than mowers allowing beautiful wildflowers to grow and insects to thrive*'.

They go on to ask us to remember to keep dogs on leads around the livestock and to also pick up after our pets. Not doing this (anywhere) could lead to a fine and that dog mess is harmful to human health (Toxocariasis) and harmful to grazing animals too.

For more information and guidance from The Parks Trust on such matters as Professional Dog walking and more canine matters go to www.theparkstrust.com



Our Prickly Friends!

For those who know me well will know I am a big fan of hedgehogs!

Twiglet (pictured) was a hedgehog that I rescued after he was found – out in the blazing sun, during the day, (a sure sign that something was not right!), but luckily recovered and was released back locally.



Twiglet

Our modern living has challenged these creatures and numbers have massively declined.

So what can we do to help encourage this vulnerable species?

- Did you know that a hedgehog can travel up to a mile or so each night to search for food, create territories and find a mate. Any obstacle or obstruction such as closed fencing, walls that typically surround our gardens restrict this movement. So why not help to develop 'Hedgehog Highways' across our parish by ensuring you have gaps (cut holes CD size 13cm x 13cm / or dig out beneath) your boundaries to encourage movement between gardens and green spaces.
- Do leave out a shallow bowl with fresh water. If you have a pond, ensure you have a 'ladder' or means for a hedgehog to get out.
- If putting out food – ensure it is appropriate (meaty cat and dog food (not fish!))
- Why not get a hedgehog house or leave wild areas (with leaf litter) within your gardens and surrounds to provide opportunities for 'house building'!

More information and advice can be found at www.hedgehogstreet.org and it would be great if we can log sightings or 'losses' at: www.bighedgehogmap.org (type in your postcode).

Charlotte

Our feathered friends!

..... **New Legislation for Bird Keepers – Our Feathered Friends!**

Did you know that as of the 1st October 2024 it will become mandatory to register poultry and other birds (including pets) even if your flock is 1! Previously it was only mandatory for 50+ birds.

All bird keepers will be required to log their flock (1+) on a National Register via the Animal and Plant Health Agency (APHA) – part of DEFRA.

This is part of a move to tighten up on disease control in the wake of recent avian influenza outbreaks. The register will allow updates and communication to all bird keepers in disease control zones and guidance and information on biosecurity rules, when in place. This will help track and control disease.

This does not include birds kept / housed inside a home, but does include birds kept in aviaries and outside cages.

The birds listed include: chickens, ducks, pigeons, geese, aviaries (parrots, budgies, cockatiels), emus and quail... and more

For more information and guidance : **GOV.UK DEFRA**



Red-legged Partridge

Need advice?

citizens advice Milton Keynes

If you live in Simpson, Ashland or Old Woughton Parish and you need advice, you can drop in and see one of our Advisers on the dates below.

• Friday 12th July 2024

The session will take place at:

Ashland Lakeside Centre
12:00pm - 3:00pm

Next session on
11th October
10 'til 1pm
St. Mary's church



- There's no need to make an appointment.
- Just drop in between the times advertised and an Adviser will see you as soon as possible.
- If the Adviser is busy there may be a short wait.



The service is for residents only and is funded by both Old Woughton and Simpson & Ashland Parish Councils



St Mary's Church

Woughton on the Green, MK6 3BS

Strawberry Fayre

Funds raised for Church Fabric Fund

Saturday 6th July
2 - 4 pm

Strawberry teas

Cake stall, Raffle, Tombola
Crafts, Honey, Bric-a-brac

The Electoral Commission

No ID? You can apply for free voter ID now

Find out more at

electoralcommission.org.uk/voterID

You need photo ID
to vote at a
polling station

Erratum

The Spring edition contained incorrect information about last year's 2023/24 Precept values. The correct information is shown in the table below.

Precept	23/24	24/25	Increase	
Tax Band	Annual	Annual	Annual	Weekly
AR	£18.58	£37.37	£18.78	£0.36
A	£22.30	£44.84	£22.54	£0.43
B	£26.02	£52.31	£26.30	£0.51
C	£29.73	£59.79	£30.05	£0.58
D	£33.45	£67.26	£33.81	£0.65
E	£40.88	£82.21	£41.32	£0.79
F	£48.32	£97.15	£48.84	£0.94
G	£55.75	£112.10	£56.35	£1.08
H	£66.90	£134.52	£67.62	£1.30



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

MK Marathon 2024

The weather was overcast, cool but not wet, good for the runners, but a little cool for spectators. The course this year was back to the regular one finishing at Stadium MK, which required two circuits through Woughton on the Green. The photos on this page show the runners spread out on their second circuit through Woughton. The men's winning time this year was 2 hours 37 minutes and 17 seconds with the women's race being won in a time of 3 hours 3 minutes.



The marathon relay was won in a time of 2 hours 34 minutes and 16 seconds by an all male team. The half marathon was won in a time of 1 hour 11 minutes and 10

seconds for the men and 1 hour 23 minutes and 03 seconds for the women. If you wish to see the full race results they can be found at <https://results.resultsbase.net/Results.aspx?Cid=8&Rid=20484>.

The more usual location for the water station and toilets on the Green was in place this year. This of course generated a huge number of discarded bottles and other items, but, as is now the norm, these were all picked up by the Marathon volunteers after the races were completed.

The annual MK event is consistently ranked in the top 10 UK marathons. It is an AIMS (Association of International Marathons and distance races) certified race and has BARR (British Association of Road Races) Gold accreditation for outstanding race management.



Runners can use it as a qualifying event for London and Boston marathons as well as an Abbott World Marathon Majors Wanda Age Group World Championships qualifier.

It is also an England Masters qualifying race.

EVENTS

10th July Woughton Heritage Talk – Mushrooms!
7.30pm – St Mary's Church – more info to follow

19th July Passmore litter pick
2pm at the noticeboard

Sunday 25th August Parks & Ride Ouzel Valley Park
starts 11am from the Woughton Playing Fields car park

31st August Patch Allotments Open Day
From 11 to 3pm

6th – 15th September Woughton Heritage will be displaying their work at the MK Central Library
(Library Hours and opening times) as part of the 'Heritage Open Days'

25th October Passmore litter pick
2pm at the noticeboard

Old Woughton News is produced by



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