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Editorial by Mick Ridley and James Read

A question for you: Where, would you say, is the centre of the village?

Early in the 20th century, there were relatively few houses on Shefford Road or Fildyke Road. High Street was indeed Meppershall's High Street with its pubs and the church standing across a large green at the southern end.



The village grew, and the junction of Fildyke Road, Shefford Road and High Street has come to be the centre of the village for many of us. The Sugar Loaf on the corner, backing onto the allotments with the village shop just across the street. Perhaps, for you, the school and, nearby, Roger's Bakery feel more like the centre. Yet more villagers feel the church is the centre of their village life, enveloped by fields and looking out over the magnificent Bedfordshire landscape to Upper Stondon, Shillington and Gravenhurst to the East, South and West (you would need to stand on the top of the church tower to truly understand that - some of us are lucky enough to have done that!) ***Or is it the Village Hall...?***

Our fine new Village Hall building must have felt a bit lonely through lockdown! No pre-school, no social club, no events in the hall... at times lockdown was so strict that there weren't even the customary hot hatches nosed in by the seats at the far end with dubious aromas billowing out of the windows.

On a serious note, the Village Hall must certainly be at the centre of our village life – not just in terms of its position, but also in terms of its service to the community and its fundamental purpose. There is a widespread hope in the village that events that were commonplace in the last ten years will return, bringing everyone together and creating a true sense of a village community, meeting together, enjoying a seasonal event together, knowing each other. Let's imagine the return of the Summer Fair (who knows, perhaps graced once again by the RAF Red Arrows or Battle of Britain Memorial Flight – yes, they came here in recent years!) Village Quizzes, Fireworks Night, New Year, Easter Bonnet Parades... let's hope they return soon!

We hope the Village Hall Committee also figure out how to maintain good stewardship of a facility that must serve local community organisations, many running on slender finances. Let's hope the Meppershall Players may one day rehearse and perform in Meppershall again. The Brownies deserve a good, affordable local venue. Many other small groups and activities could meet at the hall, if the few pounds that individuals may have to spare can be reconciled with access to this important facility. The hall has its origins in local philanthropy, and is of course operating on a not-for-profit basis. So it needs policies that mix a good range of higher income events and bookings with a reliable home for the things that really should sit at the centre of the village.

Thank you to the Village Hall Committee and all those spending some of their free time to make sure we have a vibrant and accessible village hall for our wonderful village.



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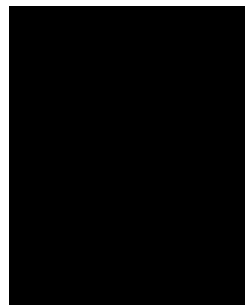
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Letters to the Editors

Dear Editors,

Massive thanks to everyone who supported this year's **Bike and Hike in aid of Beds & Herts Historic Churches Trust** which took place on 11th September. Trevor Wilkinson surpassed his already amazing track record, visiting well over 50 churches across the region in the day-long event and raising £750. Special thanks to him and his incredible commitment every year. A team of Tash, Max, Tabitha, Jasper, Hetty, baby Marnie and baby AJ made a junior team and walked around 10KM between the three churches now under Rector Roni in our Benefice – Meppershall, Campton and Shefford. Thanks to them and to the adult hikers who joined the team. We had a really fun day out. Our total reached £1065 plus gift aid, half of which is returned to St Mary's here in the village for its specific maintenance and repair funds. You can see the fun we had in our film at <https://fb.watch/8gmE8mw2Sh/>.

James Read

Dear Editors

I was devastated to hear that the Walnut Tree Café will no longer operate in our new Village Hall.

Many people enjoyed the facility and full marks go to all who made it so pleasurable to visit. It is a very pleasant place to meet up with friends and other people.

I understand the Hall was built for the community, so where do we go from here? We don't know the reason why the closure of Café has come about and I hope someone from the Village Hall Committee can explain.

Yours sincerely, a very disappointed visitor and long standing resident of Meppershall,
Mrs E. Lawrence

Dear Editors

The village was very fortunate to a magnificent new village hall through a generous land donation and the funding (£106) of the building from Croudace Developments. This was to be a great village asset to be used and enjoyed primarily by the residents of Meppershall but with facilities that could be hired out to 'outsiders'.

I would very much like to understand why, as a Mepperhall Village Asset, why the Players had to move out in the early days, the Pre-School had to fight to remain and now we have seen the Café move out, fortunately only to The Sugarloaf – a very clever solution.

This leads me to ask the Village Hall Trustees to comment on how their policies/future plans will maintain our Village Hall as a Meppershall Village Asset, as currently village amenities appear to be moving out?

Name Supplied

Editor's Note : Since receiving these letters we have also been sent an update by the Meppershall Village Hall Trustees. The article looks to address concerns raised. We would encourage all those that wish to express both their support and any issues that need addressing to attend the Village Hall AGM on 5th December. Please see the update later in this issue for further details.

GNOMES (Meppershall Good Neighbours)



**Good
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The **GNOMES** Coffee Mornings are BACK.

We are very pleased to confirm that the regular monthly **GNOMES** Coffee mornings are resuming on **THURSDAY 14th OCTOBER** from **10.30am**.

We are also pleased that we will be hosting the coffee morning in the **Walnut Tree Café's** new home in **The Sugar Loaf**. All are welcome, please come along for a friendly chat over a cup of coffee.



The **GNOMES** are still around and willing to help where we can, from collecting prescriptions to Telephone Befriending. Our facebook page is regularly updated with useful information on help and resources available locally and please remember we can help with emergency shopping especially while the village shop is closed for refurbishment.

Whatever your need, call us on **07760 793921, Monday to Friday, 9am to 6pm** and if we cannot help then we will try our best to find someone or some organization that can. And if you have a neighbour who you think might need some help like this, you don't have to be a **GNOME** to ask them.

Do you have some spare time and like to help people in your community?

Then consider volunteering on a one-off or regular basis. Give us a call or email gnomes.secretary@meppershall.org and join our friendly team of insured and DBS checked volunteers to help those who need a helping hand at times.

COVID Info: Have You Had the Jab?

Anyone over the age of 18 is now being invited to get their COVID-19 vaccine by calling 119, through local walk-in options (at <https://bit.ly/2U4IYGT>) or through the National Booking Service: <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/coronavirus-vaccination/>

It's the largest vaccination programme in the history of the NHS. The vaccine is being offered to more and more people in our area every week.

How do vaccines work?

Vaccines teach your immune system how to protect you from diseases. It's much safer for your immune system to learn this through vaccination than by catching the diseases and attempting to fight them.

Can I catch Covid-19 from the vaccine?

No. You cannot catch Covid-19 from taking the vaccine but having the vaccine could stop you from becoming seriously ill if you catch the infection.

Should I be concerned about the speed the vaccine was made available?

The speed in which the vaccines have been developed does not mean that they are unsafe. The technology used to develop the vaccine is not new. It's been tried and tested for decades. It is with this technology and massive global investment to develop a Covid-19 vaccine that has allowed it to be available so quickly.

Any coronavirus vaccine that is approved must go through lots of clinical trials and safety checks, like all other licensed medicines, before it is approved. The Covid-19 vaccines used in the UK have been declared as effective by the UK's independent Medicines and Healthcare Products Regulator (MHRA) after extensive trials. Read more at www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/vaccinations.

What about getting a Covid-19 test?

Find information about using the simple rapid lateral flow self-test conveniently in your own home at <https://www.gov.uk/order-coronavirus-rapid-lateral-flow-tests-or-by-calling-119>. Around 1 in 3 people with COVID-19 do not have symptoms. Rapid lateral flow tests help to find cases in people who may have no symptoms but are still infectious and can give the virus to others. The test usually involves taking a sample from your tonsils (or where they would have been) and from your nose, using a swab. You can get a result in 30 minutes. Please consider testing if you are going to be with other people, whether or not you have been vaccinated.

Interview with Sanjay Chandarana – New Proprietor of Meppershall's New Shop

The Messenger met with Sanjay Chandarana for an exclusive look at the new village shop and to find out about its new owners and plans for the future.

Sanj's passion for the shop is obvious as soon as you meet him. Alongside his family; Mum and Dad, Seema and Paresh and his brother Rishi, he has been running a similar sized store in Walkern, a village outside of Stevenage. They opened the store 15 years ago and in 2019 underwent a similar conversion to the one that is being carried out in Meppershall.

When asked what gave him the most satisfaction about owning a store, Sanj commented – "It's about community. The village store should be a focal point, particularly for those that are less mobile and need somewhere not just to shop but a place to spend time and chat".

This talk of community is clearly a passion for Sanj. When asked about how his business had fared during the pandemic he spoke about how they supported the most vulnerable in their community by delivering essentials to those who were unable to leave their houses. He and his team focused on the village but at one point they were delivering as far afield as Stevenage to over 70 households. His staff often went above and beyond to ensure those regular customers were catered for.

This support of the community was picked up by the local press and you can read more about it here <https://www.thecomet.net/things-to-do/budgens-of-walkern-helping-the-community-5436588>

As their business grew, Sanj and his brother were keen to open a new store in a similar "nice location". They already knew Meppershall through friends in the village and upon further investigation felt that it had a good reputation with the kind of strong community ties that they were looking for. Building a sustainable business meant that the size of the village and the safety aspect for their staff were also important in making their decision.

So what of the shop itself? When the Messenger visited, the bulk of the building work was complete and a raft of chiller cabinets were in place. Already, it is unrecognisable from the previous premises. Whilst the store will be badged as Budgens and a large proportion of the stock will be supplied by them, Sanj is keen to ensure there is local produce on sale and a wider selection of goods in certain areas. Meat, for example, will be supplied by a Hertfordshire butcher, Bridget B's. In addition there will be fresh produce direct from Covent Garden, a Costa Coffee machine, an extensive beers, wines and spirits section with wines supplied by Laithewaite's and a selection of Cook ready meals. Importantly, the Post Office will remain in addition to a selection of newspapers, magazines and lottery.

In conclusion Sanj had one final word. "The build has taken longer than we expected due to issues with supply of some building materials. I want to thank the whole village

for their patience with any disruption and also their help when we have needed a hand. We are really excited to be opening up on 15th October and we look forward to being part of your community and giving you all a focal point in the village you can be proud of."

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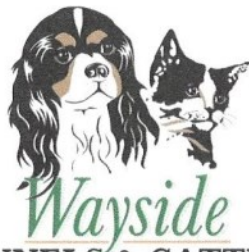
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Meppershall Village Hall

The Village Hall has now fully reopened as things start to regain a sense of normality. The bar, run by Meppershall Social Club, is open every evening, and from 12 noon at weekends.

We are pleased to welcome NG Dance Collective from 16:15 on Thursdays and BoxFit on Saturday mornings, to join the existing sessions run by Krusader Kickboxing, Ataru Shotokan Karate Club, HATS Drama Group, Musical Bumps and Pilates with Kate Byrne.

Meppershall Brownies is now on Wednesday evenings from 5.45pm and the Craft Club is on Tuesday mornings from 10am.

We were all disappointed that the Walnut Tree Café chose to move away from the village hall. Unfortunately, there was no easy solution to the need for the kitchen to be available for other hirers when the Café was not open. The Café had not been charged rent since re-opening this year, and a reduced daily rate to cover cleaning, utility and equipment costs had been agreed from September. We wish them well in their new location.

The Village Hall is not run to make a profit, but does need to cover running costs, particularly hot water, room heating, electricity and cleaning. In the absence of volunteers to clean the hall every day a local commercial cleaning business has been retained. Hire fees for the changing rooms and showers in particular reflect the fact that they will need a couple of hours cleaning every time they are used.

The Trustees have always seen their role as ensuring that the Village Hall is available as a facility rather than to directly run events or activities. The bar is run by Meppershall Social Club which pays a monthly rental in respect of the Walnut Social Area and hires the hall when required. The Village Hall makes a standard hire fee from these bookings but doesn't carry the risk, or benefit from the success, of these events.

Under the terms of the constitution the assets of the Village Hall Trust are to be used for the benefits of residents of Meppershall and the neighbouring area, not just the village itself. Unlike some other local halls it does not rely on support from the Parish Council or through the Council Tax. The vast majority of bookings do have a connection with the area of benefit, and there would undoubtedly be some debate about the criteria to be applied if different prices for those based outside the Parish were to be considered.

Regular hirers receive a discount based on the booking period, and the Brownies, Craft Club and GNOMES have received additional support.

If you would like any additional information about the running of Meppershall Village Hall, the trustees can be contacted on trustees@meppershallvillagehall.co.uk.

The AGM is scheduled for the 5th December at 6pm.

Meppershall Parish Council

An Ordinary Meeting of Meppershall Parish Council (MPC) took place on Monday 13th September

Public Session - CBC Ward Councillors Mark Liddiard and Anthony Brown provided an update on Central Bedfordshire Council (CBC) activities as follows:

- Garden Waste - The collection of garden waste remains suspended however CBC does have new drivers ready to take HGV driving tests and they want to resume services ASAP.
- Tidy Tips - Residents can still book slots at CBC Tidy Tips for the disposal of garden waste.
(Please Note: as of 27th September 2021 there is no longer any need to pre-book visits to tidy tips)
- Ward Councillors Grant Scheme – money is still available and Ward Councillors would welcome requests from village organisations.
- Refugees from Afghanistan – CBC are supporting refugee families (6 families supported so far) and have asked the Government to allocate CBC a fair share of those arriving.
- Pathfinder Legal Services – CBC owns a third share of Pathfinder Legal Services with two other local authorities; Cambridgeshire and Northants. CBC therefore no longer has its own legal team. The most recent publicised accounts for Pathfinder Legal Services show a profit of £865k, with other local authorities buying in services from them.
- Schools for the Future – Programme has been ‘paused’ in our local cluster due to cost and growth numbers different from those expected. The CBC CEO will be taking over responsibility the delivery of the programme including staffing as it is considered to be a large capital expenditure programme.
- Black Cat – A flyover is proposed at the Black Cat that would see the A1 go under the flyover and the A421 as a dual carriageway underneath leading all the way to Cambridge.
- RAF Henlow – Homes England have reported that they are no longer contemplating building new homes on RAF Henlow. Another organisation may. Due to the cost and implications of moving training equipment it is likely that the earliest closure date for RAF Henlow will be 2025.

Questions / comments from the public:

- Can waste trucks able to take garden waste be parked at Priory House so that residents do not have to travel to Tidy Tips? *Cllr Brown advised this was not possible as Priory House was being used a Vaccination Centre.*
- Is garden waste likely to be emptied soon? *Cllr Liddiard reported that the CBC Portfolio holder is trying to organise garden waste collections by the end of September to beginning of October but no plans have been issued yet.*
(Please note that for two weeks – W/C 18th October 2021 and W/C 25 October 2021 – food waste collections are being replaced by garden waste collections. Your garden waste bin should be put out on the normal recycle bin day instead

of your food waste bin. Your food waste bin will not be collected during these two weeks.)

- Can Pathfinder Legal Services be opened up to use by local parish councils? *Cllr Liddiard believed they are however he would clarify the situation and provide an update to the Clerk.*
- Does MPC have a representative on the Village Hall Committee as original documentation requires this? *The Clerk advised that at present MPC does not have a representative on the Village Hall Committee as previously there was thought to be a conflict of interest.*
- Can MPC reconsider their position on this and put forward a representative? The Clerk was asked by the Chairman to add this item to the next MPC agenda.

Procedures, Consultations and Legal

- i. **Co-Option** – The expression of interest in co-option that had been circulated to all councillors for consideration for the meeting in July was still valid and the applicant informed that Council would consider the application at this meeting. Councillors welcomed the application but as the applicant was not present at the meeting Council were unable to consider the application at this time.
- ii. **Councillor delegation** - Councillors reviewed the current delegation arrangements and agreed that no changes were required. Where there was currently no Spokesperson for a working group the Clerk would take on that role.
- iii. **Councillor numbers** - In 2018 CBC carried out a Community Governance Review (CGR) where, as part of the review, MPC were invited to consider the number of Councillors that we have to represent our Parish. At the time MPC chose to maintain 10. Normally, a Parish Council would have a minimum of 7 members and CBC would not be starting the process of carrying out a review until 2022 with any resultant changes being made in time for the 2023 elections. Councillors discussed the pros and cons of having both 10 and 7 councillors and agreed that due to the amount of work required of councillors no reduction from 10 should be requested.
- iv. **Procedures** – Councillors resolved to; re-adopt MPC Data Protection Policy v2.2. and MPC Privacy Notice v1.2, and adopt MPC Asset Register Policy v1.0, MPC Freedom of Information Policy v1.0, MPC Dealing with Complaints Policy v1.0, MPC Dealing with Habitual or Vexatious Complainants Policy v1.0 and MPC Equality and Diversity Policy v1.0. The Clerk will look to present a Sustainability Policy to council.
- v. **IT – Website and Email** - Cllr Standbridge reported that the new website had 692 users since going live and has been viewed 955 times. Council resolved to move domain hosting services to Krystal Hosting Ltd on a 3 year plan. The Clerk advised that parish councils are being urged to make use of gov.uk email addresses and the same for websites. A change to a gov.uk domain and emails would have to occur after moving to Krystal who would need to apply for the domain name on our behalf. Council resolved to apply for gov.uk domain and apply to website and appropriate emails.

- vi. Centenary Field Parish Facilities Update** - The Clerk had received calls from both the Croudace Solicitor and Construction Director. The updates are as follows:
- The Solicitor has returned to work today. Unfortunately, there has been a death in her family and this is the reason why she has not been at work and communication delayed.
 - Croudace Solicitor to send our Solicitor, MVHT and the Clerk a revised draft of the settlement letter.
 - The 'future defects' clause will be re-written to cover future structural defects (due to build or design) using statutory clauses. Our Solicitor will need to confirm he is happy with this but MVHT will need to agree to the wording also.
 - Regarding the Parish Council land transfers, the Croudace Solicitor has confirmed that she has received communication from our Solicitor but wants him to draw up/prepare the transfers together with the plans.
 - We have received an update on outstanding planning conditions.
 - An additional £6k is to be added to MPC's settlement.
 - The Croudace Director and the Clerk have set a deadline date for signing of completed documents and agreed to speak again on Monday 20th September in the morning to review progress of actions from both sides. Achieving this date will be highly dependent upon the solicitors doing their bit and agreement of the future defect clause.
- vii. Stocken House Green Space** - The Clerk, Cllr Thompson and Cllr Liddiard met with CBC officers to discuss concerns identified by MPC. Updates as follows:
- Watering of trees and plants required under MPC management. CBC officers do not believe it is required to water trees as suggested in the Management Plan. If required watering is to be done in the first 12 months under Davidson management.
 - Litter disposal – CBC officer has advised that the play area requires 2 bins and dog waste bins within the green space area.
 - Arboreal inspection prior to acceptance – CBC officers have agreed that we should do this.
 - Qualified ROSPA inspections every 6 weeks – CBC will not insist on or check this.
 - Land drainage responsibility – above or below ground – CBC Suds Officer has suggested that without a commuted sum MPC should not accept responsibility for SUDs or even swales above ground especially as the swales feed into the SUDS system that will be the responsibility of the future onsite management company. It was suggested that the green space to be handed over to the MPC could be reduced so that it ends at the footpath prior to the swales areas. It was further suggested that MPC do not even mow the grass in the swales areas unless the management company provide the machinery to be used. CBC Officers also raised concerns of managing the land drains to be installed near 75 Shefford Road.

- Works to trees to be approved by Ecologist to safeguard bat habitat – CBC will not check this.
- Replacement planting up to Yr 5 – CBC officers suggest that issues with planting will be evident after 12 month of planting. They have suggested that we add into any agreement with Davidsons a defects liability period that would make Davidsons responsible for planting but review planting with them (receive report after 12 months).
- Yr 10 review and management plan with CBC – CBC officers said that they would not normally expect a 5 or 10 year review. They would only want to know of any fundamental changes within 5 years.
- Phased handover – CBC have advised that the open space needs to be completed by the time Davidsons want to sell their 108 house as per the current Unilateral Undertaking. By this point the area is likely to have been established for 1 year. CBC officers would propose that we accept transfer once Davidsons have 95% occupation.
- CBC Planning officer has advised that Davidsons will need to request a Deed of Variation to amend the Unilateral Undertaking for MPC to be transferred the green space.

The Clerk and Cllr Thompson will engage with Davidsons and agree best way forward.

Finance

- i. **Grants** – Council resolved to make a donation of £800 to MAGPAS air Ambulance and a grant of £721.70 to the Meppershall Wanderbus.
- ii. **2020/2021 Audit** - Council noted the comment from the External Auditor in its completion letter and certificate of completion. The Clerk advised that the MPC website has been updated.
- iii. **Purchase Orders – Council** resolved to approve costs incurred to print banners, leaflets, documentation and cost to hire MVH for the Neighbourhood Plan Regulation 14 Consultation, and to approve the purchase of blinds for the sports area in Village Hall.
- iv. **Insurance** – Council resolved to approve insurance renewal with Zurich Municipal at a cost of £1350.58.
- v. **Orders for the payment of money** - A schedule of payments was distributed at the meeting for approval and authorisation.

Planning and Housing

- i. CB/21/02518/FULL - 41 Walnut Tree Way, SG17 5AB - Change of Use: From agricultural land to domestic garden rear boundary. *No objections*
- ii. Sugar Loaf PH re-nomination for Asset of Community Value (ACV) - The status of ACV will expire on 27th September. Previously residents spent two years getting the application approved and then fighting the planning application to convert it into a store. Given the investment and direction the Sugar Loaf PH has now taken (viable business), the re-development of the village stores and the new Village Hall, a viable application may be difficult to prove therefore Council resolved to allow the ACV to lapse and not submit a new application.

Neighbourhood Plan - The new Chair to the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group, Mr Andrew Pain, reported that Consultation on the Draft Neighbourhood Plan will start on 20th September until the end of October. Residents will be advised of the consultation via the MPC Website, The Messenger, a leaflet drop, emails and Facebook posts. Drop in sessions will take place at the Village Hall on the 2nd and 9th October between 10am-12noon. After the consultation finished the steering group will need to review all the feedback given and make changes to the plan as required. They will then be able to submit the Plan to CBC for external review prior to the Referendum.

(Circulated with your Messenger is a Neighbourhood Plan Leaflet and comments document which you can complete with any comments about the Neighbourhood Plan and it should be returned to The Clerk at the address on the Comments Sheet.

Highways and Transport - An apology has been received from CBC Highways regarding the closure of Shefford Road by CBC contractors without notice. The contractor has applied for a permit to close the road on 17th September but then thought to change the date without confirming with CBC. The Clerk has been invited to meet Lisa Swanell the head of the CBC Section 278 Highways Team with Cllr Liddiard.

Environment and Leisure - The Clerk met with Village Trees on 6th September to discuss hedge trimming the three sides around the ORM play area, flattening the land at the far end and along the nature reserve side to see work required to create a small pitch area to the far end as part of plans to re-develop the ORM play area. Council asked that the Clerk progress works at a cost of £500. Carried. Council discussed the costs involved in purchasing torches and beacons for celebrating the HM The Queens Platinum Jubilee and also the manpower required to run an event. Council agreed to encourage Meppershall Events to carry out activities and to progress the planting of trees and the installation of benches in commemoration of the event.

Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) - The Clerk reported that CBC are requesting that all villages form a CERT. In essence this is a WhatsApp group with local people that would like to be involved. The CERT WhatsApp Group will link directly with BLEVEC (CBC's Emergency Volunteers Partnership) and CBC Emergency Planning Team and provide important information, intelligence and a quick form of communication should an incident occur in our area. Organisations involved in BLEVEC can offer things like 4x4 support, first-aid, food provision, transport, emotional and practical support and much more. The Clerk was asked to attend drop in sessions and create a CERT plan for presentation to council.

Staffing - The Village Caretaker resigned from his role on 12th July 2021 giving 3 months' notice. One application has been received for the new Community and Environment Officer role. It was agreed that Cllr Merryweather, the Clerk and one other would conduct interviews by the end of October.

John Thompson - Chairman - Meppershall Parish Council



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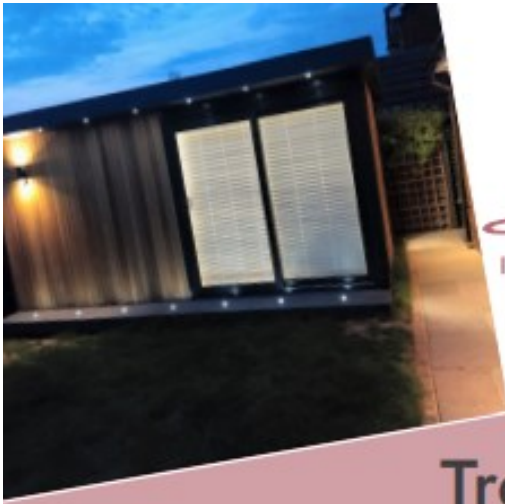
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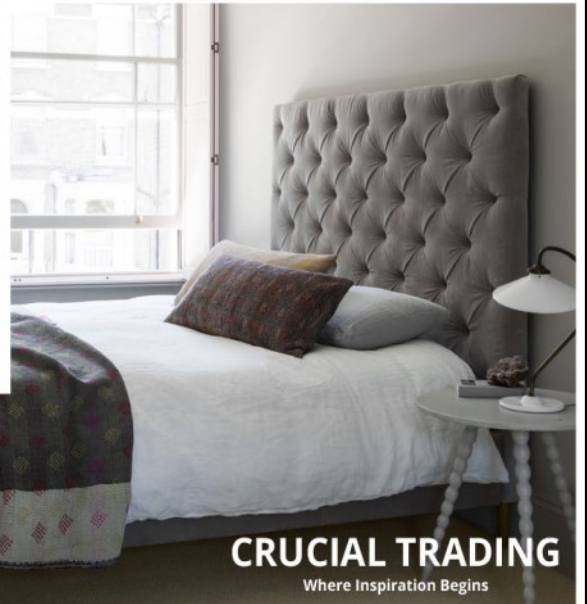
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Waste Collection Updates – Garden Waste Collection in October



Central Bedfordshire Council will be undertaking a garden waste collection during a two-week period in October. This collection aims to clear the backlog of waste in our garden bins before the winter period.

The collection is between 18th October and the 30th of October.

During this two-week window, residents are asked to place their garden waste bin or their two Council issued bags at the kerbside instead of their food waste bins, from 7am. This should be done on the day residents normally have their recycling collected.

The background to the problem lies with FCC, the council's contractor, which has been struggling to recruit enough LGV drivers due to the national shortage. Crews from the weekly food waste collection are being deployed to collect garden waste for these two weeks. The longer term driver shortage continues.

This means that food waste will not be collected during this period. If residents are unable to wait until for food waste collections to resume (from the 1st Nov) to dispose of their food waste, the council recommends either home composting or disposal in household waste.

From Monday 27th September, it is no longer necessary book in advance for a visit to the Household Waste Recycling Centre (tidy tips). The normal permit system will be reinstated from that date. Trade and commercial waste is only accepted as a paid service at Thorn Turn HWRC. Residents need to book online for vans, large trailers and certain materials – for more information, check the website: www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/tidytips.

Community Safety Session – “Celebration Safety”

As we head through autumn and winter, we enjoy some much loved celebrations, including Halloween, Bon Fire Night, Diwali and Christmas. The Central Bedfordshire Council Community Safety Session in October will be on the subject of Celebration Safety. Stacey Moore from Bedfordshire Fire and Rescue Service will be talking about safety issues, from bonfires and electric lights, to fireworks and candles. The session is on Monday 11th October, 3.30 - 5pm. More info from Elaine Mountfort, Safer Communities Officer, 0300 300 4382, elaine.mountfort@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk.

Inspiring Music in Central Bedfordshire – Get Involved

Inspiring Music is Central Bedfordshire's music service, offering music lessons in a number of venues including Ampthill Music Centre at Redborne Upper School (Music and Drama Block), Biggleswade Music Centre (Stratton Upper School) and Leighton-Linslade Music Centre (Vandyke Academy). The Inspiring Music sessions provide children, families and members of the community with the chance to play and make

music. There's a huge range of musical instruments and activities on offer during each session, including guitars, jazz bands, musical theory, singing, ukuleles and much more.

Sessions reopened after lockdown on Saturday 25 September, with new timetables and activities catering for all ages and instruments, welcoming both old and new budding musicians, including early years and beginners. All are welcome.

The Saturday sessions are between 9.30am and 12.30pm during term time and are open to everyone. Inspiring Music staff will be on hand to offer advice and answer questions. Read more at <https://www.inspiringmusic.co.uk>. Inspiring Music offers a 25% discount on first term membership for anyone aged between 5 and 18. Music sessions are also available for adults. For those aged under 18, prices start from as little as £9.50 for 4 sessions. Upcoming sessions are planned for 2, 9, 16 October; 6, 13, 20, 27 November; and 4, 11 December. Contact Ollie Drackford on 0300 300 8310 or by email: oliver.drackford@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk.

Your Chance to Become a Councillor

Meppershall Parish Council needs two new team members; if you think you would like to join the team contact the Clerk on 07930 813808 or email clerk@meppershall.org

What is a councillor?

Councillors are elected to represent an individual geographical ward or parish, in Meppershall it is the entire parish. They are generally elected by the public every four years, but there are Co-option spaces available on the Parish Council at the moment as Councillors Karlake, Austin and Thomason have given their resignations to the Parish Council.

What do councillors do?

Councillors have three main components to their work:

1. Decision making - through meetings and attending committees.
2. Monitoring – ensuring decisions lead to efficient and effective services.
3. Getting involved locally – for instance through representation at meetings of local organisations, reviewing planning applications, community action (such as litter picking) and taking up issues on behalf of members of the public

How much time does it take up?

Quite often councillors say that their duties occupy them for about an hour a week – some spend more time than this, some less. It is an important role, where you can help keep our village a great place to live and work. Read more at <https://www.meppershall.org/index.php/parish-council/councillors> and contact the Clerk to the Council (details above).

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Rector: The Reverend Veronica Goodman

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

Churchwardens:

Chris Valentine 01462 815971 Peter Clark

Email: Meppershall.PCC@gmail.com

PCC Secretary:

Anne Parsons 01462 813333 Email: annie10639@gmail.com

Message from St Mary's

October is upon us - and we are now back to "Every Sunday is an in Church Sunday" with the service at 11am. In general, the first and third Sundays will be Morning Worship led by our Reader Keith Callard or by our Lay Leaders of Worship, and the second and fourth Sunday of the month will be Holy Communion.

Morning and Night Prayer - 9and9 everyday - still continue online.

In October we will celebrate Harvest, giving thanks to God primarily for the food grown on the land - although also an opportunity to give thanks to God for all the good things he gives us. Part of the way we give thanks is to share what we have with others...

We will celebrate Harvest in our 11am service of Holy Communion on 10th October.

As usual, we will be collecting in Church for the Need Project which helps to feed those in need locally. There will be collecting boxes at the back of the Church on Wednesday 6th October and 13th October when the Church is open from 10.30 for private prayer. Gifts can also be dropped off at the Rectory by arrangement 01462 339962.

The Bishop's Harvest Appeal 2021 is called "Water is Life" and is aimed at bringing clean, safe water to communities in the Democratic Republic of Congo.

Bishop Alan Writes: "Life in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) is tough. With a history of civil war, widespread poverty and a cycle of conflict and displacement, communities struggle every day. Also, more than 70 per cent of the DRC population use unsafe drinking water and so daily encounter the devastatingly high risk of cholera, a preventable disease. The Bishop of St Albans' Harvest Appeal 2021, **Water is Life**, will bring clean water to many more communities in the DRC, bringing with it transformation to daily lives and hope for the future."

"For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat. I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink" Matthew 25:35

Our Harvest plate collections in Church will be sent to the Bishops Harvest Appeal. You can also drop donations in a suitably marked envelope through the Rectory door.

Unfortunately, I don't think we are able yet to hold our usual Pet Blessing Service this year - hopefully, that will be able to resume next year!

Wednesday 27th October will be the time for "Special Memories" when we take time to remember particularly those whose funerals we have conducted in the last year and those who mourn them.... although it is a chance for all of us to remember those we have loved and lost. The Church will be open from 10.30 am - for private prayer - names will be displayed and there will additionally be a chance to light a candle, to spend time quietly with God and/or your own thoughts, and to take away a prayer card if you wish, to remember the occasion.

You may like to know that in preparation for Remembrance Sunday - there will be a Churchyard clear up day on Saturday 13th November, when your help would be greatly appreciated. More information nearer the time!

All are welcome to a socially distanced Act of Remembrance at the War Memorial at 10.45am on Sunday 14th November. Please let Revd Roni know if you are hoping to come into the Church for the Service that follows, as we are still socially distanced and spaces may be limited.

Do you need prayers? We have a small group of intercessors who will continue to pray confidentially for those who ask for prayers. If being held in prayer in that way is something you would like, please talk to Roni 339962 / 07533376880 or Chris Valentine 07701039324.

Please let me know if there is anything more we can do for you at this time.

With my love and prayers, God bless you, Rector Roni

A New Dean of St Albans

The Venerable Joanne Kelly-Moore, Archdeacon of Canterbury and Residentiary Canon at Canterbury Cathedral, has been nominated for election as Dean of St Albans, succeeding The Very Reverend Dr Jeffrey John after his resignation on 31st March 2021. The Dean leads the life and work of the Cathedral Church of St Alban, sharing in the oversight of the Diocese and supporting its vision of 'Living God's Love' with the Bishop and other senior colleagues. Joanne was educated in New Zealand and after a career in law in Wellington and London she graduated in theology from the Bible College of New Zealand and was ordained Priest in 2001. She became Vicar of St Aidan's in 2004, was Chaplain for Corran School for Girls and became Acting Archdeacon of Auckland in 2005 (for 18 months). Joanne became Dean of Holy Trinity Cathedral, Auckland in 2010 and in 2017 she took up her current roles as Archdeacon of Canterbury and Residentiary Canon at Canterbury Cathedral.

The Lord-Lieutenant of Bedfordshire Helen Nellis welcomed the news, saying, “I know that the new Dean will receive a warm welcome from everybody, and we all look forward to working with her.” Meppershall, along with church communities across the area, certainly looks forward to extending the welcome to Joanne.

Church News and Events in October and Beyond

We carefully observe COVID-safe practices and have returned to a service in church every Sunday. There are some special events this month, as well as the online services that still continue.

Sunday morning	11.00am	Morning Worship (3 rd and 17 th October) Holy Communion (10 th and 24 th) Harvest service on 10 th October
Alternate Wednesdays	10.00am	Holy Communion in church (6 th , 20 th Oct)
Wednesdays and Sundays		Private prayer and quiet time – the church open for you to sit and visit during the day, 10.00-3.00pm “Special Memories” – church open to remember those we have lost, from 10.30am
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		
Churchyard working day	Saturday	13 th November – come and be part of the volunteer group helping to clear up and maintain our beautiful churchyard – all day, for as long or as little as you can.
Remembrance Sunday	Sunday	14 th November - Gather at the War Memorial in the churchyard from 10.45am – let Roni know if you intend to join the service afterwards in the church (for social distancing / seating purposes)

Do you need prayers? We have a small group of intercessors who will continue to pray confidentially for those who ask for prayers. If being held in prayer in that way is something you would like, please talk to Roni (Tel. 339962 / 07533 376880) or Chris Valentine (telephone 07701 039324).

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Name your Street: Where did Meppershall's Road Names Come From? By John Parsons

We all, or most of us, have an address to which we feel we belong. But have you ever wondered how that address came into being, or indeed, if there might be a story behind it?

In Meppershall, we have a mixture of old and new, geographical and historic, memorials and commemorations. As our village has grown, more addresses have had to be created and, in an effort to maintain links with the village heritage, the Parish Council, who are entitled to suggest names for village roads, elected to nominate names with links to the village and its peoples.

Clearly, in the past when villages were much smaller, everybody knew everybody else and where they lived and probably until the advent of the postal system, a formal address was not needed. However, times change!

Probably the first road name within the village was High Street, signifying the road along which most of the houses were built. Most places have a High Street or High Road and is a good indication of the oldest part of the settlement.

The next category could be described as geographical, being the road that leads to.... Hence, we have Shillington, Campton, Stondon, Hitchin and Shefford Roads although not all of them have always been so named or indeed led to the place or to have existed at all. For instance, Stondon Road was once Sand Lane, since it led to one of the village sandpits. Shefford Road is a relatively recent arrival, the traditional route to Shefford being along what is now known as Hoo Road to Hoo Farm and via the road from there into Shefford. At the time of the nineteenth century Meppershall Enclosure of the medieval fields the track that had traditionally led to Campton was stopped up, presumably by the new owner of the fields who did not want all and sundry travelling across his land. The present road was reinstated in due course. In the case of Hitchin Road, it is possible that many residents might have been unaware that the road designated as the A600 is partly in the parish with the parish boundary to be found running up the centre of the carriageway.

Further geographical links can be found with Chapel, Church and Rectory Roads. Chapel Road is associated with St Thomas's Chapel, situated now on Chapel Farm, one of the medieval manor farms. Rectory Road would have been the route from the Church to the Rectory, now known as Monks Pool, built by the eighteenth-century Rector, Thomas Webster. Hopefully no explanation of Church Road is needed!

The last of the parish roads which could be described as being part of the old settlement and will have been in existence for several centuries are Fildyke and Hoo Roads. The name Fildyke is nothing to do with filling dykes but is derived from field wick, meaning land used for a special purpose such as milking the cows but separated from the associated farmstead. Hoo Road, originally Hoo Lane would have been the lane leading to the hamlet named Hoo, a locality name for a sharply rising hill, probably the hill up from Shefford past Wren Park. Up until recently Hoo Road was known to older villagers as Old Road. Until the reopening of the road to Shefford as it is now, the

route to Shefford was via Hoo Road and down Hitchin Hill, then a turnpike road. Hence it was the 'old road', The name has been marked in the naming of Old Road Meadow, the village Nature Reserve.

In recent times, as has already been noted road names have been chosen to reflect village heritage. Again, some are geographical, some commemorate village history and some are linked to notable former residents.

Beginning with the geographical category, many names are linked to old field names. Before the advent of modern mapping villagers would have needed to be able to describe a piece of land to others, so most fields had their own name. Thus, we find Walnut Tree Way. Gregory Close, Harriets Field and The Acres. All are close to pieces of land of that name, originating in the nineteenth century or earlier and collected and recorded from old village memory. Gregories Close appears in a lease from Henry, Lord Grey of Wrest Park from 1640. Crackle Hill is taken from one of the spellings of the name of the hill rising up beyond the Village Hall. The ridge of which Crackle Hill is part, forms some of the highest points of the village which gives rise to Hilltop View. Halberycroft appears in a lease from the prior of Chicksands in 1441, the name comes from the Old English for a wholesome or salutary place.

Until 1853 a large proportion of the farm land in Meppershall was still to be found as eight large open fields, reflecting the medieval farming system of strip farming. Among the names of the great fields were Banland (Croft) and Coneygate. As part of this medieval system there would have been areas of common grazing land for livestock. Lyspitt Common was one such area.

Since much of its course through the village is through culverts or along the rear boundaries of many properties many may be unaware that Meppershall has a small brook running through it. The stream rises as a spring in what used to be the village pond near the church and known as the Marywell. The first part of its journey lies to the rear of the road bearing the name then follows the approximate line of the High Street before giving name to Brookside and Brookmead.

The last of what might be described as geographically connected names begin in the south with St Marys Place noting the dedication of our church to St Mary the Virgin. Moving northwards Fowlers Drive leads towards Fowlers Farm. The earliest known occupier of the farm was George Fowler, son of George Fowler of Woodhall, a yeoman farmer who died in 1739. Glovers Drive marks the site of an early village industry, the Overhand Glove factory which began making Khaki gloves for the Services in 1917. A slight diversion eastward leads to Old Nurseries Close, the site of one of the large number of glasshouse nurseries which in the past were a very significant part of the economy and employment in the village. Returning to our northward progress brings us to Orchard Close. Meppershall has a long history of market gardening or horticulture and from early mapping it can be seen this included large areas of orchards, particularly cherries. Stocking Drive may be found on land broadly corresponding to an area known in 1846 by the Old English name 'Stokking'. Finally at the northern end Woodview Lane leads towards the ancient woodland known as Nunswood.

Returning to the south again Robinson Grove commemorates John Robinson, second son of the village blacksmith who emigrated to America in the early 17th century and after an eventful life, including the founding of townships, now cities, was killed by Native Americans while hunting with his sons. One of the turnings off the High Street is Taylors Close, a family name with connections to many aspects of the village in the past. Buxton Close, leading off Fildyke Road, was named for Joe and Edna Buxton, both of whom made major contributions to village life in their time. Joe was Chairman of the Parish Council for many years. Meppershall has been fortunate to have had a village school since 1698 when it was founded by Mistresses Sarah and Elizabeth Emery, daughters of the village squire Richard Emery. They are commemorated with Emery Croft. Also, at the northern end of Shefford Road, Pestell Grove remembers Thomas Pestell, a farmer tenant at Chapel Farm who served as Churchwarden, Overseer of the Poor, a Trustee of the Emery School and Highway Surveyor, He was born in 1720 and died in 1785 and is buried in Meppershall Churchyard. Thus, we reach the end of the long list of roads, lanes, closes and drives which make up our village.

Meppershall has a long history, almost 940 years since being recorded by William the Conquerors' Auditors in 1086, and it is to be hoped that by incorporating some of the heritage into the modern infrastructure then it will remain memorable.

The research behind many of the choices of road names has been greatly facilitated by the excellent Parish History researched and published by the late Dr. V. H. Chambers and due acknowledgement is hereby offered.

The Oxford-Cambridge Arc: Have Your Say With Government

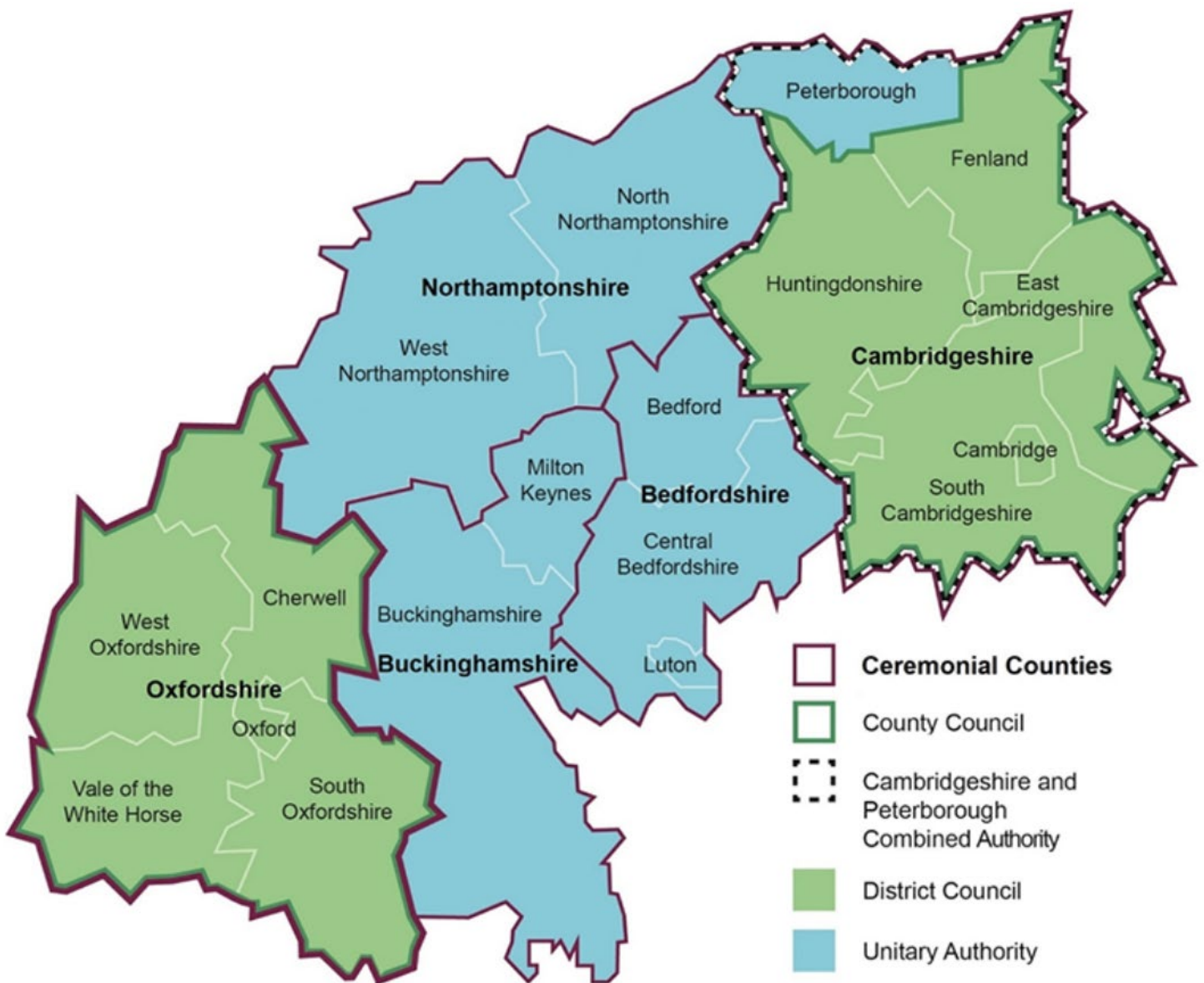
You may have heard of the "Oxford Cambridge Arc". It is an area of England that the government plans to develop, with the aim of building a better economic, social and environmental future for the area, including high-quality, well-connected and sustainable communities and making the area an even more beautiful place to live, work and visit.

That's the aim, but getting there will have impacts on existing communities and people living in the area – including, potentially, lots of additional building.

So the government is currently consulting on the ways in which it will develop the Arc – and you can have your say by going to <https://placebuilder.io/futureofthearc>.

What is the Arc, why is it important?

The Oxford-Cambridge Arc (the Arc) is seen as a globally significant area, linking Oxford, Milton Keynes and Cambridge and including Meppershall. It is formed of Oxfordshire, Bedfordshire, Buckinghamshire, Northamptonshire and Cambridgeshire. It supports over two million jobs, adds over £110 billion to the economy each year and is one of the fastest growing economies in England.



Map of the Oxford-Cambridge Arc, taken from the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government Policy Paper (18th February 2021)

What is currently happening?

Right now, the government is taking opinions and feedback on *The Spatial Framework* for the Arc. You can be part of this and give your views (see the link above).

The Spatial Framework will be a long-term strategic plan for the Arc to 2050, led by the government, informed by engagement with local communities and stakeholders. It will have the status of national planning and transport policy, providing a strategic framework for local planning (so local and neighbourhood plans will effectively fall under this wider Spatial Framework, when it comes to developing the Arc).

It will coordinate and focus investment in the area and shape future local planning decisions on: how land is used; how the environment is protected and enhanced; where and what type of new development happens; and what infrastructure is provided.

What kinds of issues are being considered in the consultation and in the Spatial Framework?

Environment

The consultation on the Spatial Framework is looking for your opinion on things like green spaces, nature and biodiversity. It is asking questions about climate change and “net zero” – how can we make communities that, overall, have no impact on the amount of carbon in the atmosphere? It explores what you think about air quality and water management – including access to the water coming out of your tap, management of lakes and rivers, preventing flooding and avoiding water shortages.

Economy

Government wants to know what you think about the future economy here – from education and training to how we can maintain a growing economy and provide a great place for business, science and technology, and innovation. It wants your views on making sure that existing industries succeed here, and how people can get around easily to bring the right people to the right job locations. It also covers the kinds of workplaces and buildings we might need, supporting the green economy and innovation such as artificial intelligence and cutting-edge science.

Connectivity and Infrastructure

Give your comments on combining new developments with the infrastructure and services required - at the right time: water, energy, waste, schools, hospitals, GP surgeries... How can we make sure that new development makes the most of existing resources – reusing materials, using renewable energy? How can we guarantee the right digital infrastructure (high speed broadband) is in place, as communities develop? How do we plan roads and transport – reducing the need to drive around the area and helping people to choose walking, cycling and public transport?

Place-making

How can we enhance the area’s natural environment and biodiversity, ensure communities and businesses have access to the infrastructure they need, and ensure new development is more affordable and beautiful so that it enhances places across the Arc? What are the most suitable locations for new development, what kinds of new homes, streets and buildings will be needed?

Next steps

The Spatial Framework for the Arc will be created by government by working with local communities. Read ‘Creating a Vision for the Oxford-Cambridge Arc’ and give your views (by 12th October) at <https://placebuilder.io/futureofthearc>. The proposal is to have an “Arc Growth Body” that would give leadership on various aspects of the Arc development. Government will also look at the case for new and/or expanded settlements, partly based on stations between Bedford and Cambridge on the new East West Railway and at Cambridge itself. Give your feedback. Shape the future!

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The Meppershall Players



'Jack & the Beanstalk' a Pantomime for all the family; Jack and his Mum Dame McNutty are struggling to pay the mortgage on their small farm in the village of Little Simpleton. Jasper De Villeman is demanding payment, and having already sold all the livestock to pay bills, only Rags the dog is left. Will Jack sell Rags at the Market? Or will he sell him to the Magnificent Marvin for some magic beans? Will Jack and his Mum be able to find the money to save their farm? Or will Jasper De Villeman take it all away from them? Come and find out the answer to all these questions at this fun for all ages Pantomime...

Performing on Saturday 4th & 11th December 2021; Matinees 3pm, All tickets **£5** Evenings 7.30pm, tickets £10 & Concessions £8 (3yrs to 17yrs & 60yrs and over)

Tickets are on sale NOW and can be purchased online at ticketsource.co.uk/themeppershallplayers or call 01462 816336 to reserve. All performances at STMA Digswell hall, Shefford.

The Ultimate Decades Disco is back! On Saturday 16th October 2021 at STMA Digswell Hall, Shefford; playing all the best music from the 60's, 70's & 80's. Fashions of the decades are optional but fun, with prizes awarded for the best dressed. Come and relive the heydays of disco. Tickets all £5 on sale NOW at ticketsource.co.uk/themeppershallplayers or call 01462 816336 to reserve.

And I haven't forgotten about the continuance of the Players history, which will hopefully be resumed in the November issue of the Messenger.

Find the Meppershall Players on Facebook (Meppershall Players Community), Instagram and Twitter.

The Players meet every Monday evening at 7.30pm at the STMA, 10 Hitchin Road, Shefford SG17 5JA. Membership is currently free and we welcome people from the age of 9 to 90+, to indulge in all areas of theatrical performances: set building, costumes, directing, acting, make-up, song & dance, etc.

Interested? We look forward to meeting you.

Karen Mitchell (Players' Secretary) 01462 816336

Diary of an Allotment by Zoe Cox

After losing the plot (pun intended) how do you get your mojo back so the following year can be more productive? The monthly allotment social conversation is dominated by our inner school teacher telling ourselves “we feel we could have done better and can do better next year if we applied ourselves”.

It is hard to motivate yourself to put in the winter work to get yourself ahead next year. October is a month of tidying up and starting to dig (for those that use a dig method rather than a no dig beds system). It is great exercise and it is often peaceful at the allotment site.

Lots of produce is available for picking with pumpkins and squashes taking centre stage. By this stage of the year the onions are well dry and stored for the winter.

One way to get enthusiastic is to get a new toy and for us it is a wormery which has been gifted to us after a friend found she couldn't get on with it. We learnt you can't use common garden worms as they eat already decomposed stuff so you need special worms. This saddened me somewhat as I had an image of a whole industry of 8 year olds collecting worms and selling them on Ebay to use the money on sweets and ice-creams... similar to those of us who remember deposits on glass fizzy pop bottles, collecting them to get 10 pence back (which we immediately spent on a bag of penny sweets). Finding a bottle in the grass verge was like winning the lottery!

With the new knowledge of needing special worms we ordered our worms and they arrived in a parcel in the post which is a bit bizarre but they seem fine.

They are now resident in their wormery and after about a week we can start to feed them. In the first week they apparently try to recreate The Great Escape so you have to keep a close eye on them. On the first morning we found quite few of them had indeed left the tub and were swimming in the bottom tray which is for the collection of the “worm tea”. Fortunately they can't escape to the wider world.

The advice sheet with the wormery says they need equal amounts of paper to food scraps so it may mean we can send less paper in our recycle bin as well. It will reduce our food waste as some of the food scraps can be fed to the worms. Incredibly worms can process their own weight in food scraps every day.

As we are new to ‘wormery keeping’ we look forward to sharing tips and trying to avoid the pitfalls awaiting novice worm-keepers! We also look forward to using the worm tea as fertiliser and the compost to add to our allotment beds. We also feel it is important to do our bit to compost as much as possible as this is better for our world so if you are interested in a wormery, the one we have can be found online here:

<https://recyworm.com/product/worm-farm-wormcomposter-wormbox/>

I also found that you can make your own wormery and this one looks like a great project to do with children - with instructions from The Woodland Trust:

<https://www.woodlandtrust.org.uk/blog/2020/05/how-to-make-a-wormery/>



MAPTA PRESENTS

MEPPERSHALL'S 2021 HALLOWEEN TRAIL

29th October - 31st October



Back by popular demand the Meppershall Halloween Trail. Entries can be made by individuals, groups, teams, or village organisations. Decorate your house or business premises which will be included on our map. Decorations should be displayed from 10am on Friday 29th October until Sunday 31st October. The winning house will be chosen by you and will win a £25 Smyths voucher. It's free to enter and maps will cost £2 with all proceeds going to Meppershall Church of England Academy.

For more information or a booking form please contact Vanessa Frezakley 07510507703 vfrezakley@yahoo.co.uk or meppershallpta@gmail.com or message us on Facebook MAPTA (Meppershall CE Academy Parent Teacher Association)

Thank you for supporting us in raising funds for our village school



MAPTA PRESENTS

MEPPERSHALL'S 2021

HALLOWEEN TRAIL

RULES AND ENTRY

Show us your scary side. Whether you enter individually as a group or organisation, family group or as a team we hope you have lots of fun and let your spooky imaginations run wild.

All entries are free and should be created by 10am Friday 29th October and displayed until Sunday 31st October. Votes will be counted, and winners will be announced Friday 5th November. Halloween scenes will be judged on decoration and title, which will be listed on our maps.

Please keep all decorations respectful and please do not use any inappropriate or offensive images or names.

THANK YOU for supporting your local school. Any further questions please contact Vangasa Freakley on 07810507703 or email vfreakley@yahoo.co.uk

.....

Name of Team/Individual entering

.....

Address/Site of Halloween scene

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Title of Halloween scene

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Shefford Leisure Group by Enid Pamment

Farewell to Summer – holidays a memory, school buses busy taking the children to school to meet up with their new teachers and friends in their new classrooms. Such a busy and somewhat traumatic time for both teachers and pupils alike.



Meppershall has become such a busy village, and the Shefford Leisure Group would like to welcome all new residents and wish them happiness in their new homes for many years to come. We are proud to say we now have a lovely pub and not forgetting the Walnut Tree Café (!) where you can meet up with your friends.

It hardly seems possible that it will not be long before our group makes its way to Warners Gunton Hall Coastal Village where we have booked a 5-day break from 11th to 15th October. This should prove a relaxing few days. The coach will collect us from Shefford and further pick-up details will be advised accordingly.

The people who have booked for Thursford on the 14th November will be advised of the pick-up time a little nearer the date.

After Thursford, Christmas will be with us. We hope 2022 will bring more normality. Thanks to everyone for your support in what has proved a very difficult year.

Take care, Enid xx

Financial Matters by Paul Savuto

Taking the emotion (and colour!) out of investment decisions

The psychology of investing is fascinating. There are so many behavioural traps that investors may find themselves falling into as markets fluctuate and knee jerk reactions take hold. The anchoring trap is a prime example, where investors over rely on their perceptions of an investment which may be totally incorrect, rather than being flexible in their thinking and responsive to new data. Separating emotions from investment selection and market reaction is indeed a whole different challenge. Managing impulses as markets and stocks fluctuate, and grossly underestimating risks associated with investments, are just a couple of reasons why investors sometimes make suboptimal decisions based on emotion, which can result in financial loss.

Red rag to a bull

Another added complication has been highlighted by an interesting new study which shows that financial information presented in red tends to make people more pessimistic about the market than the same facts presented in blue or black. It seems that using the colour red to represent financial data influences individuals' risk preferences, expectations of future stock returns and trading decisions, effects not present in those who are colour blind, and they're muted in China, where red represents prosperity.

Assistant Professor of Finance at the University of Kansas, William Bazley, who undertook the research, commented on the findings, "The use of colour could lead to investors avoiding the platform or delaying important financial decisions, which could

have deleterious long-term consequences. In Western cultures, conditioning of red colour and experiences start in early schooling as students receive feedback regarding academic errors in red. Red is associated with alarms and stop signs that convey danger and command enhanced attention.”

On our best behaviour

The good news is that you can avoid these potential pitfalls. You can rely on us to take the time to understand your objectives, apply a rigorous process and advise you on the strategies and products most appropriate for you.

Financial advice is key

If you're concerned about your finances or need help with basic financial topics, we aren't here to judge. We're on hand with simple, jargon-free advice that will provide you with the confidence and understanding you need to take control of your finances once and for all.

Rising inheritances and deficit may hasten IHT change

In 2018, Chancellor Philip Hammond asked the Office of Tax Simplification to review Inheritance Tax. However, subsequent events have meant that the tax regime for transfers of wealth between generations has not been revised, though Mr Hammond's next but-one successor Rishi Sunak could yet dust-off two OTS reports.

A big deficit caused by the pandemic points to unwelcome tax rises. Some economists see tax on transfers of wealth as a way to generate revenue without stifling the economy, whilst also acting to improve social mobility. One influential think-tank recently explored inheritance and inequality. The Institute for Fiscal Studies' April 2021 paper, 'Inheritance and inequality over the life cycle: what will they mean for younger generations?' identifies trends that could influence policymakers' thinking on taxation of wealth transfer, whether during someone's lifetime or after death. One key finding is that inheritances have formed a rising part of national income for the past five decades.

Inequality of inheritance

The IFS calculates that inheritances for those born in the 1960s will on average equal 9% of their other lifetime income, compared with 16% for those born in the 1980s. If this trend of rising levels of inherited wealth continues, the gap between rich and poor families can only widen; a more stringent version of IHT could mitigate that.

A major impact clearly stems from parental wealth. The IFS projects that people within each of the two age groups having parents in the top one fifth on the wealth scale will receive average inheritances that deliver a lifetime income boost of 17% or 29%, respectively, but only 2% or 5% if their parents are in the bottom one-fifth on the wealth scale.

So, the younger group will receive a greater boost from inheritance than the older one and within both groups those with wealthier parents will benefit far more, heightening inequality. With social levelling-up prominent on a financially-stretched government's agenda, IHT changes could prove costly for the better-off. It's sensible to prepare for all scenarios, taking expert advice on strategy.

Summer may be here but what about the LTA (Lifetime allowance) Pension freeze?

The pension LTA has been frozen at its current level of £1,073,100 until April 2026. So essentially, the total amount you can hold in your pension without being taxed on withdrawals is static for the next few years, which means that a growing number of people may need to start considering a wider range of savings options for retirement, in order to avoid a potential tax bill.

Tax is currently payable at 55% on everything over the limit if you take the money as a lump sum, or 25% if you take the money in another way, such as drawdown or through an annuity. If you're nearing the LTA, and an increasing number of people will be in this situation due to the big freeze, it's worth considering additional options available to complement saving for retirement. There are a whole host of scenarios and outcomes depending on your personal circumstances. The calculations around pensions and the LTA can be very complex. So careful consideration of your options is essential before making any decisions.

Get in Touch

DGS are Independent and Chartered Financial Advisers. They also hold the Gold Standard for Pension Transfers. I am a Chartered Financial Planner with over 29 years financial services experience, so you are in safe hands. For a free review of your financial situation and to discuss 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.

Birthdays

The whole team at The Meppershall Messenger sends very best wishes for a very happy birthday this month, to:

- Betty M. will be 93
- Dora S. will be 94

In Memoriam

Our condolences to the family and friends of Derek Millard who passed away on 11th August aged 93. A full tribute to Derek can be found on the following page.

Our condolences to Pauline and family and friends of Eric Larsen who passed away on 11th September aged 84. We will publish a full tribute to Eric in our next issue.

Derek Millard (18 September 1928 – 11 August 2021)

Derek (Edward Charles Millard) was born on 18th September 1928 to Lillian and Fredrick Millard at the Barley Mow Pub, which was once situated at the top of Hoo Road, in Meppershall. A sister Pam quickly followed in 1929. The family lived there for a while then moved to 84 Shefford Road.

Derek went to the local school and then to Shefford. He liked football and cricket. He left school at 15 and went to work at Commer Cars in Luton. In 1946 he went into the RAF for three years stationed mainly at Marham in Norfolk where he was also in the football team.

In the early 1960's, he then went to work at NIAE at Silsoe where he helped with the research and development of agricultural machinery until he retired in 1986 aged 58.



Derek was married for a short time, to Shelia, but when he got divorced in 1972, he lived the life of a bachelor, and usually had a lady on his arms.

He lived at Shefford Road, next to his sister Pam for over 60 years, but was very much his own person. He had at least 8 springer spaniels during his life, which he took shooting, and in 2018 he lost Jilly his last dog whose ashes lay alongside him as he requested in his coffin.

During this time he had around 5 MG sportscars and was also a member of the Bedford Gun Club where he would spend his time with John Eastaff and Bob Reynolds; they became good friends. Derek went on to help John in his gun shop on Saturday mornings. He went all over the country shooting and did a bit of fishing too. In the 60's he ran the shoot at Manor Farm, Wilstead, shooting with his other great friends Donald Simkins and Bob Copperwaite, his cousin. Mrs Seamark the farmer's wife used to call him Derek Duck – probably because he put ducks down for the shoot. David Seamark remembers him as a smartly dressed man who always had a dog at his side.

Derek liked a drink socially and played dominoes for over 40 years. When he gave up his driving licence a few years ago, David Kitchin would pick him up and take him to the Musgrave Arms. Derek would put himself out for his friends, for example, he would pick up John Parrish when he was unable to drive and bring him to dominoes at the pub. He was known to have a good appetite, any buffet near him would grab his attention. Breakfast for many years consisted of 2 crumpets, one with a poached egg on and the other with honey, he would also have two Weetabix and that was only breakfast.

Over the years, when he was still driving, he would call in at Bowles Garage to have a word with Brian and it was nearly always morning tea break. After a cup of tea he would then do the washing up, but one day the oven ring was on, and Derek accidentally put his hand on it, not wanting anyone to know he had burnt himself he promptly announced he had to go home.

Derek always liked to dress smartly when he was going out, but quite often had a thick pair of pink socks on. Over the last few years he had an electric scooter and would ride around the village and visit Walnut Tree Café at the Village Hall, where he would have a cup of coffee and a chat. He also looked forward to his Sunday lunches brought to him by Jill every week and phone calls from Mary in Devon. He will be remembered as somebody who loved life, and who lived his life his way and to the full.

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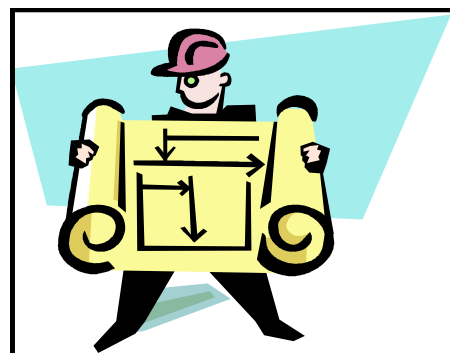
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NEW TIMETABLE & NEW ROUTES - VALID FROM 3RD OCTOBER 2021

Service open to everyone. Cash fares /concessionary travel passes accepted

As from 3 rd October 2021		"Stops at all Bus Stops on Request"	
W2 BEDFORD	- 1 st & 3 rd Wednesday of Month	OUT	RETURN
Shefford Rd, all stops		08.59	RR
High St. / Rectory Rd - all stops		09.00	RR
Interchange Retail Park		09.40	12.20
St Pauls Square / Corn Exchange		09.55	12.00
W3 BIGGLESWADE	- Every Monday	OUT	RETURN
Rectory Rd / High Street, All Stops		09.27	RR
Shefford Road, All Stops		09.29	RR
Biggleswade – A1 Retail Park		10.00	12.05
Town Centre - pick up o/s Asda Superstore		10.05	12.00
W5 BALDOCK (Town Centre / Tesco)	- Every Friday	OUT	RETURN
Rectory Rd / High St. – all stops		10.00	RR
Shefford Rd. – all stops		10.03	RR
Baldock – Tesco		10.25	12.15
W6A CAMBRIDGE	- 4 TH Wednesday of Month	OUT	RETURN
Rectory Rd. / High Street, All stops		08.48	RR
Shefford Road, All stops		08.50	RR
Cambridge, Downing St. – o/s/ John Lewis		10.10	14.15
W8A ST ALBANS	- 2 nd Wednesday of Month		
Shefford Rd. – all stops		08.48	RR
High St. / Rectory Rd – all stops		08.50	RR
St Peters St. o/s Santander Bank / pick up opp Bank		10.25	14.00
W10 ST NEOTS	- 2 nd Thursday of Month	OUT	RETURN
Rectory Rd. / High Street, All stops		09.18	RR
Shefford Rd, All stops		09.20	RR
St Neots - Market Place		10.15	12.20
W11 MILTON KEYNES	- 3 rd Thursday of Month	OUT	RETURN
Rectory Rd. / High St., All stops		09.08	RR
Shefford Rd, all stops		09.10	RR
MK - Midsummer Blvd / M&S (Stop J3)		10.10	
/ John Lewis (Stop E3)			13.15
W12 HITCHIN	- Every Tuesday	OUT	RETURN
Shefford Rd, All stops		09.18	RR
High Street, Rectory Rd All stops		09.19	RR
Bancroft Stop D		10.05	
Bancroft Stop G (Outside Paperchase)			12.10
W14 WELWYN GARDEN CITY	- 1 st 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

EXCURSIONS – 4TH Thursday of Month – call For Details – 0300-123-2023

E: Thewanderbus@gmail.com

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UPDATED EXCURSIONS 2021 - See The Christmas Market Trip on 25th November

DATE	DESTINATION : Subject to change should Government guidelines become restrictive again.	ENTRANCE FEE as per Current Website	BUS FARE
Thursday 26th AUGUST	Castle Ashby Gardens. Castle Ashby is the ancestral home of the 7th Marquess of Northampton. Wander through its gardens and take a walk through history. Set in the heart of a 10,000 acre estate, the 35 acres of gardens are a combination of several styles including the romantic Italian Gardens, the unique Orangery and impressive Arboretum.	£10.00 for Gardens	£10.00 Pick Up 10.00/10.30 : Return depart 15.00/15.15
Thursday 23rd SEPTEMBER	Wimpole Hall, Cambs. The mansion, at the heart of this estate, is evidence of Elsie Bambridge's success in creating a home. Intimate rooms contrast with beautiful and unexpected Georgian interiors, including Soane's breathtaking Yellow Drawing Room and wonderful plunge bath. The fascinating basement corridor offers a glimpse into life below stairs. Stroll around the colourful parterre garden and wander through the Pleasure Grounds to the Walled Garden, abundant with fruit, vegetables and beautiful herbaceous borders. Free for National Trust members	£18.95 House & Gardens. £10.00 Gardens only. Free to National Trust Members	£5.00 Pick Up 10.00/10.30 : Return depart 15.00/15.15
Thursday 28th OCTOBER	Stockwood Discovery Centre & Gardens, Luton. The former Stockwood Park Museum was transformed in July 2008 into the Stockwood Discovery Centre - a spectacular visitor attraction and museum for the 21st century. A paradise for garden enthusiasts, Stockwood Discovery Centre is one of the few places in the country where the work of acclaimed artist Ian Hamilton Finlay can be seen on permanent display. His Improvement Garden is a classical garden in which the sculptures are an integral part of the landscape. Once part of the original Stockwood House walled areas, the Period Gardens reflect the changing styles of gardening in this country. New areas include a contemplative Sensory Garden, a colourful World Garden and a Medicinal Garden highlighting the usefulness of plants.	Free	£5.00 Pick Up 10.00/10.30 : Return depart 15.00/15.15
Thursday 25th NOVEMBER	Waddesden Manor - Buckinghamshire - Christmas Market The fair will be set against the backdrop of the floodlit North Front of the Manor with its 20ft Christmas trees. Soak up the sights, smells and sounds of Christmas with hand-selected stalls all housed in charming wooden chalets, surrounded by twinkling trees.	£15.00 p.p. entry.	£10.00 Pick-up 11.00/11.30. Return departure 19.00
<p style="text-align: center;">To Book : Call 0300 123 3023 or email: thewanderbus@gmail.com</p> <p style="text-align: center;">We do require a deposit of £5.00 p.p. for any excursion. A cheque to Wanderbus, 5 The Pastures, Upper Standon, Beds SG16 6QB or a bank transfer to : CAF Bank Ltd, Sort Code 40-52-40, Acc No. 000131118 Name: Wanderbus Ltd (Use your name in Reference)</p>			

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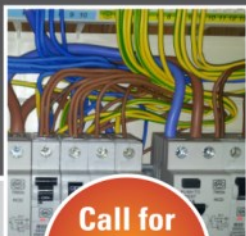
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DOCTORS, DENTISTS, PHARMACIES

NHS Direct	111
Dr Griffiths & Partners	
Shefford Health Centre, Robert Lucas Drive, Shefford SG17 5FS	
Appointments	01462 810034
General queries, prescriptions etc.	01462 818620
Drs. Collins, Garragher and Neal	
109 Station Rd Lower Stondon SG16 6JJ	01462 850305
Shefford Dental Practice, 34 High St Shefford	01462 814020
Shefford Dental Clinic, 99 Hitchin Road, SG17 5JB	01462 648465
Lloyds Chemists, 7 High St Shefford	01462 813283
Shefford Pharmacy	
Shefford Health Centre, Robert Lucas Drive	01462 818633

Police Emergency 999, non-emergency 101

Report crime online at www.bedfordshire.police.uk/report

Hospitals

Bedford Hospital	01234 355122
Lister Hospital, Stevenage	01438 314333

Utilities

Gas Emergency	0800 111999
Anglian Water	03457 145145
Electrical (power cuts, overhead cable down etc)	0800 838838

Central Beds Council 0300 300 8301

CBC councillors:

Tony Brown	anthony.brown@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk
Mark Liddiard	mark.liddiard@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk

Meppershall Parish Council

Parish Council Clerk Alessandra Marabese clerk@meppershall.org

Member of Parliament

Nadine Dorries MP dorriesn@parliament.uk

St Marys Church

Rev. Veronica Goodman, The Rectory, Church Road 01462 339962
(see the church section of The Meppershall Messenger for full details)

Library

High St, Shefford 0300 300 8067
Check times: Closed Mondays. Tuesday - Friday 9 - 6, Sat 9 - 4.
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Whitbread Wanderbus Service

Stephanie Kirby thewanderbus@gmail.com

Shops

Village Stores, newspapers, Post Office, High Street 01462 811252
Rogers Bakery, High Street 01462 813398
Mobile Fish & Chips, Tuesdays 3.30 -7.00, Sugar Loaf car park

Schools

Meppershall Academy, High Street 01462 813293
Meppershall Pre School (Village Hall) Tamsin Osborn 07816 357159
meppershallps@gmail.com
Robert Bloomfield Academy, Shefford 01462 628800
Samuel Whitbread Academy, Shefford 01462 629900
Etonbury Academy, Stotfold 01462 730391
Henlow Academy 01462 813733
Redborne Upper School, Ampthill 01525 404462

Organisations

Meppershall Players Karen Mitchell 01462 816366
Meppershall Good Neighbours (GNOMES) 07760 793921
Meppershall Brownies, Suzanne Brightwell 07817 392325
Shefford Guides, Angie Griffiths 07957 462519
Shefford Scout Group (Beavers, Cubs, Scouts, Explorers)
Kathy Georgiou 01462 629313

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 sent by post, or left in the folder kept at the Village Stores. Contributions should run to not more than one A5 page (except by prior arrangement) and should be received by the Editor not later than the 12th of the month for publication at the end of that month. 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.

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Collating Dates 2021-22			
November Issue	November 1 st	March 2022 Issue	February 28 th
December-January Double Issue	November 29 th	April 2022 Issue	March 28 th
February 2022 Issue	January 24 th	May 2022 Issue	April 25 th
Please contact Colette to confirm arrangements (contact information above).			

Please note that dates in the above table USUALLY show when collating will take place, at 2.30pm in the Sugar Loaf, for the corresponding month, displayed to the left. The issue being collated usually relates to the following month. However, during the coronavirus social distancing measures, our collation procedures have changed and we will review our plans for the printed magazine in line with government guidance.