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Editorial by James Read



Jean Holden was an endless source of cheery greetings, wise garden-gate chats, enthusiasm and insights for this magazine for more years than I can count. Her passing in July is a very sad moment for the village. Sometimes over-used, the phrase “end of an era” truly applies with Jean. With the whole Messenger team – of which she was a deeply respected and loved part – we wish you clear roads ahead and Godspeed in your journey, Jean. Deepest sympathies to Jeremy and Simon, who will have the support of the whole village at this time of loss.

We have so much history, born of a wonderful community of many generations. We celebrate a little piece of that history on pages 6-7. But we cannot stop the march of time. The Central Bedfordshire Council consultation on sites for the CBC Local Plan invites us to look forward three decades to 2050 and join the conversation about where development will take place across our region. Meppershall Parish Council has provided some background thoughts and information in an article here (p3-5) and it is for each of us to go to the consultation website and make comments.

As always, we will have the most impact if our input to the consultation reflects not just what we do not want, but what we are willing to support.

The redevelopment of both RAF Henlow and RAF Chicksands is included in this consultation (sites 135334 and 135347 on the website, see pages 4-5). Together they offer almost 1,000 acres of development potential – a huge proportion of all the available land. Many of us doubt the wisdom of demolishing military infrastructure that has received billions of pounds of investment over the last hundred years. But if they are available to be developed, allocating them to the Central Bedfordshire Local Plan will save many other precious places from going into the plan and give these brownfield sites a custom-made new lease of life for generations to come.

A 200-acre triangular area between Meppershall, The Airman and the edge of Henlow Camp (site 136749 on the website), is also in the consultation. Few would consider this a favourable place for new construction, but (apparently) it is a potential “green energy” site. A wind or solar farm on the edge of Meppershall may gain support from some, if – in any scenario – some countryside must go. Yet, how can we guarantee it will not become a housing estate instead, once it is in the Local Plan?

If these sites might be supported, there is much to object to. Destruction of the last remaining agricultural meadow atop Crackle Hill, construction linking Meppershall all the way to the A507 around Chapel Road and Hoo Road, or building across the hilltop between the water tower and Fildyke Road and Coneygate (already subject to a proposal, in part): these sites would delete our rural identity and urbanise prime farmland. Beyond Meppershall, one site would join Polehanger Farm to Campton across the River Hit (Site 136474 – Campton) and another would join the River Hit to Shillington by developing Hadenem Farm (Site 136290 – Shillington). These sites would impose huge losses of rural character, village identity and greenfield farmland and would negatively impact the way of life of thousands of people. In contrast, the big brownfield bases at Henlow and Chicksands offer a huge development opportunity for the least personal harm (and maybe even benefits) to local people.

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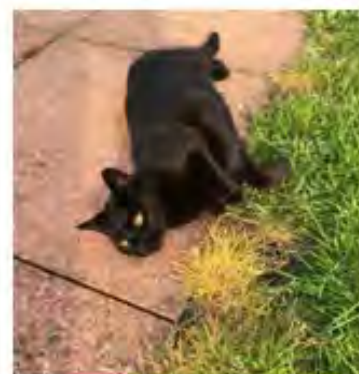


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Letters

Dear Editor,

Please may I say a very big thank you to all those lovely friends who joined me at my celebration of a very special birthday in June. Hearing laughter I will never forget, it was a wonderful occasion. It was fun to see the look of horror and disdain when old and much loved, treasured friends were asked if they would like a cup of tea. Naturally they each had a large glass of wine, which continued during a truly memorable and special afternoon. Thank you everyone.

Elizabeth Lambley

Dear Editor,

A quick word of thanks to whoever strims the footpaths. It's much appreciated by those of us who use them every day.

David Bartlett.

Dear Editor,

It was a warm night in June and the village hall provided a great venue for a party with live music - thank you to everyone who came along. I have thanked everyone I can personally, but someone left a box of chocolates and a pretty yellow rose 'precious gold' - I'm sorry I don't know who to thank, but both were very much appreciated!

Jayne

Dear Editor

Village Hall – Volunteers Needed

Many thanks to everyone for supporting the village hall over the past 12 months.

Following our Annual General Meeting in August, we continue to welcome people to become more involved to support this important community facility.

We are especially interested in people who live locally and those from business backgrounds to help us with fundraising, management and legal matters, if that's you - please get in touch with the trustees@meppershallvillagehall.co.uk.

Trustees of Meppershall Village Hall

Central Beds Local Plan – Comment Now On Proposed Sites

Share your views on sites being considering for new building to 2050

Central Bedfordshire Council (CBC) has begun a consultation on the 452 potential housing sites across the whole local authority area, from which, in a couple of years, a shortlist will be agreed for development in the next Local Plan.

At the end of 2024, the council conducted a legal process known as a 'Call for sites' where anyone with land they want to develop could put this forward. 626 sites were proposed. Council officers then worked through this list, removing 132 sites which were obvious candidates for refusal such as:

- Not big enough for at least 10 new homes
- Land in SSSIs, or sites which are in the highest flood risk areas

- Land with a legal issue e.g. submitted without permission of landowner
- Sites not directly next to the edge of a town/village and not big enough to form a new settlement on their own

CBC has now put together a website where you can see exactly where the remaining 452 sites are located. You can also see how big each site is, what it could be used for, and where there is Green Belt.

The council has received proposals of land amounting to about 10,900 hectares which we estimate would be enough for around 381,500. Based on the number of houses CBC is required to build, this means that only about 7% of the land would be required. However, this is NOT a guarantee. On some land, a developer may want to build at a lower density (eg. mansions with huge gardens). On another they might want to build tower blocks (high density). Also, the rules over use of Green Belt sites are rightly stricter, so these are less likely to be used anyway. This means areas without Green Belt will be more likely to be allocated housing than those who have it.

CBC is now offering everyone the opportunity to highlight which sites are the most unsuitable, so please get involved and have your say. You can comment on any of the sites across Central Beds.

In Meppershall, 11 sites have been put forward, totalling 180 hectares. Although it is unlikely that all of this land will end up on the shortlist, some of it probably will.

So, it is really important that as many people as possible go on the website and make their opinions known. Please take part, so that CBC gets a feel for which sites are the most unpopular. **The consultation is open NOW and closes on 17th August 2026.**

Take part in the consultation here: <https://centralbedfordshire.oc2.uk/document/99>

Common Questions About This Process

1. DO WE REALLY NEED MORE HOUSES IN THE COUNTRYSIDE?

No one would disagree we need homes for the next generation. But what we don't want, is to see our countryside and wildlife destroyed by ugly new housing developments or the look and feel of our village and surroundings changed.

2. WHAT HAPPENS IF CBC DOESN'T HAVE A LOCAL PLAN?

The government insists councils have an up-to-date Local Plan, and CBC had one approved in 2021. If local authorities refuse, or drag their heels, developers can just apply to build wherever they want to, knowing even if the council turns it down, this could easily get overturned at appeal, as the local authority won't be able to demonstrate they have a plan.

3. HOW MANY HOUSES ARE NEEDED?

The original proposal was 14,800 by 2045, but this has been increased to 25,500 by 2050. The government controls the numbers.

4. IS CBC CONSULTING THE PUBLIC?

Yes. All the way through the process they must consult with the public.

5. WILL THIS NEW LOCAL PLAN MEAN LOADS OF NEW HOUSING?

All local authorities are obliged to provide housing as per government targets but the locations in question are down to local authorities (CBC) to decide. Under the current plan, CBC is obliged to find around 2,000 houses per year. This number only changes if the government decides it will. There are housing sites allocated until

2035. The new plan would extend this to 2050, so yes, it is expected that there will be new houses allocated in Meppershall out to 2050.

6. WHERE WILL THE HOUSES GO?

This is to be decided by CBC officers with feedback from the current and future public consultation. It will depend to some extent on the land put forward.

7. DOES THE COUNCIL CARE WHAT THE PUBLIC THINKS?

They must consult. Housing will need to be allocated, we have no choice about that, but communities should be properly heard.

8. WHAT ABOUT INFRASTRUCTURE?

In the past, we have seen huge developments built, across the country, with little in the way of infrastructure. CBC says that the new Local Plan will better attempt to understand (and enable delivery of) what communities want and need, alongside new homes.

Alessandra Marabese, Clerk to the Parish Council, Meppershall

*** Where are the proposed sites in Meppershall? ***

View them on <https://centralbedfordshire.oc2.uk/document/99> – click on Meppershall **and other villages** to see all of the sites near us – here's a list of the just sites in our Parish:

- The cow meadow beside the playing field at the top of the Crackle Hill ridge, around 6 acres **(Site 136293)**
- The wild area by Shefford Road just inside the village near the nursing home, around 2 acres **(Site 136328)**
- Disused glasshouses south of Stondon Road, around 1 acre **(Site 136388)**
- The entire area between Stondon Road and Fildyke Road, east of High Street, Monks Pool and Coneygate, around 60 acres **(Site 136390)**
- The full width of land between Hoo Road and Chapel Road, north of Fildyke Road, out to Wayside House, over 20 acres **(Site 136573)**
- Paddocks behind houses (numbers 70-80) south of Fildyke Road, around 3 acres **(Site 136644)**
- Flint's Field – the whole extent of land between Shefford Road and Hoo Road, north of (adjacent to) Emery Croft, around 13 acres **(Site 136652)** – PLUS...
- Some 110 acres adjacent to Flint's Field, extending this site as far as Hoo Farm and along part of the A507 **(Site 136808)**
- Two sites Opposite RAF Henlow on the A600 south of The Airman (proposed for industrial/employment use) – one of around 10 acres **(Site 136734)**, the other around 20 acres **(Site 136789)**
- A 200-acre triangle – all of the land between Chapel Farm, The Airman and RAF Henlow, north of Cow Lane (proposed for residential, industrial/employment and/or green energy) **(Site 136749)**
- The whole site of The Airman, around 3 acres **(Site 136896)**

Compare the size of these difficult sites to the 1,000 acres available on RAF Henlow and RAF Chicksands land. Make your voice heard! Add your views...



A Little Bit Of Meppershall FC History

Gary Dilley and his cousin Gina German have kindly shared this remarkable piece of village history – the Meppershall FC team of the late 1940s.

We would love to know if anyone can add to what we know about the players shown here – do get in touch if you know more! We believe the photo shows...

Back row from the left: Bill Lamb, Pete Carter, Lou Carter

Middle row from the left: Bryan Dilley (others unknown)

Front row from the left: Peter Dilley, Barry Gray, Ray Millard (others unknown)

Can anyone help with the missing names?

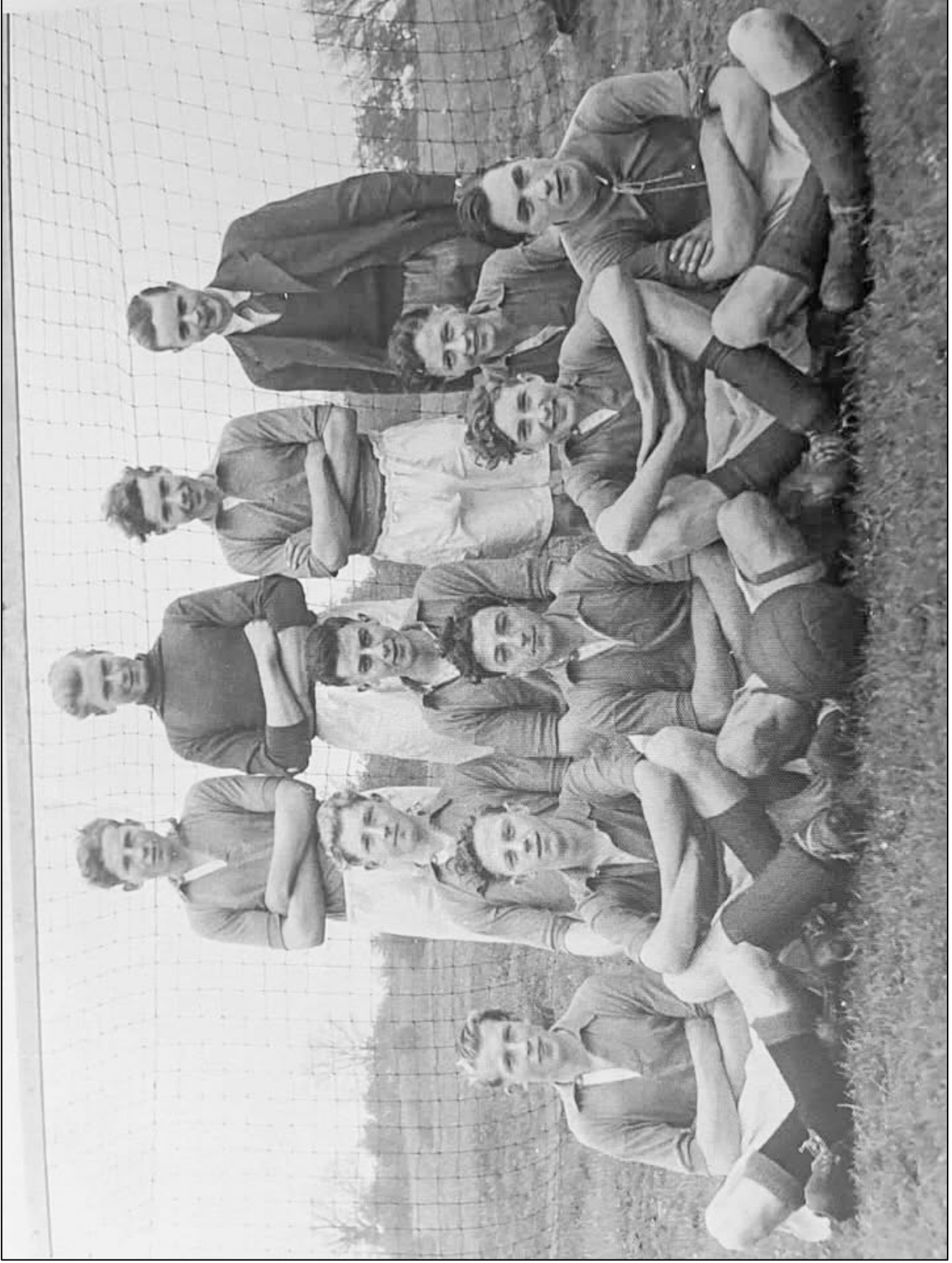
The football pitch used to be opposite the church, and was known as Top Meadow.

Today's Meppershall FC

As we know, the newly recreated Meppershall FC had a great first season back in competition, 2025-6. Those playing get to represent the village and enjoy their sport as part of a close-knit team. People watching get to celebrate the competitive spirit of the village, taking our place in a wider community in rural Mid Bedfordshire. Altogether, it makes the most of the new football pitch, Centenary Field.

They are still looking for sponsorship alongside ASM Windows. If that is of interest to you and your business, please contact Meppershall FC, or find George Prowle, on Facebook (or we can connect you via this magazine's contact info on the back pages.

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Meppershall FC, c.1948

Jean Holden

The Messenger is very sad to announce that Jean Holden passed away in July.

Jean was well-known, and equally well-loved by many in the village, and we will miss her. Our thoughts and condolences go out to her family.

Jean had been a member of the Messenger delivery team until very recently, and you may remember her as she was a familiar sight out walking with her little white dog Lilibet; many of the village children will remember seeing them in her garden on the High Street as they walk to and from school.

Her records of village life have often contributed to articles in this magazine – with an extensive set of newspaper clippings about the village dating back more than 50 years, and wonderful scrapbooks of the wildlife adventures of her boys when they were young, which inspired a series of articles in this magazine.

She was also equally familiar driving round Meppershall in a distinctive classic Triumph Herald with her late friend Richard Ivory, who we lost only last year.

Jean was the driving force behind the classic car displays at the village fayres in past years, and even if you didn't know Jean, some of you might recall the cars. Her late husband had a variety of Triumph TR sports cars down the years and led the 'TR Club' for a time. Jean was an equally keen car enthusiast.

Once again - our thoughts are with her family at this sad time. We hope to include a more complete tribute in a forthcoming issue.



Meppershall Brownies have welcomed three new "Owls" (volunteer leaders) this year. The impressive power of Facebook thankfully brought us new volunteers when Suzanne announced that she was moving away and leaving Brownies. Thank you to Curly Owl (Sara), Night Owl (Sarah) and Adventure Owl (Carol) for stepping forward to join Tawny Owl (Gemma) and Little Owl (Rosie) and our Young Leaders, ensuring that our village Brownie unit not only continued but also expanded!



It's been a busy year. In the Spring term the Brownies gained their First Aid 2 skills builder badge. They learnt how to make an emergency phone call, what to do when someone is unresponsive, how to do the recovery position and explored good mental health wellbeing plus had a go at making mock wounds! It's not all life skills - they also enjoyed a friendship evening making bracelets for their friends, celebrated St Patrick's Day with some Irish-themed activities and took a virtual trip around our five world centres - with local food from each country of course! For Mother's Day, the Brownies made gifts for their mums, including making cards and decorating a plant pot and potting a plant - we hope the mums enjoyed the crafts that the girls brought home.

The summer term saw us out and about, especially during the second half of the term when the evenings were lighter. We celebrated Earth Day with some eco activities, made kites and attempted to fly them and had a go at archery. We had an exciting evening exploring the woods and making dens at Rowney Warren. As part of their Camp 2 skills builder badge, the Brownies practised getting ready for bed in the dark, had a go at pitching tents, and learnt about fire safety before lighting fires and cooking s'mores and pitta pizza. We had hoped to have a football session – it was the World Cup after all! Unfortunately, the hot weather meant we had to postpone this until the Autumn term.

The highlight of the summer term was joining 1,600 other Bedfordshire Girlguiding members at the "Wild at Woburn" county trip to Woburn Safari Park. The Brownies had an amazing time meeting the animals, having fun at the park and generally enjoying a great day with their Guiding friends.



We'd like to thank Girlguiding Anglia for providing a grant from their Units in Need Fund, to pay for our rent this year, which was much needed as our bank balance was almost zero in February. If anyone knows of any other grants that we can apply for then do let us know.

If you are interested in adding your daughter to our waiting list for joining our friendly unit, or would like more information, please email: meppershallbrownies@gmail.com. Brownies are aged 7-10 years, but younger girls can join on our waiting list.



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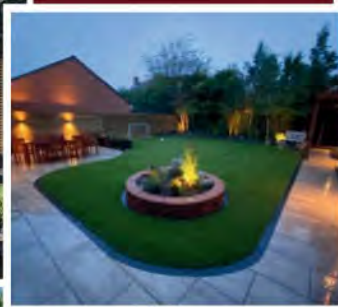
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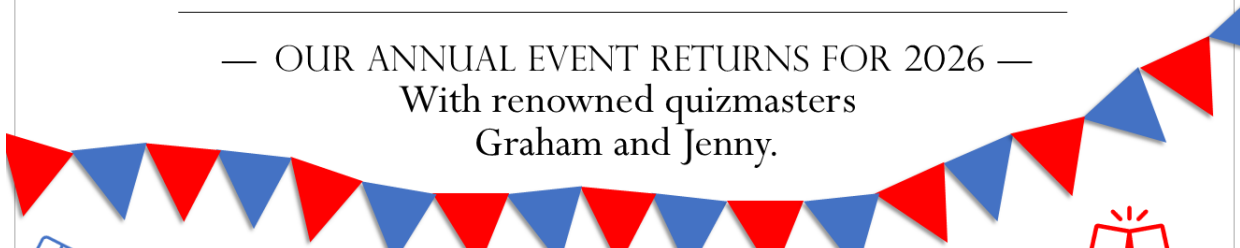
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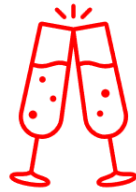
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THE FRIENDS OF ST MARY'S MEPPERSHALL CHARITY NO. 1028048

The Friends of St Mary's Meppershall is a village charity established in 1993 to raise money for the church building. The income of parish churches throughout the UK is reliant on local fundraising and giving as well as charitable grants in order to maintain the amazing, special historic places that we see today. Right now, we are fundraising for work to the church bells, planned for 2027. Please join us at the annual Village Quiz – a long-standing feature of the Meppershall calendar!

Boring job? Not at Bedfordshire Police

Bedfordshire Police offers a career that gives you the opportunity to make a real difference within the community.

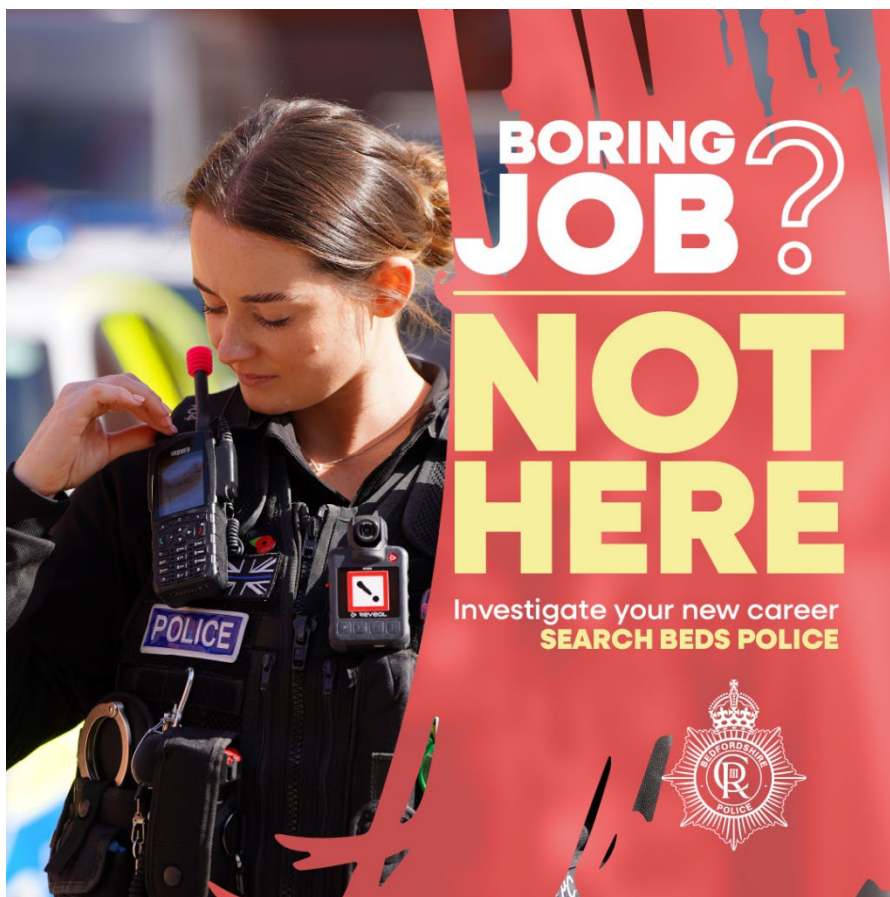
Every day is different. We are a small and busy force that offers a lot of experience due to the wide range of crimes we see compared to other forces in the UK. You are not just a number at Bedfordshire Police. You will develop with close-knit teams and there will always be someone to support you through the ups and downs of policing.

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If you think being part of a team that helps to keep the public safe and tackles crime day-to-day is for you, then a role with Bedfordshire Police could be your next career step.

We're recruiting now. To find out about the different routes into policing and apply to join, visit our website: www.beds.police.uk

You can also follow us on Facebook by searching Bedfordshire Police for more news and recruitment updates.

Personal Finance by Paul Savuto

Balancing family support and retirement goals – take time to reflect this summer

As we settle into the summer, many of us finally find the breathing space to pause and reflect. The longer evenings and holiday mindset often encourage a wider perspective – not just on where we are today, but on the future we want to enjoy. For many families, however, retirement planning can quietly slip down the priority list when adult children need support. Whether helping with rising living costs, a first property deposit, university fees or simply navigating a challenging economy, parents are increasingly stepping in financially long after their children reach adulthood.

The growing cost of supporting adult children

New research has found that 61% of parents with children over 18 are providing financial support, with one in seven expecting this generosity to delay or reduce their retirement plans. Some are dipping into savings, others are reducing pension contributions and many acknowledge that supporting family has affected their own long-term financial goals. Of course, most parents want to provide security and opportunity for their children, but there is an important balance to strike. Supporting loved ones should not come at the expense of your own financial future.

Revisiting retirement priorities

Retirement planning is rarely static. Priorities evolve over time, and so should financial plans. Revisiting retirement goals, reviewing pension contributions, understanding future income needs and adjusting investment strategies can all help ensure plans remain aligned with changing family needs and circumstances. Importantly, retirement today is no longer viewed as a single end point. Many people are planning for phased retirements, flexible lifestyles and longer, more active later years. That makes ongoing financial clarity even more valuable.

Finding the right balance

Summer can be the ideal moment to step back and reassess. With the right advice and careful planning, it is entirely possible to support children when needed while still protecting the retirement lifestyle you may already have or are working hard to build. The key is ensuring generosity and long-term security sit side by side.

A few positive steps to consider

- Review your retirement goals regularly – even small adjustments to pensions or investments can make a meaningful long-term difference
- Set clear boundaries around family support – helping children financially works best when it sits within an agreed and sustainable plan
- Let's talk it through – a fresh perspective can help balance generosity today with security tomorrow.

Pensions and IHT – the shake-up many are missing

From April 2027, a significant change to Inheritance Tax (IHT) will take effect. Unused pension funds will no longer sit outside a person's estate. Instead, they will be included when calculating IHT, potentially exposing them to a 40% charge where thresholds are exceeded.

The end of a tax-efficient era

For many years, pensions have been seen as one of the most tax-efficient ways to pass on wealth, often left untouched while other assets were used first. This long-standing approach is now being overturned, forcing a major rethink of retirement and estate planning.

The awareness gap

Despite the scale of the change, awareness remains low. Research suggests that nearly nine in 10 UK adults are unaware that pensions will fall within the IHT net from 2027.

This knowledge gap is already influencing behaviour. An increasing number of people are choosing to access their pensions earlier than planned, with over 116,000 individuals withdrawing funds at age 55 in the past year, a five-year high. In many cases, this reflects a desire to reduce future tax liabilities or pass on wealth sooner. However, acting too quickly can have consequences, particularly if it could leave you short of income later in retirement.

When change creates opportunity... for scammers

There are also wider risks emerging as periods of uncertainty, combined with pressure to act, can leave individuals more vulnerable to scams. Fraudsters are already exploiting confusion around the new rules, offering so-called solutions to avoid IHT that can put retirement savings at risk.

The key message is clear: while the 2027 reforms will reshape how pensions are treated on death, they do not mean immediate action is always the right course. Careful planning, informed decisions and taking professional advice remain essential to ensure that both retirement security and legacy goals are protected. The changes from April 2027 are proposed and subject to legislation.

Enjoying your happy and healthy retirement

With a clear sense of purpose, your retirement opens a world of possibilities. Getting your finances in order is a crucial step, but it is only one part of a wider plan. Here are some key considerations for a happy and healthy retirement.

Wellbeing and wealth

After all those years of work, retirement is a chance to live exactly how you want. As people are living longer, retirement planning increasingly spans multiple decades, giving you a large window to chase your dreams. Two building blocks of a happy retirement are wellbeing and wealth. Wellbeing means something different to each of us. Living your healthiest life will allow you to stay active and independent for longer, whether you're planning to run ultramarathons or simply want to feel at your most energetic. Mental wellbeing means keeping your mind sharp and prioritising social connection. Likewise, wealth is not a one-size-fits-all indicator. From having the means to travel far and wide to supporting loved ones, your wealth goals can secure the retirement you want. Whatever financial security means to you, retirement planning can provide confidence and peace of mind.

Laying the foundations – and continuing to build

Retirement planning is not a now-or-never moment. Rather, your plans should be built gradually and remain in constant development. Over time, priorities, health or

spending needs evolve, so plans should be reviewed periodically to ensure they still meet your lifestyle.

One key concept to keep in mind is income sustainability. This means balancing present spending with preserving wealth for later-life needs and legacy goals. A dynamic retirement plan that can adapt quickly to changes helps you strike the right balance.

Planning beyond the numbers

Retirement planning is about much more than money. A well-planned retirement should support your broader life goals, including your lifestyle, travel, family, hobbies and personal growth. A fulfilling retirement comes with purpose and flexibility. Indeed, the most successful retirements are often those that combine clarity and openness. You have a strong plan – now it's time to put it into action!

GET IN TOUCH

DGS IFA Ltd are Independent and Chartered Financial Advisers. I am a Chartered Financial Planner with over 30 years financial services experience, so you are in safe hands. To discuss your financial situation, your plans and goals, please contact me, Paul Savuto, AFPS, Chartered Financial Planner. DGS Independent Financial Advisers Ltd. 07834 499 595 or email ps@dgsifa.com, I'll be happy to talk to you and answer any questions you have. FCA 225814. Please note: This blog is for general information only and does not constitute advice. The information is aimed at retail clients only.



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Table Top Sale At Meppershall Village Hall

A great new initiative for the autumn – make a date to come and browse (cakes available!) – and consider booking a table to sell your wares!



Autumn



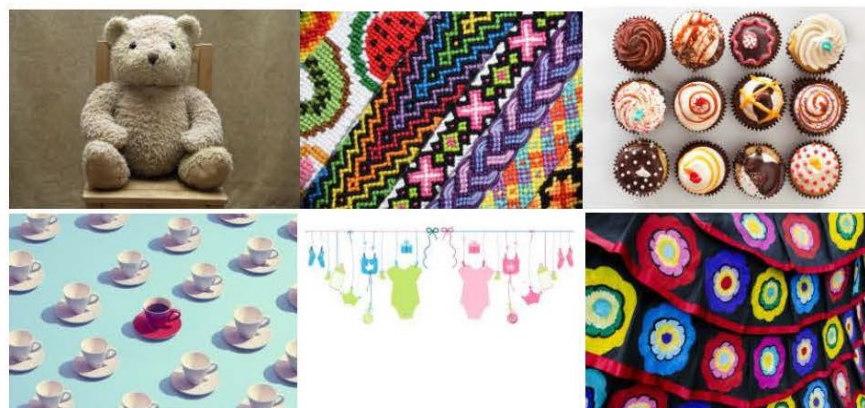
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Going Solar At Meppershall Village Hall

Charity Number 300052



Update – as reported in April 2026, our bid for a community lottery fund grant for £19,750 was successful and in July we completed the solar panels and batteries installation at the village hall – a total investment in excess of £40,000.

This energy efficient scheme reduces greenhouse gas emissions, generating electricity without producing carbon dioxide and other gases associated with fossil fuels. The batteries will store clean energy for use at night and on cloudy days.



Meppershall Village Hall management committee members:
Barry Gatenby (left) and Ray Wood (right - project lead for the solar panel initiative).

By replacing fossil fuels, the system will reduce harmful pollutants which can impact on respiratory health in our community. The system will also promote energy independence (decreasing reliance on the national grid) and, in the longer term, benefit the community by reducing the running costs of the hall.



Thank you everyone who has supported the scheme. Special thanks to Ray Wood our splendid project lead on behalf of MVH Management Committee.



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Updates From Our MP, Alistair Strathern



On the two-year anniversary of my election to represent Meppershall and all of the towns and villages in our constituency, it's been wonderful to see our community coming together. From the fantastic support for England in the World Cup, through to the various great community and charity events taking place over the summer months from Hitchin Town's charity fundraiser to youth charity GRIT's monopoly fun run!

A highlight was of course the fantastic charity bake sales and events hosted by Meppershall Social Club and the village hall. A big thank you to everyone who makes them possible!

As we head into summer, I hope local families will be taking full advantage of some of the Government's summer savings programme. From free bus travel for children aged 5-15 over august to cutting VAT on children's meals and days out, I hope this will make it that little bit easier to manage what I know can often be an expensive month for families.

Looking back over a busy two years though, I am proud of what we've been able to achieve. We've secured £25m for crucial upgrades at Lister and Bedford Hospitals. We've got stuck in locally too to help unlock GP surgery expansions and ensure thousands more appointments are now on offer locally. This includes finding funding for extra clinical rooms to deliver thousands more appointments at Shefford Health Centre.

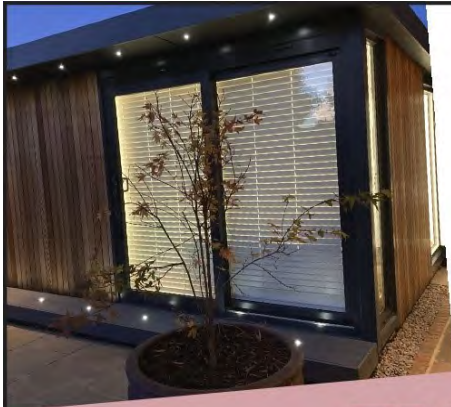
For local families, thousands can now access up to 30 hours of free childcare each week, with funding for two local nursery expansions secured to boost places. With a broken system of special educational needs provision letting down far too many young people across our community, we've been one of the leading voices for reform, we secured millions of extra investment in SEND provision for central beds. Working closely with local teachers and families too, we delivered national change to ban phones from schools and toughen up restrictions on social media for under 16s.

But there is still more to do. We need progress on the 3-to-2-tier school transition, action on the dire state of too many local roads, and continued efforts to bring down household bills.

So, lots done, lots learned, and plenty more to do. Thank you as ever to all those in Meppershall who have taken the time to engage with me over the last two years. Whether we agreed on everything or nothing, you are a big part of what makes this the best job in the world.

alistair.strathern.mp@parliament.uk





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Meppershall Munchkins



August & September Update

We hope you're all enjoying the summer holidays! Thank you, as always, for your continued support of Meppershall Munchkins. We love being part of such a wonderful community and look forward to welcoming families back over the coming weeks.

Summer Holiday Closures

Please note that Meppershall Munchkins will be closed on the following dates:

- Tuesday 4th August
- Friday 28th August
- Tuesday 1st September
- Friday 4th September



There may be additional closures depending on volunteer availability, so please keep an eye on our Facebook page for the latest updates.

A Desperate Plea for Volunteers



Meppershall Munchkins is run entirely by volunteers, and we urgently need your help.

From September, some of our amazing volunteers will no longer be able to help at our sessions. Without new volunteers coming forward, we may have to reduce or even cancel some sessions.

Whether you can spare an hour every now and then or help on a more regular basis, your support really would make a difference. No special experience is needed—just a willingness to lend a hand to keep this much-loved group running for local families.

If you've ever thought about volunteering, now is the time. Please come and speak to one of the team or send us a message. We would be so grateful for your support.

Regular Sessions

Tuesdays and Fridays, 9:30–11:30am

- £3.50 for the first child; £1 for each additional child
- Snack and squash included
- Walk-ins welcome
- Payment via cash or bank transfer

For updates, including any additional closures, please check the Meppershall Munchkins Facebook page.

We look forward to seeing you all soon for more fun, friendship and community spirit.



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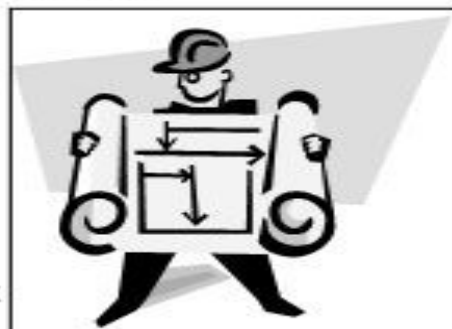
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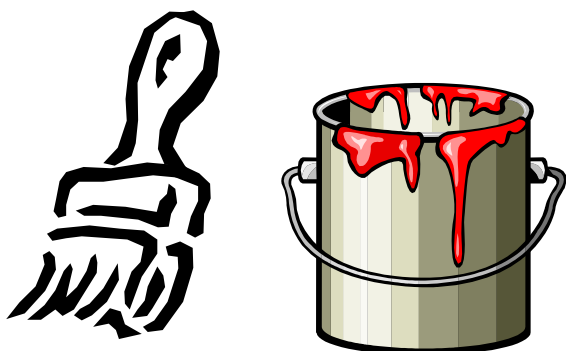
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Our community drop-in service provides young people and their families/carers with direct access to a CAMHS clinician. During your drop-in appointment, you will have a brief conversation with a CAMHS clinician to discuss your concerns. The clinician will offer advice and help you understand the most appropriate next steps and available support.

This service is for young people experiencing concerns about their mental health, and parents, carers, or family members who are worried about a young person's emotional wellbeing or mental health.



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Meppershall Social Club

Opening Times

We're open from 4pm on Fridays for the summer!

- **Monday:** Closed
- **Tuesday:** 7pm – 11pm
- **Wednesday:** 7pm – 11pm
- **Thursday:** 7pm – 11pm
- **Friday:** 4pm – 11pm
- **Saturday:** 12pm – 11pm
- **Sunday:** 12pm – 10:30pm

Whether you're popping in for a quiet drink, catching up with friends or enjoying the sunshine in the park, everyone is welcome.

Weekly Friday Bingo

Our popular **Bingo Night** takes place **every Friday evening**. It's a great way to start the weekend, with a friendly atmosphere, plenty of laughs and the chance to win some cash prizes. New players are always welcome, so come along and join in the fun.

15th August we will be having family karaoke from 7pm

Reminder: no quiz in August

September's quiz will be on the 13th.

For the latest news, events and updates, visit meppershallsocialclub.co.uk and follow the **Meppershall Social Club Facebook page**.

We look forward to welcoming you to the Club soon!





BINGO NIGHT

EVERY FRIDAY 7PM

DOORS OPEN 6:15PM

OVER 18'S ONLY



"Your Parcel is Out for Delivery..." How to Spot Mobile Scams

By Lucy Standbridge

We have all received them: an unexpected text message claiming a parcel cannot be delivered due to an outstanding fee, or a WhatsApp message from an unknown number saying, *"Hi Mum, I've broken my phone, this is my new number."*

Mobile-based scams, known as **Smishing** (SMS phishing), have surged dramatically. Because we tend to trust our mobile phones more than our email inboxes, scammers are moving away from computers and straight into our pockets.

Learning how these mobile tricks work is essential for protecting your personal information and business data.

The Post Office & Delivery Scam

The most common mobile scam involves fake courier notifications, often pretending to be from postal services like Royal Mail, DPD, Evri.

- **The Setup:** You receive a text stating that a package is waiting for you but requires a small payment (usually £1.50 to £3) for shipping costs or customs fees.
- **The Trap:** The message includes a link to a counterfeit website that looks identical to the official delivery service. If you pay the small fee, the scammers do not just take the pocket change - they steal your full debit or credit card details.
- **The Clue:** Official delivery companies rarely demand unexpected fees via text message out of the blue. If you actually are expecting a parcel, log directly into the official tracking website via your browser separately, rather than clicking the link in the text.

The "Hi Mum" WhatsApp Trick

WhatsApp scams often rely on emotional manipulation rather than fake tech problems.

- **The Setup:** A message arrives from a completely unfamiliar number, claiming to be a family member who has lost or damaged their phone.
- **The Trap:** Once they have engaged you in conversation, they will quickly fabricate a crisis: *"I need to pay a bill urgently online, but my banking app is locked on this new phone. Can you transfer £400 for me? I'll pay you back tomorrow."*
- **The Clue:** Never transfer money based purely on a WhatsApp conversation. If a relative claims they have a new number and desperately needs money, use the "side-step" rule: call their *original* mobile number, or ring another family member to verify the story first.

Three Golden Rules for Mobile Safety

- **Check the Sender Number:** Official organisations usually send texts via an official, named ID rather than a standard, random 11-digit UK mobile number. If a message from a major bank or courier comes from a personal mobile number, delete it.
- **Look at the Link Closely:** Scam links are designed to look close to the real thing but contain subtle errors. A link like...
royalmail-redirection-fees.com
 or a shortened address from an unknown sender, like bit.ly/package-update – that's a guaranteed scam.
- **Never Share Verification Codes:** If someone asks you to forward a 6-digit verification code sent to your phone, **stop**. Doing so gives them the exact key they need to hijack your WhatsApp account or online banking.



I hope this helps take the stress out of your mobile notifications. If you've received a message you're unsure about, or if you want to make sure your personal or business accounts are tightly locked down, feel free to catch me for a chat!

Lucy Standbridge | Iris Web Media | iriswebmedia.co.uk

Iris.

WEB MEDIA

Lucy Standbridge

Founder

📞 07367 856169

✉️ lucy@iriswebmedia.co.uk

🌐 iriswebmedia.co.uk

Want to know more about staying safe online?

The National Cyber Security Centre provides a wide range of advice and information for organisations, businesses and the public. They also run an online reporting system for suspicious phone numbers, email addresses and websites. Find them at **NCSC.gov.uk**.





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www.stmarysmeppershall.org.uk ✝ facebook.com/stmarysmeppershall



Rector: The Reverend Veronica Goodman

01462 339962 – ronigoodman@gmail.com – usual day off Monday

Churchwardens:

Chris Valentine 01462 815971 John Archer

PCC Secretary:

Anne Parsons 01462 813333 Email: annie10639@gmail.com

A Message From St Mary's...

You might like to know that there are some big changes ahead in our Diocese.

Firstly we look forward to welcoming the Rt Revd Andrew Rumsey to be the next Bishop of St Albans. His Installation at St Albans Cathedral will take place on Saturday 19 September. If interested in what that service is like, why not join the online livestream?

Bishop Richard the Bishop of Bedford has announced that, having received the consent of both HM the King and the Archbishop of Canterbury, he will be retiring at the end of the year... expressing regret that he and Bishop Andrew will not be working together for longer. Bishop Richard asks for our prayers as he prepares to move on.

Welcome now to August and September and to the Summer Holidays. I wonder if you have a summer holiday - and if you do what you have planned?

Hopefully some time to slow down, to rest and relax, to be refreshed and revitalised - time to enjoy family and friends - and maybe, if you are lucky enough, to explore and enjoy either a favourite part of God's world - or a place that you have never explored before. One year when our children were small, we had very little money for a holiday - so we looked around for all the things that we had always meant to do just around where we lived, all the places we had meant to visit. We divided them into wet days and dry days, and cheap and expensive days - and we kept ourselves wonderfully occupied and entertained for that whole summer and beyond.

When I think about all our young people for whom this is moving up or moving on time - I think maybe it is also a good time for us all to pause and take stock, and to make new resolutions, find new hopes and dreams and visions to take with us into the Autumn.

I explored this with the children reflecting on the year that has passed - here are some of the reflections...

Of course we are going to need to take some things with me from today and yesterday! I have some bad memories - things I got wrong – and I think that I might choose to learn from them and then leave them behind so I can start again tomorrow. I also have some really happy memories of things I did well

- things I liked doing - and of course I will choose to take them with me into tomorrow.

There were some times that I was sad last year - I will learn from them if I can - but then I think I will leave those behind. There were some people that I didn't really get on with last year - a few arguments - Perhaps I can forgive "old enemies" and let them start again just the same as I want to.

I made lots of good friends last year too - I think I will take their love and friendship into tomorrow - perhaps I will be able to keep in touch... but I will look forward to making new friends as well.

I learned lots of things last year and I practised new skills - I think I will need them in the future so I will take them with me!

And then I have got some hopes and dreams for my life - some things I would like to do and to be - I think I had better take those with me - don't you? Then, I think I am ready for tomorrow.

But I forgot one thing

I forgot to ask God to be with me - of course He will anyway because He loves me so much - but He does like me to think about Him and to thank Him when things are going well and to ask Him for help when things are a bit difficult...

I wonder what joys and what challenges lie ahead!

I think, young or old, it is a good time to pause and ponder!

Wishing you a great summer.

God bless you.

With love, Rector Roni

Church Events In August and September

Usual Pattern of Services

Sundays	11.00am	Morning Worship every Sunday Holy Communion: 2 nd and 4 th Sundays
Every Wednesday	10.00am	Holy Communion in the Rectory
Church open to visit	10.00-4.00	Private prayer, quiet time – the church is open.
Online services:	9.00am	Morning Prayer using 24-7's Lectio 365 App 7-days-a-week
	9.00pm	Night Prayer/Compline from the C. of E. Daily Prayer App, 7-days-a-week

Find us on Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/stmarysmeppershall/>

Find us on our website: <https://www.stmarysmeppershall.org.uk/>

Find us on YouTube:
<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCRjDLGAy8GI6afkO8iALYOA>

Please note '9and9' continues daily on our Facebook page.

Forthcoming Services and Events

Come and experience the warm welcome and friendly community of St Mary's, your beautiful village church ☺ We hope to see you soon.

30

August 2 nd	11am. Morning Worship Cafe Style
August 5th	9.45am. Holy Communion in the Rectory
August 9th	11am. Holy Communion
August 12th	9.45am. Holy Communion in the Rectory
August 16th	11am Morning Worship
August 19th	9.45am. Holy Communion in the Rectory
August 23rd	11am Holy Communion
August 26th	9.45am. Holy Communion in the Rectory
August 30th.	10.30 am Benefice Communion St Mary's Meppershall
September 2nd	9.45am. Holy Communion in the Rectory
September 6th	11am. Morning Worship Cafe Style
September 9th	9.45am. Holy Communion in the Rectory
September 13th	11am. Holy Communion with Junior Church
September 16th	9.45am. Holy Communion in the Rectory
September 20th	11am. Morning Worship
September 23rd	9.45am. Holy Communion in the Rectory
September 27th	11am Holy Communion
September 30th	9.45am. Holy Communion in the Rectory

St Mary's Meppershall Junior Church

Join us on the 2nd and 4th Sunday of each month.
Call Gillian for more information on 07778 449051.

Junior Church Team

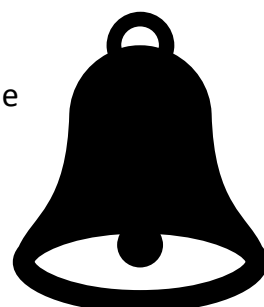


News From The Tower

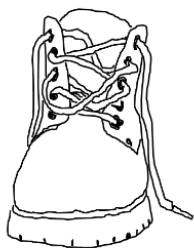
Want to try something new? Why not try bellringing!

Interested? Come along to a practice on a Thursday at 7.30pm. Let me know you're coming on 07778 449051.

Gill Marshall-Davies, Tower Captain



Meppershall Second Sunday Strollers



August and September are busy with several special walking options! We would love to see you on one of these outings...

Sunday 9th August

On Sunday 9th August we plan a local loop from Meppershall, past All Saints Shillington (the “church on the hill” in the vale south of our village), out towards Pirton on the big open fields and back to Meppershall past Chibley Farm.

Meeting at the church gate in Meppershall at 2PM, this is a hike of around 10KM (6 miles). Those wishing to save some of the miles and do a shorter distance can also join at All Saints Church (at around 2.50PM). We aim to be back at Meppershall by 4.45PM.

Sunday 13th September – Men’s Mental Health Walk

Sunday 10th September is world suicide prevention day, and our September hike marks this awareness initiative with a Men’s Mental Health Walk. We hope to see all of our regular hikers (men and women!) and anyone who wants to join us. Walking and talking has been found to be a great way for people who may feel the pressure of stress, anxiety or isolation, to find people to chat with. We are grateful that this walk has been arranged in partnership with Alistair Strathern MP and his team.

With a 2PM start as usual at the church gate, we will hike to St Michael’s Shefford via Meppershall Village Hall (join there if you prefer, at 2.10PM), Crackle Hill, All Saints Campton, Campton Plantation and Shefford Hardwicke Farm - aiming to arrive at St Michael’s Shefford (around 5KM from Meppershall Village Hall) by 4PM, where there will be refreshments, facilities and further time to chat and reflect on the importance of mental health support. Some of us will then walk back up to Meppershall, another 3KM ish.

Many people don’t realise that suicide is the most common cause of death for men under 50 in this country. Let’s reach out to each other and chat – sharing, caring and offering a positive ear to the people around us. Sometimes it’s just about asking, “How are you?”

Saturday 12th September – The Annual Bedfordshire & Hertfordshire Bike and Hike!

This regular fixture in the village calendar sees the village team raising money for Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire Historic Churches Trust. Each year the trust arranges for as many churches in the region as possible to be open for visiting cyclists and walkers to clock up their visits and get sponsored for the number they visit. Whether you are a church-goer or not, this is a wonderful community activity and a great opportunity to relish the beautiful church buildings at the heart of our villages and towns across Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire.

Many people don’t realise that local churches are paid for by local people, who cover their upkeep through donations. There is almost no government money. There is almost no money from “The Church of England” – and local donations are never enough these days. So charities like the Beds & Herts Historic Churches Trust have a crucial role to play, including recent contributions to Meppershall’s parish church renovations. So.... (turn over to find out how you can help!!!!)

Please consider being a biker, hiker and fundraiser – we can put you in contact with the team if you email us here at mepp.messenger@gmail.com, or contact the church (see details in the church pages of this magazine). It is such fun!

Or just consider sponsoring us, at: <https://www.justgiving.com/page/meppershall26>



Sponsored Bike 'n Hike
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For more information and all documents:



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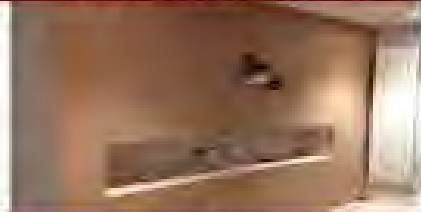


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Crossword Solution For July

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M	U	F	T	I		C	A	M	E	O		T	O	E
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S	S	T		R	O	D	E	O		S	P	A	L	T





CAKE CAFE

Homemade Cakes / Cookies / Traybakes

Tea / Coffee / Squash / Hot Chocolate



Saturday 8th August

9.00am to 12:00pm

Meppershall Village Hall

Homemade cake donations needed to support the cake café

If you would like to donate a homemade cake, please bring your cakes to the Village Hall on Friday 7th August between 5:15pm and 6pm - or on Saturday.

Please do not put your cakes in any containers that you would like returned as we cannot guarantee you will get them back.

Please put a note with your cake if you have used nuts.

This is a community event & proceeds will go to running similar community events at Meppershall Village Hall.



CAKE CAFE

Homemade Cakes / Cookies / Traybakes

Tea / Coffee / Squash / Hot Chocolate



Saturday 19th September

9.00am to 12:00pm

Meppershall Village Hall

Homemade cake donations needed to support the cake café

If you would like to donate a homemade cake, please bring your cakes to the Village Hall on Friday 18th September between 5:15pm and 6pm - or on Saturday.

Please do not put your cakes in any containers that you would like returned as we cannot guarantee you will get them back.

Please put a note with your cake if you have used nuts.

This is a community event & proceeds will go to running similar community events at Meppershall Village Hall.

Phew What A Scorcher! by Donna Cameron

Donna's Garden Designs | 07833 670934

Wow! It has been hot and the plants are feeling it! Some plants seem to thrive in these conditions whilst others have struggled. For example, it seems to have been an amazing year for Roses yet if Hydrangeas lack water they really suffer.

The longer these hot spells last, the more we turn to thinking of having to use drought tolerant plants in our garden. This doesn't mean we are limited, we just have to rethink a bit, especially in areas of the garden that have no shade.

Grasses can withstand dry spells and there are some really interesting varieties. They create movement and are very low maintenance. Providing a backbone in winter they are comfortable with frosts settling on them. Cut back some varieties in February and away they grow next season.

One of my favourites is *Stipa tenuissima* - Ponytail Grass. It grows to about 40cm and sways about in the breeze. Paired with *Echinacea*, *Lavender* and *Alliums* it looks lovely for a coastal feel or prairie style garden.

Stipa gigantea is exactly that! Gigantic! It's a real statement grass for a centre piece with lovely grass seed heads like oats that tower above the flower beds in the most architectural and majestic way.

For a nautical feel, try *Festuca glauca* – a muted blue grass that pairs well with *Lavender* or *Eringium*.

Quaking grass - an annual - does just that, with its seed heads nodding in the breeze. Although an annual, it self seeds and is lovely in flower arrangements for a dainty feel. *Agapanthus* is great for late summer colour and seems to thrive on neglect, as does *Lavender*. Once plants are established and have got their roots down, they do amazingly and seem to withstand a lot of the heat.

What to do if you notice things are wilting? Water either early morning and evening - not in the midday sun, and respecting the hosepipe ban (watering cans are okay!)

Install water butts and use wherever possible, recycle washing up water for the plants.

Applying a layer of mulch really helps keep moisture in, especially in a damp bed.

Try not to worry about lawns they always tend to bounce back after rainfall.

Ensure you have an area of shade in your garden by having a pergola with climbing plants, planting trees or using a parasol. Using greenery and plants rather than too much hard landscaping really lowers the temperatures of your gardens. Most of all, enjoy your gardens and the use of outdoor space.



For inspiration in dry gardens visit Beth Chattos garden or RHS Hyde Hall.

Happy Holidays!

Donna x

Donna x

Jobs In the Garden For August and September	
Prune Wisteria	Net Blackberries
Dead head flowers	Take softwood cuttings of Penstemons
Water regularly	Collect seed
Keep Camellias and Rhododendrons well watered	Harvest sweetcorn
Trim Lavender	Cut out fruited canes of Raspberries
Prune Rambling Roses	Keep ponds topped up
Sow hardy annuals	Lift and pot up runners from Strawberries
Mow area of wildflower meadows	Sit back and enjoy your hard work

Trugs And Trowels (Campton Gardening Club) – August and September

As Britain is adjusting to increasingly extreme weather you find yourself with a battle on your hands to save your garden. Gardeners are urged not to brave new plantings, it is the time to protect what is already growing. The temperature records have been repeatedly beaten this year and for gardeners this changes everything. The real danger of the hot weather is the heat and the lack of moisture. What looks healthy one minute can suddenly look limp and tired. Pots dry out in hours and struggle to establish in a drought situation and shortage of rain. All new plants are already struggling with transplant shock, heat, a lack of moisture while trying to build strong roots. What is the answer?

Take action early morning and in the evenings avoiding the brutal heat of the day.

- 1) Attention to all small baskets and pots using a watering can direct to soil and roots, do not wet leaves and flowers and ideally place in a shaded spot to help stop pots from heating up and drying out the soil. Evening watering may stay damp overnight leading to fungal problems especially in crowded planting.
- 2) Mulch where possible, it is a life saver to retain moisture and adding organic matter will shield the soil assisting to slow evaporation and keep the root zone cooler. If you are tempted to fill gaps resulting from plant loss it demands constant care, deep watering, shade cloths and moisture checks as plants are vulnerable to drying out of soil. Do not plant for instant beauty during a heat wave, the one thing it needs is protection.
- 3) There are many products on the market to help with this which could mean installing solar irrigation to help overcome extreme drought.
- 4) Consider planters with reservoirs - frost resistant, light weight and made of recycled material with a 2 litre reservoir for indoor and outdoor use. Multifunctional

sprayers enable you to target areas which saves water, minimises waste and comes with 4 settings for delicate planting, seedlings and also fast settings for beds and borders.

5) Whitewash the inside of your greenhouse if you have plants in the ground and wet hard standings to create moisture in the air, ideally remove all plants if possible.

We are facing a hose pipe ban so I urge you to reuse bath water, washing up water and salvage any rain water. Have a wonderful summer and enjoy your outdoor space which you have worked so hard on this year.

Please join us at Gardening club on 3rd August at 7:30pm in Campton Village Hall, everyone welcome.

Maryika Wilding. Tel.01462 851729.

Take A Trip From Meppershall: Wanderbus Excursions

2026 EXCURSIONS — 4th THURSDAY OF THE MONTH		
Call 0300-123-3023 or e mail: thewanderbus@gmail.com for more info or to book your seat.		
Full payment 21 days before departure. A cheque to Wanderbus, 5 The Pastures, Upper Stondon, Beds SG16 6QB or a bank transfer (Account details to be advised later). Cancellations 14 days before excursion date. Refunds will be discretionary.		
DATE	DESTINATIONS & ENTRANCE FEE (Correct at time of print)	BUS FARE
27th Aug	Hertford Castle & Old Town Free entry	Bus Fare £10.00
		Pick up 11.00/11.30
		a. 12.30 d. 15.30
Following the Christmas Trip several passengers requested a summer trip to the Castle grounds and time to wander the streets of the old town.		
24th Sept	Mountfichet Castle, Stanstead Mountfichet, Essex £16.00 OAP / £18.00 Adult p.p.	Bus Fare £12.50
		Pick up 10.00/10.30
		a. 11.30 d. 15.30
Castle & Norman Village of 1066. Explore the Castle and roam through the Norman village hidden behind the walls and explore the many houses. Experience the ambience of an ancient bygone lifestyle including the House on the Hill Museum. Restaurant serving a wide range of food.		
22nd Oct	Battle of Britain Bunker & Exhibition Centre, Uxbridge £12.50 / £10.00 OAPs p.p.	Bus Fare £12.50
		Pick up 10.00/10.30
		a. 11.45 d. 15.35
The Battle of Britain Bunker housed RAF Fighter Command's No 11 Group Operations Room throughout the Second World War. The bunker is a series of rooms on two levels some 60feet underground. The Operations Room with its large scale maps, squadron display boards, , balloon and weather states, is exactly how it was when Winston Churchill visited on 15th Sept. 1940. NB There are 76 steps into the Bunker but no rush! Cafe and Exhibion centre		
26th Nov	Blue Diamond Garden Centre, Wyton, Cambs. Free entry	Bus Fare £10.00
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Do You Need a Poem for a Funeral or Celebration of Life?

 Carolyn's Celebrations and Memorials of Life and Love
Tips from Your Local Celebrant

Why poems matter

When we gather to honour someone, whether at a funeral or a celebration of life, we create a moment of shared meaning. Poems help shape that moment. They offer stillness, comfort, and emotional clarity when words can feel hard to find. UK funeral research, (Co-op Funeralcare and SunLife) shows that around 70–80% of families include a poem or reading in their ceremony. It's one of the most chosen elements after music and personal tributes.

What poems bring to a ceremony

A poem can act as a gentle anchor. It gives people a chance to breathe, settle, and connect with the person being remembered. Poems often express emotions perfectly, feelings that feel too big or messed up to say aloud. They can be reflective, spiritual, or modern, creating different atmospheres. Families choose poems that feel soft and reassuring, especially when grief is fresh. Others choose uplifting or modern pieces for celebrations of life where the tone is more joyful.

Popular poems families choose

Over time, certain poems have become favourites because they speak simply and beautifully to love, loss, and memory. Families often choose pieces like *Desiderata* (Max Ehrman), *The Summer Day* (Mary Oliver), *Funeral* (Rupi Kaur), *God's Garden* (Melissa Shreve) or *I Have Not Gone* (unknown). These poems have familiar, gentle, and emotionally safe qualities people seek when planning a ceremony.

Writing your own poem

Often families write their own poems or short tributes. These pieces do not need to be perfect. A simple, honest poem can be one of the most memorable parts of a ceremony. The grandchildren from a family I worked with wrote a poem about their grandfather and read it together. I can remember the feelings to this day.

Do you need a poem?

Simple answer? No; you don't *need* a poem. Some families prefer music, silence, or a spoken tribute. But if you're unsure, or looking for a way to create connection, a poem can be perfect. It doesn't have to be famous or long. It just has to feel right for the person you're honouring; perhaps their favourite poem or author. There are no rules.

In Summary

Poems are a beautiful option for a funeral or celebration of life. They make breathing space in a ceremony, with a new voice from the person reading it. It can be a very moving experience. If you need advice on a poem, I would be pleased to help you.

Get in Touch

I offer a free ceremony audit a simple, friendly way to explore your plans and get some advice. I am based in Meppershall, so can meet up.

If this has inspired you, please contact me, Carolyn Holmes, on 07305 002858, email ritesofw@gmail.com, or via <https://www.ritesofway.com/contact-celebrant>



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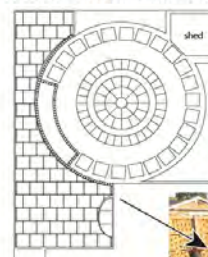
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TIMETABLE - VALID FROM 2nd September 2024

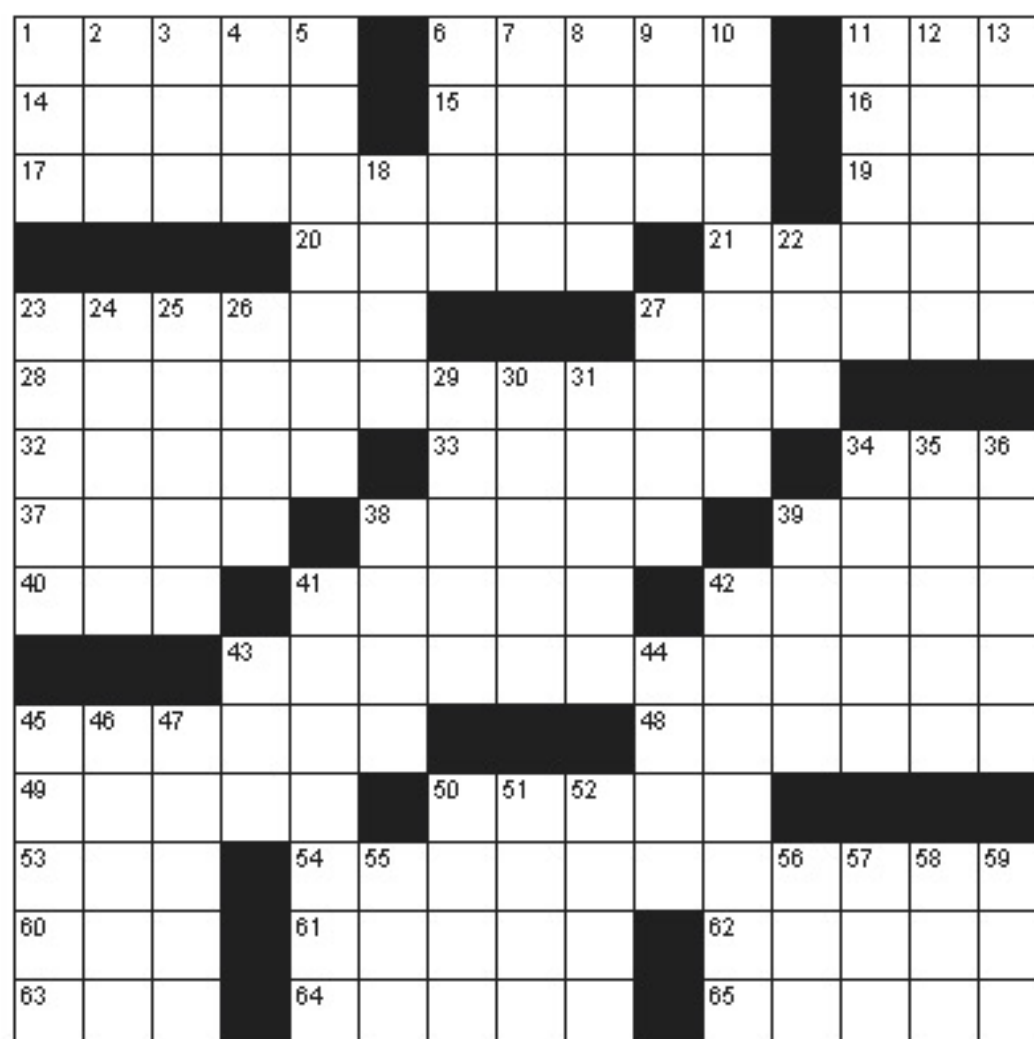
Time/Days have changed – please check & new W16 Stevenage

As from 2 nd September 2024		“Stops at all Bus Stops on Request”	
W2 BEDFORD	- 2nd Wednesday of Month	OUT	RETURN
Shefford Rd. / High St., / Rectory Rd. - all stops		09.00 / 09.02	RR
Interchange Retail Park		09.40	12.15
St Pauls Square / Corn Exchange		09.55	12.00
W3 BIGGLESWADE	- Every Monday	OUT	RETURN
Rectory Rd / High Street, / Shefford Rd., - all Stops		09.36 / 09.40	RR
Biggleswade – A1 Retail Park		10.10	12.15
Station / Town Centre - pick up Church St. Bus Stop o/s Asda		10.15	12.10
W5 BIGGLESWADE - A1 Retail Park/Town Centre - Every Friday		OUT	RETURN
Rectory Rd / High St. / Shefford Rd – all stops		10.00 / 10.03	RR
Biggleswade A1 Retail Park / Station & Town Centre		10.25 / 10.30	
Church St bus stop o/s Asda / A1 Retail Park			12.10 / 12.15
W6A CAMBRIDGE	- 4TH Wednesday of Month	OUT	RETURN
Shefford Rd. / High St. / Rectory Rd. - all stops		08.48 / 08.52	RR
Cambridge, Downing St. – o/s John Lewis		10.15	14.10
W8A ST ALBANS	- 1st Wednesday of Month		
Shefford Rd. / High St. / Rectory Rd. – all stops		08.48 / 08.52	RR
St Peters St. o/s Santander Bank / pickup opp Bank Stop 13		10.15	14.00
W10 ST NEOTS	- 2nd Thursday of Month	OUT	RETURN
Rectory Rd. / High Street, / Shefford Rd. All stops		09.18 / 09.20	RR
St Neots - Market Place		10.15	12.20
W11 MILTON KEYNES	- 3rd Thursday of Month	OUT	RETURN
Rectory Rd. / High St., / Shefford Rd. - all stops		09.08 / 09.10	RR
MK - Midsummer Blvd / M&S (Stop J3) / o/s John Lewis Stop E3		10.10	13.15
W12 HITCHIN	- Every Tuesday	OUT	RETURN
Shefford Rd. / High Street / Rectory Rd - All stops		09.18 / 09.20	RR
Bancroft Stop D		10.05	
Bancroft Stop G (Outside Oliver Bonas)			12.10
W14 WELWYN GARDEN CITY	- 1st Thursday of Month	OUT	RETURN
Rectory Rd. / High Street, All stops		09.14	RR
Shefford Road, All stops		09.16	RR
WGC Central Bus Station		10.00	12.15
W16 STEVENAGE	- 3rd Wednesday of each Month		
Rectory Rd. / High St. / Shefford Rd. – all Stops		09.34 / 09.37	RR
Tesco Extra, The Forum Centre (opp Station)		10.05	12.10
M&S, Roaring Meg Retail Park		10.10	12.05

EXCURSIONS – 4TH Thursday of Month – call For Details – 0300-123-3023

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**ACROSS**

1. Underground enclosures
6. Wide
11. Increase by several
14. Preen
15. 1000 kilograms
16. Perish
17. A charge of misconduct in office
19. A single thing
20. Dissolute men in fashionable society
21. Receded
23. Sacred text of Zoroastrianism
27. Contemptuous smiles
28. Judge incorrectly
32. A petty officer on a merchant ship
33. With rapid movements
34. Automobile
37. Ancient Middle-eastern kingdom

38. Strong sexual desires
39. A card game
40. Beam of light
41. A friction match with a large head
42. Pinfish
43. Garish
45. A form of self-defense
48. Shot from a gun
49. Poet T.S. _____
50. Not a credit
53. Harsh noise
54. Clarification
60. Wander aimlessly
61. Respond
62. Actor Clark _____
63. S
64. The undersides of footwear
65. Afterpiece in ancient Roman theater

DOWN

1. Consumer Price Index
2. A superior limb
3. Very Important Person
4. Scottish for "Uncle"
5. Austere
6. British Thermal Unit
7. City in Italy
8. 1 1 1 1
9. Advice columnist _____ Landers
10. An easing of tensions between nations
11. Sun-dried brick
12. Restaurant
13. Feats
18. Bituminous fuel
22. Stinging insect
23. A deep yellow color
24. A stringed instrument
25. An analytic literary composition
26. A film of impurities
27. Pouches
29. To give rise to
30. Distressed
31. Not now

34. A Christmas song
35. Debate
36. A shelter for birds
38. Entice
39. Be unsuccessful
41. Shackles
42. A tax or levy
43. Chinese revolutionary
44. Cited previously (used in footnotes)
45. A type of anchor
46. Secret identity
47. Skins of fruit
50. Twofold
51. Latin for „Behold!“
52. Small amounts
55. Constellation "The Lion"
56. A levy imposed by the government
57. Anagram of "Bio"
58. Not young
59. Born

Useful Contact Details In Meppershall

DEFIBRILLATORS – outside School, Village Hall and Budgens

DOCTORS, DENTISTS, PHARMACIES

NHS Direct 111

Dr Baxter & Partners

Shefford Health Centre, Robert Lucas Drive, Shefford SG17 5FS

Appointments 01462 810034

General queries, prescriptions etc. 01462 818620

Lower Stondon GP Practice

109 Station Rd Lower Stondon SG16 6JJ 01462 850305

Shefford Dental Practice, 34 High St Shefford 01462 814020

Shefford Dental Clinic, 99 Hitchin Rd Shefford 01462 648465

Jardines Chemist, 7 High St Shefford 01462 813283

Shefford Pharmacy, Health Centre, Robert Lucas Drive 01462 818633

Police:

Emergency 999, non-emergency 101

Hospitals

Bedford Hospital 01234 355122

Lister Hospital, Stevenage 01438 314333

Luton and Dunstable Hospital 01582 491166

Utilities

Gas Emergency 0800 111999

Anglian Water 03457 145145

Electrical (power cuts, overhead cable down etc) 0800 3163105

(Or 105 from a landline)

Central Beds Council

0300 300 8301

CBC Councillor for Gravenhurst, Meppershall, Shillington:

Blake Stephenson blake.stephenson@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk

0300 300 8526

Highways Emergencies 0300 300 8000

Other enquiries: <https://www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/contact>

Parish Council Clerk

Alessandra Marabese clerk@meppershall-pc.gov.uk

Member of Parliament:

Alistair Strathern MP

C/O House of Commons, London, SW1A 0AA

020 7219 6004

alistair.strathern.mp@parliament.uk

St Marys Church

Rev. Veronica Goodman, The Rectory, Church Road 01462 339962

See full details in the church pages of The Meppershall Messenger

Library: High St Shefford

0300 300 8067

Tuesday – Friday 9am – 6pm, Saturday 9am – 4pm, closed Monday & Sunday

Whitbread Wanderbus service

Stephanie Kirby

thewanderbus@gmail.com

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Samuel Whitbread Academy, Clifton

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Redborne Upper School, Ampthill

01525 404462

Henlow Academy

01462 813733

Robert Bloomfield, Shefford

01462 628800

Meppershall Academy, High Street

01462 813293

Meppershall Pre-School Village Hall, Ella Carey-Butler

07816 357159

meppershallps@gmail.com

Meppershall Munchkins, Melanie Choonos

meppershallmunchkins@gmail.com

Organisations

The Players @ STMA, Karen Mitchell

01462 816336

Meppershall Good Neighbours (GNOMES)

07760 793921

Meppershall Brownies

Meppershallbrownies@gmail.com

Shefford Guides, Angie Griffiths

07957 462519

Shefford Scout Group (Beavers, Cubs, Scouts, Explorers)

Kathy Georgiou

01462 629313

HATS Drama Group, Linda Winfield

lin.winfield5@gmail.com

Meppershall Village Hall Trustees

trustees@meppershallvillagehall.co.uk

Meppershall Village Hall Bookings

bookings@meppershallvillagehall.co.uk

Bookings Tel.

07485 102727

The Team And Collation Dates

CONTRIBUTIONS

The Editor welcomes contributions to the Messenger, whether as letters, articles or notices. Contributions should preferably be as attachments to e-mail (address below) but handwritten contributions may be submitted. Contributions should run to not more than one A5 page (except by prior arrangement) and should ideally be received by the Editor not later than the 12th of the month, for publication at the end of that month (or by the later deadline date publicised by email or Facebook). Contributions received after the deadline may be held over.

DISCLAIMER

The Editor reserves the right to omit or alter any advertisement or article and to change the content, format or issue date of the magazine without prior notice. The Editor cannot be held responsible for the factual correctness of, or for any libellous comment or statement made in any advertisement, article or other contribution published in this magazine. Every effort will be made to avoid any deliberate attempt to mislead or otherwise cause harm or damage to any person or persons by any advertisement, article or any other contribution published in this magazine.

THE TEAM

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PRODUCTION DATES AND DEADLINES

The table below shows the dates for collation of the magazine. The collation team generally meets at 2.30pm in the Village Hall on the collation date. Printing takes place 7 days prior to collation. The deadline for submissions is two Fridays prior to collation. Please look out for updates and alterations to usual plans when occasionally necessary. Can you spare some time to help produce the magazine? We would love to have you on the team! Use the contacts above to find out more.

Issue date	Collation date	Issue date	Collation date
October 2026	Tues 29 th September	May 2027	Tues 27 th April
November 2026	Tues 27 th October	June 2027	Tues 1 st June
Dec-Jan 2026-7	Tues 1 st December	July 2027	Tues 29 th June
February 2027	Tues 26 th January	Aug-Sept 2027	Tues 27 th July
March 2027	Tues 23 rd February	October 2027	Tues 28 th September
April 2027	Tues 30 th March	November 2027	Tues 26 th October
Contact John Thompson to confirm arrangements (contact information above).			