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Editorial by James Read



Not only is it October already but our ever-industrious friends at Meppershall Parish Council are now thinking about the Christmas Tree Lights Switch-On Event. This has been a fabulous night for the last couple of years and it requires a fair amount of organising, so if you think you might want to help out by volunteering as a marshal to keep things safe and clear for everyone, check out the info at the end of this issue (p35).

We include more tributes to Jean Holden in this issue, who died in July and was buried on 4th September. The village turned out in large numbers to honour her passing and it was a reminder of the characters like Jean upon whose shoulders the village is built. Best wishes to Simon and Jeremy.

Autumn is bringing a new lease of life to our village pub (p8). We all wish Leah and team every success as they take on the challenges and rewards of life in a business at the very heart of the community. We speak for everyone when we say a big 'Thank You' for everything you are doing to keep the village heart beating at The Sugar Loaf. Our cover honours your hard work and the support we know everyone will give.

The Cake Café at Meppershall Village Hall, Saturday 3rd October, is a fundraiser for 1st Meppershall Brownies (p15). Please go along and show your support. Well done to them for including a Food Bank donation point alongside their cakes – and they also have a tombola so you might win something to take home!

We love the Table Top Sale idea which takes place in the village hall next month (p10). The village hall team are now taking bookings for tables – where you can go along and sell your wares and have some fun in the run-up to Christmas. It promises to be a great day whether you are a seller, buyer or browser. These are the moments that bring the whole village together - why not be part of it?

The Queen would have been proud of all the wonderful village projects and enterprise represented in this magazine. In her Christmas message, 1996, she said, "I often draw strength from meeting ordinary people doing extraordinary things: volunteers, carers, community organizers and good neighbours, unsung heroes whose quiet dedication makes them special." Four years after her death (September, 2022), we are all being given a chance to look back and remember special moments in our lives linked to The Queen, through the nation's Queen Elizabeth II Digital Memorial (p23). We are a fortunate generation who have lived through the era of our country's greatest monarch. What will you remember about her, what memories can you share? The initiative is freely available and you can participate via the website.

I'll end this month's message with best wishes to everyone starting new things this autumn, perhaps after exam results over the summer. Central Bedfordshire schools together delivered improvements in the overall GCSE 'Attainment 8' score – which measures a pupil's average grades across eight key school subjects. This increased to 44.5 (from 43.6 in 2025, against a national average of around 46.0). Likewise, 42.4% of students achieved grade 5 or above in English and mathematics (41.5% last year, national average 46%). Schools are probably the most important part of our local communities – well done to everyone working to make the next generation ready for the world of the future and building the values that future communities will live by.

Letters

Dear Editors,

Many thanks to local people for attending the Meppershall Village Hall AGM in August.

The Trustees are confirmed as:

Gordon Cordes (Chair)

Mandie Edwards

Jayne Walbridge

Leo Wright

To contact the Trustees please email trustees@meppershallvillagehall.co.uk

Together with the Trustees, the committee includes: Andy Cannon, Barry Gatenby, Roger Osborne and Ray Wood who have been invaluable in supporting the hall's projects.

We are also grateful for the professional support provided by David Birch as Treasurer - thank you David for all you do.

The solar project is almost complete and there has already been some benefit from the record temperatures over the summer.

With the support of the Parish Council, 4 recycled plastic (maintenance free) outside benches have been ordered - 2 with wheelchair access - to replace some of the current benches which have suffered weather damage over the years.

Volunteers to help manage the hall are always needed - please come forward if you are willing to help.

Jayne Walbridge

Dear Editors,

A big thank you to everyone who supported Meppershall's team in the 2026 Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire Historic Churches Trust Bike and Hike event.

We do not yet know our fundraising total, but James and Jim Read covered 60KM, a team comprising David Bartlet, Jayne Walbridge and Miriam Read covered around 20KM nearer to the village and – in addition – Trevor Wilkinson, is, as always, very likely to have beaten everyone in his outstanding efforts!

Our online sponsorship is just shy of £500 and if anyone still wishes to show their support you can still donate at <https://www.justgiving.com/page/meppershall26>.

Special thanks to the many people who welcomed visitors from across the two counties with drinks and cakes – Amanda, Alex, Lesley, Colette, Sue – your volunteering was highly appreciated! And thanks Miriam for organising!

James Read on behalf of Team Meppershall 2026

Central Bedfordshire Council: Your Responses To The Consultation

The last edition of the village magazine included information on how to make your voice heard in the CBC consultation process for selection of development sites to go into the new CBC Local Plan. Among the potential sites being considered were vast areas that would link our village – currently surrounded by fields – to the A507 at Shefford, to the A600 at Henlow Camp and to Campton adjoining Polehanger Wood across the River Hit.

Individual members of the community, community organisations, Meppershall Parish Council and our CBC Councillor Blake Stephenson worked very hard to ensure local people were aware and informed about the consultation. Several public meetings at the village hall raised a healthy debate about the importance of local opinion and – inspired by a similar walk-around in Shillington – the Meppershall Second Sunday Strollers arranged a walking tour of some of the proposed sites which Blake attended.

The community response was very strong. 428 letters were hand delivered to CBC, voicing deep concerns about many of these potential sites. Based on community feedback, it seems other people used the website response option heavily as well.

Environmental concerns being ignored?

It is easy for large-scale development to overwhelm local infrastructure, scar rural landscapes and destroy natural wildlife habitats. We sit in the National Character Area known as the Bedfordshire and Cambridgeshire Claylands in the place where they transition between the Bedfordshire Greensand Ridge and the Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. In this sensitive area, hedgerows, thickets, and small wooded areas sit next to large open arable areas and create a unique landscape. Wise decisions for the future require careful democratic decision making. But many planning decisions are creating concern about the approaches being taken.

Already, our local sewage infrastructure is overrun. The overflow of Shillington Sewage Treatment Works pours into the River Hit near Lower Gravenhurst, at a spot where cuckoos as well as otters and kingfisher can be found – an indication of the sensitive and special habitat linked to water quality and good fish stocks in the river. Already this year, that overflow has spilled sewage into the River Hit for a total of 184 hours, with discharge occurring on 24 separate days of 2026 alone.

And yet this issue is ignored by developers. Their responses to CBC, appealing the refusal of an application to build over 100 houses west of Hurricane Avenue, Lower Stondon (CB/25/01015/OUT) are trying to persuade CBC that everything is fine.

In a separate planning debate, an area is being considered for almost 300 houses between Henlow Camp and Arlesey in open fields along a long-distance rural footpath route (CB/26/01764/SCN). The council was recently asked on behalf of the developer whether an environmental impact assessment was needed. “No,” said the council – it might be needed if 1,000 houses were to be built... it seems this is just another 300 houses in just another 50 acres of arable fields. Something is very broken in the heart of planning policy. Local voices are now more important than ever.



Heartfelt 
THANKS
 TO OUR VOLUNTEERS!



Meppershall Litter Pick Update



A massive **thank you** to everyone who came out to help with our village litter pick on Saturday 5th September!

We had a fantastic turnout, and all your hard work has made such a huge difference in cleaning up our village. It is shocking how much rubbish ends up in the bushes and paths, but thanks to your dedication and energy, we collected a huge pile of bags and left the village looking wonderful.

We truly appreciate every single one of you for giving up your time to protect our local wildlife and keep our environment clean.

A special thanks to Kim and the Social Club who opened early for the volunteers to grab a post litter pick drink and bacon roll. Finally, thanks to the Village Hall for letting us fill up their bins.



Get involved and become one of our Adopt a Street Champions. Commit to looking after a specific area or street; keep it clean, tidy and free from litter, monitor and report any issues. Equipment and training provided. Signs installed to publicise adopted areas.

For more info or to sign up contact us at: lovemeppershall@meppershall.org

A Tribute To Jean Holden, 1939-2026. By Elsie Lawrence



I first met Jean in 1965 in Meppershall as she stepped out of a taxi. She looked very beautiful and the height of fashion. We soon palled up and remained friends ever since.

She settled in Meppershall with her husband Eddie Holden and they soon had 2 sons, Jeremy and Simon. Jean loved music, especially Country and Western and Jean and I joined the club in Stevenage, where she came from.

Jean raised funds for charity by having garden parties and also coffee mornings. She also volunteered at the Charity Shop in Shefford for many years.

Jean was into classic cars and had exhibitions at many of Meppershall village fetes and was very popular with enthusiasts.

Well done Jean, you will be very sadly missed by your family and all who knew you.

Farewell Jean, you will never be forgotten and thank you for all of the lovely memories.

Elsie and family

Here is an enduring photograph, captured by son Jeremy. Jean's funeral on 4th September was a poignant village moment, with a large number of friends and neighbours attending. She will be greatly missed.



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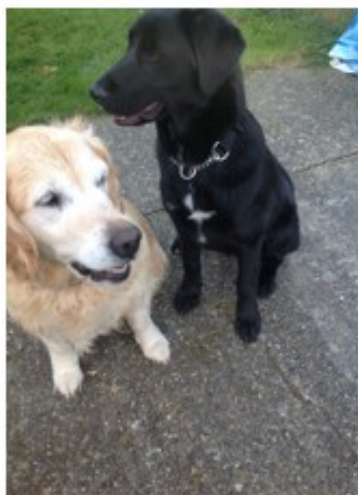
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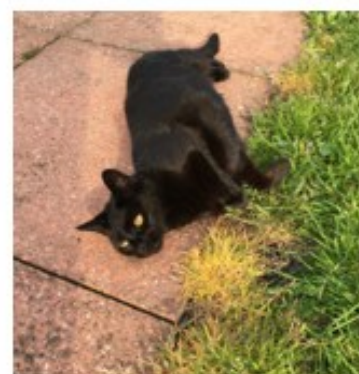
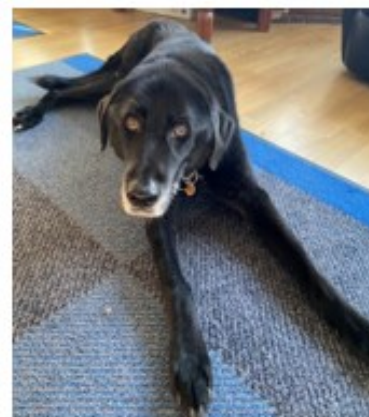
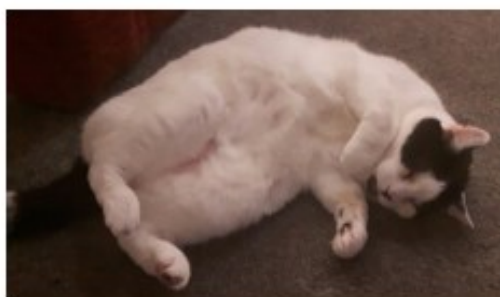
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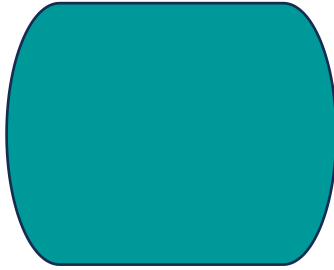
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Campton and Chicksands Remembers

You are invited to view our community created Cascading Poppy Drape

at All Saints Church, Campton

Saturday 7th November

2pm to 4pm bells rung from 1:30pm to 2pm

Tea, Coffee and Cake will be served (payment by cash or card)

Raffle

Funds raised will go to the Poppy Appeal and All Saints Church

Commemorating all those lost in conflict and honouring those who have served, and those who continue to serve their country.

Our drape has been made possible due to the efforts of the local community creating the poppies, with financial contribution from community members, Campton & Chicksands Parish Council and The Village Hall Committee, and the support of All Saints Church for hosting the installation. Thank you to all.



Your Community. Your Pub. Your Space.

Updates from The Sugar Loaf

It's probably about time we said hello properly, rather than during one of our visits while rushing around!

First of all, we'd like to say a huge ****thank you****. From day one, you've made us feel part of this absolutely incredible community. There's so much joy, friendship and, most importantly, love — not only for one another, but for *your Sugar Loaf*.

It's already been quite a journey, and we've loved seeing the pub grow and change along the way.

So far we've brought you...

Food... a pool table (the boss is still the only one to have 7-balled anyone here! 😊)
Live music... A bouncy castle... BBQs... Entertainers... Themed parties... Bingo...
Karaoke... Sky Sports... TNT Sports... ***and we're only getting started!*** Oktoberfest, Halloween, Murder Mystery, Christmas Parties, New Year's Eve all coming up!

Before we move on to the next chapter and take The Sugar Loaf to even greater things, we want to thank *every single one of you* for the support and love you've shown — not just to us, but to our entire team.

People say pubs aren't easy — and believe us, they certainly have their challenges! But when you have a community like this behind you, every challenge, every decision and every moment becomes worthwhile.

And we're loving every minute of it.

Meppershall, please never change. Keep being yourselves, keep supporting one another and, most importantly, ***let's take our pub to a whole new level together!***

Watch this space... there's plenty more to come!

Our phones are always on, our doors are always open and there will always be a warm welcome waiting for you.

**** It's your community. Your pub. Your space. ❤️ ****

With love,

Matt, Leah & the entire Sugar Loaf team

Leahstock@cheersandbeerspubs.co.uk. 07939 161351.

Kitchen opening times:

****Thursday:**** 5pm–9pm
****Friday:**** 5pm–9pm
****Saturday:**** 3pm–10pm
****Sunday:**** 12pm–6pm

Pub opening times:

****Monday:**** 3pm–7pm
****Tuesday–Thursday:**** 2pm–11pm
****Friday:**** 2pm–12am
****Saturday:**** 12pm–11pm
****Sunday:**** 12pm–9pm

Meppershall Parish Council – Announcement

Wry Close Allotment Charges

Notice is hereby given of allotment charges effective from 1st October 2027

Plot Size	Meppershall Residents and pre-October 2018 tenants irrespective of residency	Non Meppershall Residents
Category A < 120m ²	£17.01	£18.90
Category B 121-160m ²	£22.68	£25.20
Category C 161-200m ²	£28.35	£31.50
Category D 201-240m ²	£34.02	£37.80
Category E 241-280m ²	£40.68	£45.20
Category F 281-320m ²	£45.36	£50.40
Plot Deposit	£65.00	£65.00

Meppershall residents receive a 10% discount on non-resident prices.

Interested in taking on an allotment plot?

Contact the Clerk on: clerk@meppershall-pc.gov.uk



The modern world moves at a dizzying pace, keeping us glued to screens and tethered to tight schedules. If you are looking for an antidote to the hustle of daily life, the answer might be waiting for you in a small patch of earth. Taking up an allotment is more than just a gardening hobby—it is a life-changing investment in your health, community, and peace of mind.

You do not need to be an expert to start. The gardening community is notoriously generous with advice, and nature is an excellent teacher. By taking up an allotment, you are not just growing vegetables—you are cultivating a healthier, happier, and more grounded version of yourself.

Why have an allotment?

- ✓ Home-grown food is cheaper
- ✓ Grow your own for more flavour and freshness
- ✓ Enjoy the outdoor life and fresh air
- ✓ Stay healthy and take gentle exercise
- ✓ Simply relax and enjoy
- ✓ Build new relationships and friendships



Everybody is welcome. No special skills are required and remember there are no gardening mistakes, only experiments



Autumn

TABLETOP SALE

and cake café

**PLEASE COME ALONG TO SUPPORT
THE VILLAGE HALL ON**

**SATURDAY, 14 NOVEMBER 2026
FROM 1200-1600 HOURS**

**IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO SECURE A TABLE,
(WHICH WILL BE PROVIDED), TO SELL YOUR ITEMS
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JAYNE ON 07791414901 BEFORE 31.10.26



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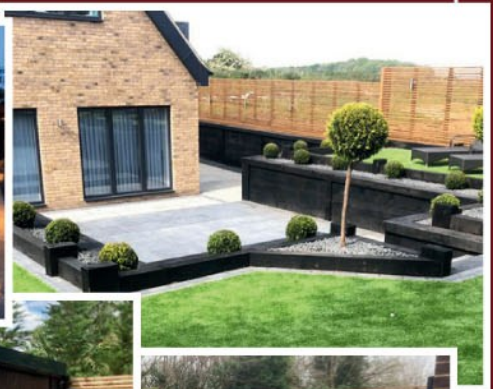
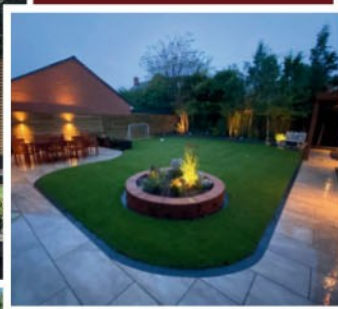
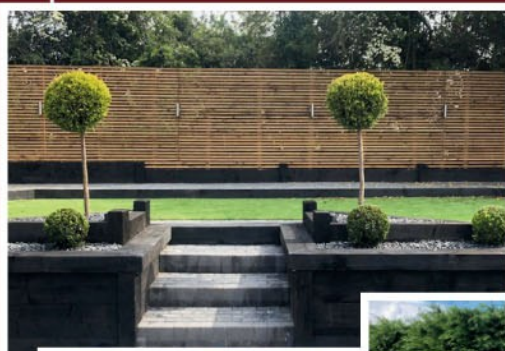
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Whitbread Wanderbus Celebrates 1st Birthday Of Our Newest Bus.

In 2025, the Whitbread Wanderbus Committee took the significant decision to replace the organisation's oldest vehicle with a new **Mercedes-Benz Sprinter featuring the EVM Cityline low-entry conversion**. This investment marked an important step in ensuring that our community transport service remains reliable, accessible, and fit for purpose for the many passengers who depend on it.



Securing the funding for this new bus required many months of dedicated effort. The Committee reached out to charitable trusts, Town and Parish Councils, and community-focused organisations across Bedfordshire and neighbouring counties. Their generous support made it possible for Wanderbus to continue delivering high-quality transport services to rural communities—services that remain entirely dependent on the commitment of our volunteer drivers and committee members, who give their time freely to keep the buses running.

We extend our **deepest gratitude** again to the organisations whose contributions made the purchase of this our newest vehicle possible:

Barton-Le-Clay Parish Council; Bedford & Luton Community Fund; Bedfordshire Freemasons; Biggleswade & Langford Windfarm Community Fund; Clifton Parish Council; Gale Family Charity Trust; Gravenhurst Parish Council; Meppershall Parish Council; Meppershall Social Club; Robert Lucas Family Trust; Shefford Town Council; Shillington Parish Council; Southill & Broom Parish Council; Stondon Parish Council; Stotfold Town Council; The Connolly Foundation; and The Wixamtree Trust.



Their support ensures that Wanderbus can continue to serve the rural villages and communities that rely on us for essential access to shops, services, and social opportunities.

The Whitbread Wanderbus remains open to everyone. We accept **National Concessionary Travel Passes** and **cash fares** on all services. Under the Government's **£3 Fare Cap Scheme**, no single cash journey costs more than £3. While card payments are not yet available, we are actively working to introduce this option in the near future.

Our mission continues to be simple and vital: providing accessible, friendly, community-focused transport services for the people of rural Bedfordshire and neighbouring counties.

John Thompson Treasurer, Whitbread Wanderbus



Updates From Our MP, Alistair Strathern

While Parliament may not have been sitting over August, it provided a fantastic chance to get out and about back home across our community. As always, the best part of my job is hearing from you, so a big thank you to everyone in Meppershall who took the time to speak to me this summer. From our Q&A events and pub discussion forums to conversations out on the doorstep and at a fantastic range of summer events, recess provided a great chance to get out and hear from you.

I was delighted to confirm we have secured Neighborhood Health Centre funding for Shefford Health Centre after raising the issue on the floor of the House of Commons in Parliament, privately over several meetings with Ministers, and with a whole host of NHS bodies locally. This will make a big difference in helping to expand the facilities on site and the services, and crucially appointments, available as a result. I'm now working closely with the NHS, Health Centre, and others locally to ensure we make the most of this investment.

With extra appointments secured at Langford, momentum finally building behind expanding Lower Stondon GPs, and £27m+ investment at Lister Hospital, slowly but surely, we're building the local NHS our community deserves. There is plenty more to do though so please do continue to share your experiences and priorities with me.

As an active champion of investing in nature, I'm delighted that a new National Forest for Central Bedfordshire has been confirmed. This will build off the Forest of Marston Vale to create a woodland the size of the Isle of Wight right on our doorstep. It won't just be a natural asset for all our community to cherish either, it's an important investment in long neglected rewilding.

The increase in extreme weather events highlights the reality of climate change is already affecting our community in the here and now. From pushing for action on nature-based flood interventions, to successfully campaigning for mandatory solar panels on new builds and investment in renewables, rest assured I will continue to champion environmental action as our MP.

We also need to invest in a far more resilient water system to handle the growing extremes. I was pleased to see the Government take up my call to support farmers to build more on-site reservoirs, but we need this to be followed up with tougher action to force our water companies to invest in fixing leaks and building out more storage across the region.

In the meantime, though, I am looking forward to spending the Autumn months walking through our beautiful countryside and hopefully enjoying some cooler weather!

My inbox is always open at alistair.strathern.mp@parliament.uk.



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Meppershall Gnomes

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email us gnomes.secretary@meppershall.org



Gnomes Coffee Mornings.

The 3RD Tuesday of the Month.

Social Area of our Village Hall, 10.30 to 12 noon.

Our next Coffee Mornings are Tuesday 20th October and 17th November.

Everyone welcome – meet friends whilst having a cuppa and a chat.

If you would like a lift, do give us a call a few days before.

Thank You!

Following our recent request for additional drivers
we are pleased to welcome our new volunteers.

We are here to answer your call -

Monday to Friday 9am to 5pm - every week. (Not inc Bank Holidays)

These are some of the things we can help you with:

Collecting prescriptions, Occasional shopping,
Transport to health appointments, Befriending and Small urgent DIY jobs.

If you are not sure if we can help, do give us a call.

If we cannot support you we can offer advice on how to get the help you need.

Please give us as much notice as possible. Thank you.



07760 793921

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
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
<i>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</i>		
26th Nov	Blue Diamond Garden Centre, Wyton, Cambs. Free entry	Bus Fare £10.00
		Pick up 11.00/11.30
		a. 12.15 d. 15.30
<i>Discover an extensive range of high-quality plants, seasonal décor, and elegant gifting, all thoughtfully curated to elevate home and garden living. With the addition of a new restaurant, it's a destination perfect for those who appreciate style, comfort and a touch of indulgence.</i>		





Meppershall FC

Starting the season, Meppershall FC played EDP FC at home on Sunday 20th September. There's a fair indication of the opposition, once you know what EDP stands for: Elite Development Programme – a sports development programme developing football talent across Hertfordshire, Bedfordshire and surrounding areas.

Meppershall won by some margin (7-1) and if social media posts are anything to go by, the spirits of the Meppershall team were high. The village is wishing their team an enjoyable and rewarding 2026-7 season, whatever it may bring.

Sunday morning matches are supported by Meppershall Social Club which opens to sell refreshments during the game. Keep up with Meppershall FC news and fixtures on Facebook and Instagram.

Congratulations and appreciation goes to Hing Opticians who became a proud sponsor of Meppershall FC alongside ASM Windows over the summer.

Here's to a great season ahead.

Brownies
TAKE OVER



We will also be collecting items for the local food bank. Such as tinned or dried goods, toiletries or long life items.

CAKE CAFE!

Homemade Cakes / Cookies / Traybakes

Tea / Coffee / Squash / Hot Chocolate

Saturday 3rd October

9.00am to 12pm



Meppershall Village Hall

We will also be having a Tombola on the morning. This event will to help raise vital money for 1st Meppershall Brownies, helping to pay for all sort of resources, venue hire, badges and more.

Card machine available but Cash payments preferred for tombola

If you would like to donate a homemade cake, please bring your cakes to the Village Hall on Friday 2nd October between 5pm and 6pm.

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

Please put a note with your cake IF YOU HAVE USED NUTS.

Any questions please contact Gemma (Tawny Owl) on 07968529282

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Meppershall Social Club

October at the Club

As we head into autumn, there's plenty happening at **Meppershall Social Club**, with something for everyone to enjoy. We'd also like to say a huge **thank you to everyone who came along to the Meppershall Eats event**. We had a fantastic turnout and it was wonderful to see so many new faces enjoying the evening with us.



We hope to see you all again soon!

Opening Times

- **Monday:** 6pm – 10pm
- **Tuesday:** 6pm – 11pm
- **Wednesday:** 6pm – 11pm
- **Thursday:** 6pm – 11pm
- **Friday:** 5pm-11.30pm
- **Saturday:** 2pm – 11.30pm
- **Sunday:** 1.30pm – 10:00pm

October Events

Halloween Activity Afternoon – Saturday 31st October

Get ready for some Halloween fun! We will have a **Halloween Activity Afternoon** for the children, plus a **Trick or Treat stop** where youngsters can pop in and pick up some sweets. Full details can be found on the **Meppershall Social Club Facebook page** or on the posters displayed in the Club.

Music Quiz – Saturday 17th October

Fancy yourself a music buff? Join us for our **Music Quiz** at **8pm**. Entry is just **£2 per person**, with teams of up to **6 people** and a fantastic **£50 prize** up for grabs!

General knowledge Quiz – Sunday 11th October

Teams of up to 6, just **£1 per person**, with proceeds split **50/50 between the winners and our chosen charities**.

60s / 70s Night – Sunday 25th October

With a prize for the best outfit!

And don't forget our **weekly Friday Bingo** – a great way to start the weekend!

For all the latest news, events and updates, visit meppershallsocialclub.co.uk and follow our **Facebook page**.

Come along, bring your friends and support your local club – everyone is welcome!

MUSIC QUIZ!



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The Facebook Cleanup: Is Your Personal Info Open to the World? By Lucy Standbridge

Most of us set up our Facebook accounts years ago (or your relative did it for you!). Over time, as we added friends, joined local groups, and updated our details, the platform made dozens of quiet changes to how privacy settings work.

Many people are accidentally sharing their mobile number, email address, date of birth, or home town with total strangers without realising it.

Taking 10 minutes to do a quick privacy check makes sure you stay connected with friends and family, while keeping your private data out of the eyes of scammers and advertisers.

1. Lock Down the "About" Section

Your profile's "About" tab is the first place scammers look when gathering information for identity theft or targeted phishing messages.

- **Check Your Contact Info:** Head to your profile, tap **Edit Profile**, and scroll down to **Edit Your About Info**. Look at your phone number, email address, and address.
- **Change the Audience:** Next to each piece of info, you will see a small audience icon (a globe for Public, two silhouettes for Friends, or a padlock for Only Me). Change your phone number and email address to **Only Me**. You can still use them to log in, but no one visiting your profile can see them.
- **Hide Your Birth Year:** Friends love seeing birthday notifications, but your full date of birth is a key piece of data used in identity fraud. Set your birth day and month to **Friends**, and change the birth year to **Only Me**.

2. Control Who Can Find You

Even if your profile looks locked down, Facebook's default search settings might allow strangers to track you down using your private details.

- Open Facebook **Settings & Privacy**, then tap **Settings**.
- Scroll to **Audience and Visibility** and select **How people find and contact you**.
- Change "*Who can look you up using the email address or phone number you provided?*" from Everyone to **Friends** or **Only Me**.
- Turn off the setting that allows external search engines (like Google) to link directly to your Facebook profile.

3. Audit Your Past Posts

Years ago, you might have shared holiday photos, check-ins, or personal updates set to "Public" by accident. You do not need to scroll back through years of history to fix them one by one.

- In the **Audience and Visibility** settings menu, tap **Posts**.
- Select **Limit who can see past posts**.
- Confirming this will automatically change all previous public posts on your timeline so they are visible only to your confirmed Friends list.

Three Quick Habits for Everyday Privacy

- **Beware of "Viral" Quizzes:** Those fun questionnaires asking for your first pet's name to see what EastEnders character you are, or quizzes digging into "the history of your mother's maiden name", are often designed to get answers to common banking security questions.
- **Review Tagged Photos:** Under your settings, turn on **Review posts you're tagged in before the post appears on your profile**. This prevents awkward or overly revealing photos from appearing on your timeline without your permission.
- **Clear Old Logins:** Check **Password and Security** to see a list of devices currently logged into your account. If you spot an old phone, tablet, or unfamiliar location, log it out immediately.

Tech Jargon Buster

- **Public vs Friends:** A "Public" setting means literally anyone on the internet can view that detail, even if they do not have a Facebook account. "Friends" restricts the view strictly to people you have accepted as a friend.

A quick digital tidy-up every few months keeps your social media experience stress-free and secure. If you ever want a hand reviewing your account settings or making sure your privacy is tightly secured, feel free to catch me for a chat!

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



Toddington Poetry Society In Luton

Do you enjoy reading or writing poetry?



You will find a warm welcome at our meetings. We are a group of poetry enthusiasts who meet once a month to read and listen to a wide variety of poems, usually on a particular theme. Some people read their own poems. Others bring poems of their choice to read and discuss. You are equally welcome just to come and listen. From time to time we invite guest poets and speakers.

Toddington Poetry Society (TPS) was originally formed at the Sow and Pigs Pub in Toddington (and the Society is now approaching its 50th Anniversary) – but for many years we have met in Luton.

We meet from 8-10pm on the second Tuesday of each month at:

Luton Irish Forum, 102 Hitchin Road Luton, LU2 0ES

This is a comfortable modern venue, easily accessible, with free parking on site. We have an interval break around 9pm, and free coffee and tea are provided.

Attendance at your first meeting is free. Thereafter there is a small charge each time to cover the hire of the room. If you plan to attend, we can meet you at the door if you let us know.

Themes we have explored in the last two years, include 'Afro-Caribbean Poetry,' 'Poetry and the Environment,' 'Wood,' 'American Poets,' 'December Traditions,' and many more.

Programme, Autumn 2026

In September...

We have already enjoyed a very interesting evening on how the theme of 'Work' appears in many different ways in poetry.

October 13th...

Visiting Poet: Hazera Forth. Hazera is a writer of Bangladeshi heritage. Living in Bedford, she regularly performs her poetry at Luton's Hat Factory, and co-organises the North Bedfordshire Stanza.

Her theme for after the break is '**Science and Nature**'.

November 10th...

'Colours': a theme evening led by a member of the Committee.

December 8th...

'A Cold Coming we had of it': Winter Journeys

A theme evening led by a member of the Committee.

For more information, email tps-in-luton@hotmail.com

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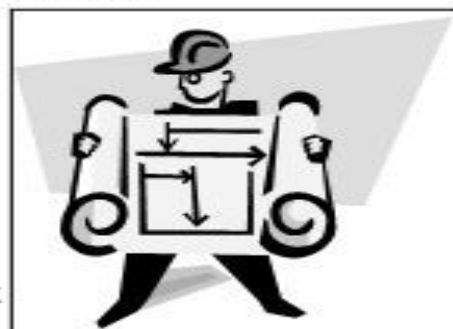
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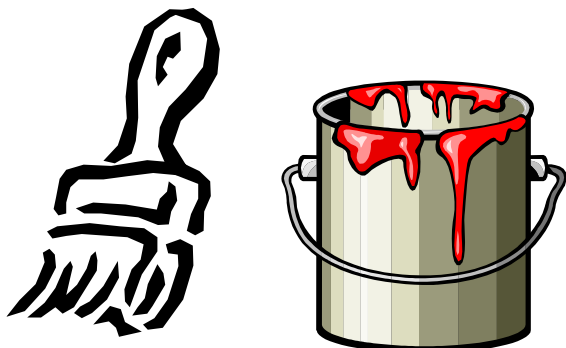
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It's probably about time we said hello properly rather than on visits while rushing around!

First of all, we would like to thank you all for making us from day one feel part of your absolutely incredible community. You are all full of joy, happiness and most importantly full of love for not just one another but for your Sugar Loaf.

It's been such a journey so far, which has seen many transformations...

- | | | |
|--|---|--|
|  Food Menu! |  BBQ! |  Sky sports |
|  Pool Table!
<i>(The boss is still the only one to have 7 balled anyone here yet!)</i> |  Entertainers! |  TNT Sport |
|  Live music! |  Themed parties! | |
|  Bouncy Castle! |  Bingo! | |
| |  Karaoke! | |

Before we move on to the next stage and take your Sugar Loaf to even greater things, we'd like to take the opportunity to thank every single one of you for the support and love you have shown, not just to us, but to the entire team.

Pubs, people say, are not easy... believe me. With a handful of them, they have challenges, but this one, with all of this fantastic community behind it, makes every challenge, every decision and every moment worthwhile and we are loving every minute of it!

Meppershall, please never change! Keep being yourselves and most importantly, let's take the Pub to a whole new level... watch this space!

It's your community, your pub and your space, at any point... our phones are always on, our doors are always open and our arms are wide open for you all too.

With love,

Matt, Leah and the entire team! ❤️



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Thursday	2pm - 11pm
Friday	2pm - 12am
Saturday	12pm - 11pm
Sunday	12pm - 9pm



EVENTS

We welcome life events!

Get in touch for our event packages including buffet menus.



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Wedding Law Reform 2026: What It Could Mean for Local Couples

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

Weddings have changed so much over the years, yet the laws that govern how we marry in England and Wales are still based on rules written back in 1836. Currently, a legal marriage must take place inside a permanently fixed structure, such as a register office or a council-licensed venue. For couples, who love nature or want a ceremony that feels truly personal, these rules can feel limiting.

But changes are afoot. On 24th September 2026, the Ministry of Justice closed a major public consultation called *"Tying the Knot"*, which explored how wedding laws could be modernised. The proposed changes are exciting, and they could make weddings far more flexible, meaningful, and affordable for local couples.

One of the biggest ideas being considered is shifting the legal licence away from the building, a licensed venue and placing it onto the person conducting the ceremony, the officiant/ celebrant.

If this reform goes ahead, couples could marry almost anywhere that is dignified and has the landowner's permission- a woodland clearing, a favourite beach, your own garden, or a beautiful spot in the countryside. For many people in our village and surrounding areas, this opens the door to weddings that feel more personal, more relaxed, and more connected to nature.

The proposed changes could also make weddings more affordable. Currently, couples wanting a personalised celebrant ceremony must book a separate legal appointment at the register office. These "2+2" appointments often book up months in advance and add extra costs and admin. Under the new system, a celebrant/officiant could conduct one single legal ceremony, removing the need for duplicate bookings and expensive licensed venues.

The proposed reform potentially creates freedom it gives couples over music, readings, and rituals. Current civil ceremony rules restrict anything with religious or spiritual wording, even in popular songs. Many couples today come from blended cultural or faith backgrounds, and they want to honour those traditions. The new framework would allow meaningful rituals such as handfasting, unity candles, or symbolic gift exchanges, all of which help create a ceremony that truly reflects the couple's story.

After the consultation closes, it may take several years for Parliament to review the findings and introduce new legislation. Realistically, we may not see the new system in place until 2028 or beyond.

But even while we wait, couples can still plan a ceremony that feels personal, joyful, and completely their own. As a local celebrant, I believe every wedding should bring out the very best in a couple and involve their families, and even their pets.

Get in Touch

You can reach me, **Carolyn Holmes**, on **07305 002858**, at ritesofw@gmail.com, or via my website: <https://www.ritesofway.com/>. Book a free ceremony audit to explore ideas and shape a celebration that truly reflects you. You can also find details about my dog naming, memorial, wedding, and vow renewal ceremonies on my website.

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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...

Let me begin by saying a huge thank you to those who raised money for Beds and Herts Historic Churches Trust and for our Church through this year's "Bike and Hike" - and to those who staffed the Church for welcome and refreshments for the walkers and cyclists.

And so October is here and although it is still quite warm it definitely feels like British weather is back and we are thankful for the rain. Hopefully there will be enough rain to refill our reservoirs. I think my garden is a bit confused though, as the grape hyacinths by my door that normally appear in the spring are poking up through the gravel!

October is Breast Cancer Awareness Month and on October 2nd, 10.30- 12.00 noon, we will hold a Macmillan Coffee morning at All Saints Campton. Please do come. Together let's help to raise vital funds for Macmillan Cancer Support to help people living with cancer.

Sunday 4th October is our Annual Village Pet Blessing Service - which falls this year exactly on the Feast of St Francis of Assisi who was so well known for his love of animals amongst other things. So, Sunday 4th October 11am is bring your pet to church day! If you feel your pet is not suited to a service in church, or if you want to remember a pet from the past, just bring a photo. Hope to see you there!

Also in October Revd Christopher Strong is continuing to lead a Bible Study for us and others in St Michael's Church on Tuesdays at 2pm. The study on 6th October is 'The Spirit Influences' based on Ephesians 5:15-21, which is the last in the Holy Spirit series, but you are welcome to attend even if you have missed the others. After that, we plan a further study on 'Prayers of the New Testament' leading up to Advent.

9th - 15th October is Baby Loss Awareness Week and, if you would like to be there, the 10.30am Communion Service on Friday 9th in St Michael's in Shefford will include prayers around this theme.

Our Annual Service of Special Memories - when we especially invite the families of those for whom we have held funerals or burials in the past year will be on Wednesday 4th November. If you would like to come - please do. Or if you would like someone remembered at that service lists will be available for names in the back of the Church

from Sunday 18th October. Please do write clearly! After that service the Church will be open as usual until about 5pm - but with opportunity to pause and remember and to light a candle if you wish to.

Please be aware that you get an extra hour in bed on 25th October. It's lovely to be early for Church - but maybe not quite that early!

Have a great October.

With love, Rector Roni

Church Events In October

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.

2nd October	10.30- 12.00. Coffee and Chat in All Saints Campton- raising funds for Macmillan
4th October	11.00am. Village Pet Blessing Service
7th October	9.45am. Holy Communion in the Rectory
9th October	10.30am in St Michael's Shefford. Baby Loss Service
11th October	11.00am. Holy Communion with Junior Church
14th October	Sorry - no midweek Communion
18th October	11.00am Morning Worship
21st October	9.45am. Holy Communion in the Rectory
25 th October	11.00am. Holy Communion with Junior Church. (End of British Summer Time!). Bible Sunday or the Last Sunday after Trinity
28th October	9.45am. Holy Communion in the Rectory
1st November	11.00am. Morning Worship Cafe Church - All Saints Day
4th November	9.45am. Special Memories Service in the church.

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

St Mary's Meppershall Junior Church

Junior Church returned from the summer break on Sunday 13 September for a Nature Walk in the church grounds. The children and adults enjoyed exploring God's creation!

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

This month we plan a walk in Maulden Wood, meeting at 2PM on Sunday 11th October at the junction of Green End and Clophill Road, Maulden, with parking on Clophill Hill Road. The meeting location postcode is M45 2AD. Maulden Wood is a beautiful 400-acre expanse of mixed woodland, heath and meadow, owned by Forestry England and conserved and managed by The Greensand Trust (which also manages the nearby Clophill Lakes Nature Reserve).

Our hike will be around 3-4 miles, exploring the autumn colour and looping through the wood's various landscapes, back at the parking spot by 4PM. For more information contact James and Miriam (857836) or find us on Facebook (@meppershallstrollers).

While Meppershall has Polehanger Wood to enjoy, Maulden Wood is much larger and, with Rowney Warren, Chicksands Wood, Campton Plantation and Whitehall Woods (Whitehall Plantation) is one of the great ways to find autumn colour and treelined walks this season in our local area. Come along and get to know it!



Last month we had a very good 'Men's Mental Health Walk' and it included very nice treats at St Michael's church in Shefford.

Thank you to everyone who came along and especially to the kind people (Stephen and Jim) who served up the tea and cakes!



Meppershall And The Queen Elizabeth Digital Memorial

How do you remember Queen Elizabeth? People across the UK, the Commonwealth and beyond are invited to map their memories of Britain's longest reigning monarch.

The Queen Elizabeth Digital Memorial is a new website to map the key moments in the life and reign of Queen Elizabeth, as a permanent record for future generations.

Across the country, people are being asked to share the stories that will make the digital memorial truly representative of Queen Elizabeth's extraordinary global legacy.

Led by the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government as well as The Cabinet Office, this initiative aims to celebrate the life and reign of Queen Elizabeth, with voices from every corner of the UK and beyond.

We can all contribute to this unique public history archive, and every memory submitted makes the memorial richer and more representative of Queen Elizabeth's global legacy — helping to create a unique historic record preserved for future generations. The organisers will be publishing selections of these memories throughout the year.

Why not find out more, and consider sharing and mapping your memories of Queen Elizabeth, by visiting www.queenelizabeth.com.



Could Your Pension Become an Inheritance Tax Problem?

Personal finance information from Paul Savuto

Why the rules are changing – and why it may be time to look at your retirement and estate plans together.

For many years, pensions have been one of the most tax-efficient ways of saving for retirement. But pensions have also become an increasingly important part of family wealth – particularly for people who have built up substantial pension pots and don't expect to spend all of the money during their lifetime.



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That is about to become more important. From **6 April 2027**, the Government plans to bring most unused pension funds and certain pension death benefits within the scope of **Inheritance Tax (IHT)**. For some families, this could significantly change the way they think about their pension.

Why were pensions so attractive for passing wealth?

Historically, a pension could be an extremely useful estate-planning tool. Someone who had sufficient other assets to fund their lifestyle could leave their pension invested rather than drawing it down. Depending on the circumstances, the pension could then pass to beneficiaries when they died, often without forming part of their estate for IHT purposes. This meant that some people deliberately spent other savings and investments first, while leaving their pension untouched.

The forthcoming changes mean that strategy needs to be reconsidered.

What is changing?

From April 2027, unused pension funds will generally be included when calculating the value of an individual's estate for IHT. That doesn't necessarily mean that 40% tax will automatically be deducted from the pension. The calculation depends on the overall estate, available allowances, exemptions and the way assets are ultimately distributed. However, someone who previously assumed that their £500,000, £750,000 or £1 million pension sat outside their estate may need to think again.

And this isn't just an issue for the very wealthy.

House prices, investments and pension savings have increased considerably over the years. A couple who own their home and have accumulated pensions and other investments can find that their estate is worth considerably more than they realise.

Does this mean I should take my pension now?

Not necessarily. This is probably the most important point.

It could be tempting to think: *"If my pension is going to be subject to IHT, I'll simply take the money out."* But withdrawing pension benefits can create a completely different tax problem. Once money is outside the pension, it becomes part of your personal estate anyway. If you take a taxable pension withdrawal, you could also pay Income Tax on it.

So moving money from a pension to a bank or investment account doesn't automatically remove it from an IHT calculation. In fact, for some people, taking money out unnecessarily could make their overall position worse.

What about the tax-free lump sum?

Most people can still take up to 25% of their pension benefits tax-free, subject to the applicable lump-sum allowances and their individual circumstances. But even here, there is no universal answer as to whether taking the money immediately is the right thing to do. For someone who needs the money to clear a mortgage, fund retirement or meet other expenditure, taking tax-free cash may make perfect sense. For someone who doesn't need it, leaving money within the pension and allowing it to remain invested may still be appropriate.

The important thing is to consider the pension as part of the **whole financial plan**, rather than making decisions based on one tax rule in isolation.

Don't forget the rest of your estate

Pensions are only one part of the IHT equation. Your estate could include:

- Your home and other property
- Bank and building society accounts
- ISAs and investment portfolios
- Business interests
- Certain gifts made during your lifetime
- Other assets

There are also important allowances and exemptions that can reduce an IHT liability.

For example, the **Nil Rate Band is currently £325,000 per person**, while qualifying married couples and civil partners may also benefit from transferable allowances and the Residence Nil Rate Band. In the right circumstances, this can mean a couple potentially passing a significant amount to their children without an IHT charge. However, the rules are complicated, and the position can vary considerably from one family to another.

Gifting isn't necessarily the answer either

Another common reaction to IHT is: *"I'll just give the money to my children."*

Gifting can certainly form part of an effective estate plan, but it isn't as simple as handing over a cheque and forgetting about it. The tax treatment depends on what is given, who receives it, whether the donor survives for seven years and, importantly, whether the donor genuinely gives up control and benefit from the asset. There can also be significant practical and family considerations when large sums are gifted.

So what should you do?

The forthcoming pension changes are a good reason to look at your **retirement planning and estate planning together**.

Consider:

1. How much do you actually need to fund your retirement?

Your pension isn't simply an investment pot – it is there to provide financial security for the rest of your life.

2. How much wealth might you leave behind?

Calculate your property, pensions, investments, savings and other assets rather than looking at each one separately.

3. Who do you want to benefit?

Your spouse, children, grandchildren or other beneficiaries may have different needs and circumstances.

4. Is your Will up to date?

Your Will is fundamental to estate planning, particularly where trusts or family assets are involved.

5. Have you reviewed your pension nominations?

Make sure your pension provider has your current beneficiary or expression-of-wish details. These should be reviewed following major life events and as part of your wider estate planning.

The bigger picture

The important message isn't that pensions are suddenly "bad" for inheritance planning. Far from it. Rather, the rules are changing and the old assumption that "*my pension is outside my estate, so I'll leave it until last*" may no longer be appropriate for everyone.

For many households, particularly those with substantial pensions alongside property and investments, **retirement planning, investment planning and inheritance planning now need to be considered together.**

A little forward planning could make a significant difference to both the income you enjoy during retirement and the amount your family ultimately receives.

This article is intended for general information and does not constitute personal financial or tax advice. Tax treatment depends on individual circumstances and legislation can change. Professional advice should be sought before making significant pension withdrawals, gifts or estate-planning decisions.

Gnome Sweet Gnome by Donna Cameron

Donna's Garden Designs | 07833 670934



Whilst carrying out a consultation at a garden the other day I noticed on the clients gate a sign reading 'Beware of the Gnomes!' Sure enough they were hidden around the garden in many forms! Bikini-clad, brides, fishing gnomes... You name it, they had one!

Love them or hate them they have adorned gardens for generations and it got me thinking, where did they originate from, and how did they make their homes in our gardens!?

They date back to Priapus who was a Greco-Roman God. He was God of fertility, livestock, vineyards and bees. Statues often adorned gardens in the hope of a bountiful harvest, some donning a large red pointy hat, as seen on gnomes today.

They had a resurgence in Germany, inspired by mining folk law, linked with the character name Genomos meaning 'Earth dweller'.

In 1847 Sir Charles Isham brought 21 of the little fellows to Britain to his estate, Lamport Hall in Northamptonshire. Only one survives today. Affectionately known as 'Lampy'! He is insured for one million pounds!

They became fashionable in gardens, although the RHS were not so fond of them and they have been banned at Chelsea (they apparently view them as vulgar, distracting from the planting schemes!) - although they have relaxed the rules a few times! Most recently a Mary Berry and David Beckham Gnome were displayed!

Some have escaped and retired to a Gnome Reserve in Bideford, Devon!

Would you allow one in your garden? **Donna x**

Jobs In the Garden For October	
Plant Spring bulbs	Cut back Perennials and divide
Tidy up garden	Move tender plants somewhere safe
Harvest Pumpkins for Halloween	Harvest apples, pears and grapes
Mow lawn for the last time and lay any turf	Prune climbing Roses
Trim hedges	Plant out spring cabbages
Collect seed from the garden	Enjoy the Autumn colours

Trugs And Trowels (Campton Gardening Club) – October

It seems like a long time since writing my last piece and haven't we had some extreme weather since then! Days when it has been too hot to venture, soil baked, plants stressed and lost to the elements, not to mention burnt lawns. As Summer closes we are starting to think about Autumn and garden recovery. S

Summer is a tough time for lawns; wear and tear from dogs, heat and playing games like football. So now in Autumn it's time for a little T.L.C.

This can include removing thatch, moss and weeds, aerating your lawn after a downpour, fixing patches and feeding with Autumn lawn care products - ideally organic. October is the last chance to sow grass seed and is the best time for laying turf but only if the hosepipe ban has ended.

Now is the perfect time to split perennial clumps and create free plants. There will also have been Summer casualties which will need replacing, for which we should consider more heat-tolerant planting for the future and look towards mediterranean species.

Now is also the time to replace summer bedding to give winter and spring bedding time to establish and get roots well down whilst the soil is warm. Look at lifting Cannas, Alliums and Dalias after the first frost. If you have not already done so, it is time to sow hardy annuals such as cornflowers, Nigella, Corn Cockle and Californian Poppy. Although these are annuals, they often self-seed.

Lots to get on with whilst still taking time to enjoy your garden! I look forward to seeing everyone on 12th October at 7:30pm at Campton village hall, a date change to the original garden club schedule, when we will welcome Charlie Sexton talking about the autumn slowdown and also bringing along many garden related gifts ideal for Xmas presents. Everyone welcome!

Maryika Wilding. Tel.01462 851729



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PROFESSOR ROBERT THOMAS

Professor Robert Thomas is a leading expert in cancer prevention and treatment, particularly on lifestyle and cancer research.

He will give a talk on **“Lifestyle diet and gut health after cancer”** at the Mid Beds Cancer Support Group.

Date & Time:

Saturday 10 October 2026, 11am

Venue:

Meppershall Village Hall, Walnut Tree Way, Meppershall, SG17 5AB

Via Zoom:

 <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/3348518015>

 Meeting ID: 334 851 8015  Password: cancertalk

For further information please contact:

✉ midbedscancersupport@survivingcancer.co.uk

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Meppershall Village Hall, Walnut Tree Way,
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**Do join us on
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We are always available to speak to individuals anytime.



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TIMETABLE - VALID FROM 2nd September 2024

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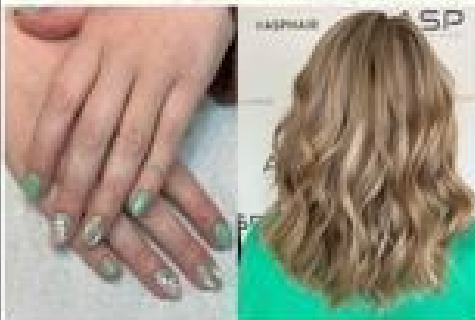
As from 2 nd September 2024		“Stops at all Bus Stops on Request”	
W2 BEDFORD	- 2nd Wednesday of Month	OUT	RETURN
Shefford Rd. / High St., / Rectory Rd. - all stops		09.00 / 09.02	RR
Interchange Retail Park		09.40	12.15
St Pauls Square / Corn Exchange		09.55	12.00
W3 BIGGLESWADE	- Every Monday	OUT	RETURN
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

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Meppershall's Christmas Tree Lights Switch on Festivities

Saturday 28 November 2026
at
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& Walnut Way

3pm - 7:30pm	Craft stalls
3pm - 5pm	FREE Children's craft activities
5pm - 5:30pm	Lights Switch On
5:30pm - 7:30pm	Santa's Grotto - Free gift to under 12's
5:30pm - 8pm	Food available
6pm - 8pm	Kids Karaoke
8pm - late	Social Club Entertainment



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for
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Christmas Tree Lights
Switch on Festivities

When: Saturday 28th November 2026

Time: 4:20pm to 5:45pm

No training needed just attendance at pre-event briefing.

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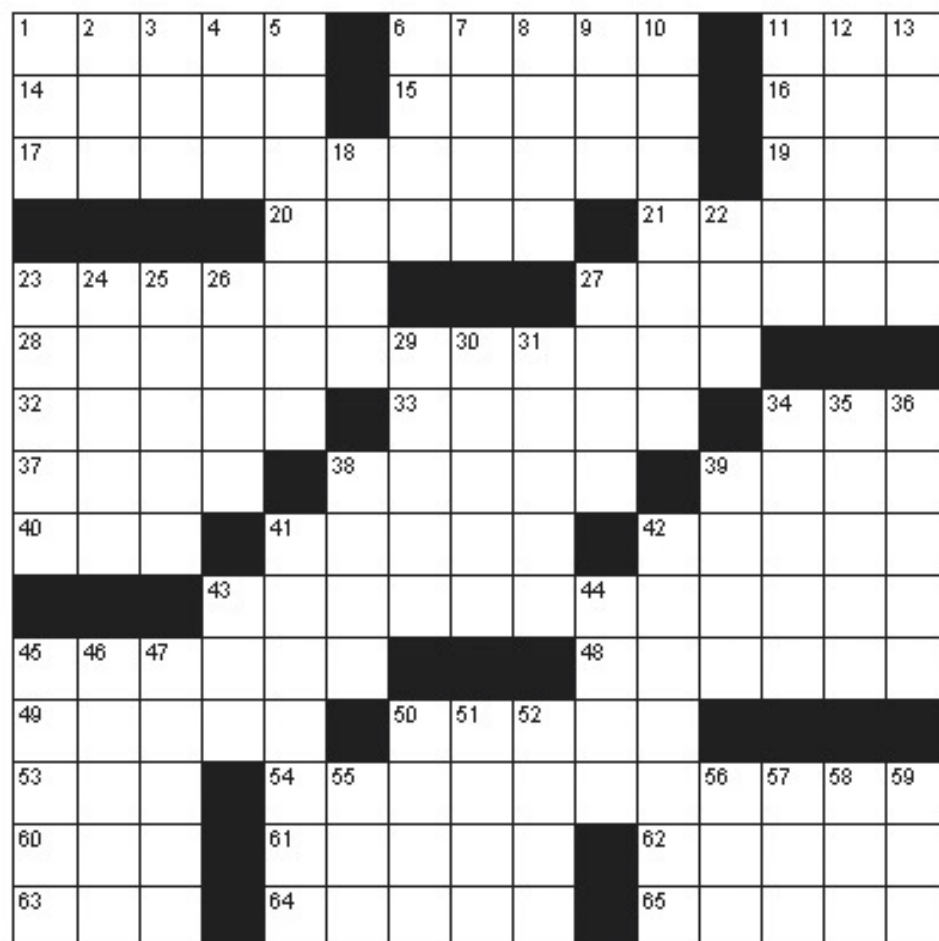
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Meppershall Pensioners Christmas Lunch

Thursday 17 December 2026
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1. A piece of hot glowing coal
6. People who get things done
11. Donkey
14. Tranquility
15. Result
16. A rebuke
17. Incentives
19. Untruth
20. Jagged
21. America has 50
23. Sixty-eight in Roman numerals
27. Showing favoritism
28. Aggravation
32. Rejoice
33. A large body of water
34. Religious "sister"
37. Annoy or anger
38. Pear-shaped musical instruments
39. Deal or contend
40. Seat oneself
41. Anagram of "Notes"
42. Increase in salary

43. Placed at intervals

45. A name meaning "Gazelle"

48. Disconcerts

49. Withe

50. Give a speech

53. Insane

54. A cry of sorrow and grief

60. Comes from a chicken

61. Eliminate from the body

62. Spoon-shaped vessel with a long handle

63. Perceive visually

64. Depressions in a surface

65. A type of shove

DOWN

1. Prefix indicating "Upon"

2. Adult males

3. Awful

4. Emergency Care Unit

5. Mark as paid

6. Demonstration (abbrev.)

7. 1 1 1 1

8. Serf

9. Groove

10. A meeting

11. Collection of maps

12. A series of connected rooms

13. Horse

18. A Great Lake

22. Brownish

23. Looks lasciviously

24. 32 in Roman numerals

25. Safe

26. Small island

27. Partiality

29. Road

30. One who plays roles

31. Adolescents

34. Sound

35. Distressed

36. Requirements

38. Permits

39. Automobiles

41. Entangled

42. Annuls

43. Frozen water

44. A short stroke in golf

45. Hemispherical roofs

46. A tributary of the

- Missouri River

47. A long narrow range of hills

50. Portent

51. Repose

52. Picnic insects

55. How long something has existed

56. Faucet

57. A mountain on Crete

58. Not young

59. Born



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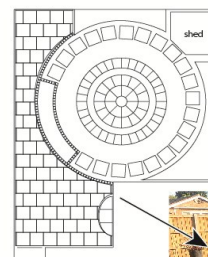
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Useful Contact Details In Meppershall

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

Food and Supplies

Budgens Stores, Post Office, High Street

Rogers Bakery, High Street

01462 813398

The Sugar Loaf, 25 High St

01462 239231

Schools

Samuel Whitbread Academy, Clifton

01462 629900

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

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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
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
May 2027	Tues 27 th April	Dec-Jan 2027-8	Tuesday 30 th Nov
Contact John Thompson to confirm arrangements (contact information above).			