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## Editorial by Mick Ridley and James Read

As the winds recede, it looks like Meppershall could have suffered far worse at the hands of Eunice. By the time you are reading this, I expect daffodils, crocuses and early blossom will be with us. But there is lots to remember when weather like that hits us... and lots to learn from!



On the eve of the storm, the Meppershall Noticeboard on Facebook was already filled with chatter about offers of help, if needed. Good to their word, Luke Harris and George Prowle were out there on Friday 18<sup>th</sup> February, removing and tidying fallen branches and hazards. More on that in a special article later in this issue. We are proud to have them on our cover this month, preparing to get to work. Their actions and generosity had a very practical value – keeping things safer, ensuring access in key places. But they also reminded us that neighbourliness and community spirit are planted deep in the village community and when it matters, it is always there. Thanks so much, Luke and George, for what you did and inspiring us all in that way.

At the same time of year in 2020, our Parish church suffered at the hands of Storm Ciara when it lost one of its great lime trees – snapped low down on its trunk in high winds. Had that tree (which was found to be weak inside, once it was down) fallen in the south-westerly gales of Eunice last month, it would have gone straight through the church. Patrick Sinclair kindly helped with making-safe on that occasion.

Thinking of big trees that we have loved and lost (!) there was dismay among the Meppershall Second Sunday Strollers to see the centuries-old giant at the corner of Priory Road in Campton completely removed, during the group's walk to Sandy Smith Nature Reserve and back in February. Sad as people were, it is also now clear that such a tree would have posed a major hazard if Storm Eunice had had her way with it.

What feels tough to lose at the time, often grows back stronger and fitter than ever. When it comes to restoring a vibrant way of life in the village, we can see lots of examples already - the new shoots of community spirit, a Meppershall Summer Fair in the works, potentially for 2<sup>nd</sup> July, a whole range of activities and events at Meppershall Social Club and loads of other village activities to come.

If you want some volunteering opportunities, this issue is PACKED with them! Or are you planning an event or activity that you want the rest of the village to know about – something people could get involved in? Please let us know – we will share your info here in the magazine and/or on our Facebook page. We would love to see new activities grow and flourish, especially with many new neighbours in the various new developments. This is your village and your village magazine, so please use it!

On that note, we were pleased to hear from colour and style coach Amanda who is new to the village and offering a personal 'colour analysis' as a Mother's Day prize for the best nomination of someone special – see her article and contact info in this issue!

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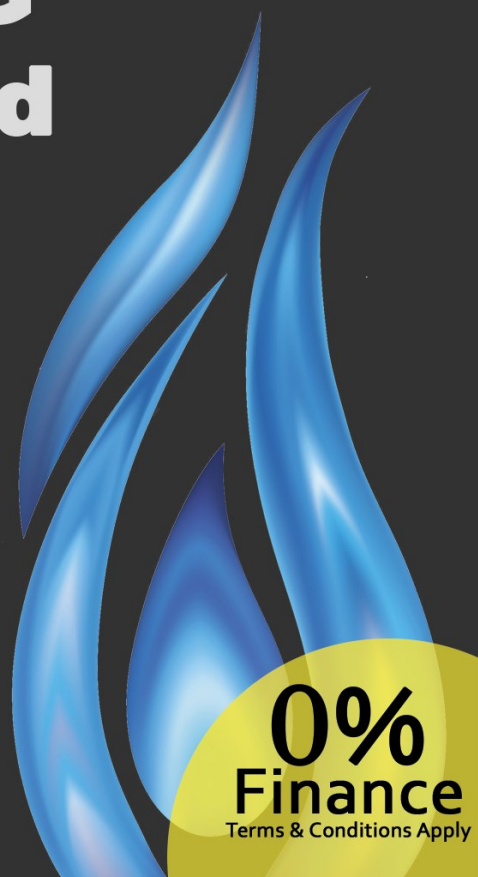
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## Letters to the Editors

### Dear Editors

I noticed that in this month's Messenger there is a letter from a resident regarding the hedgerow on Shefford Road that has been removed.

I'm not sure if anyone has responded to this but thought I might give you a little information if you would like to create a response.

There are actually 2 development sites on Shefford Road (excluding Emery Gardens at 32 Shefford Road). The first site is Stocken House where Davidson Homes are the developers building 145 homes.

The second site is land opposite 34 to 42 Shefford Road where John Burgess and Co Ltd are the developers building 9 homes.

The Parish Council objected to both planning applications regarding the removal of the longstanding hedgerows but were only successful in having them replanted. Davidsons Homes have already replanted hedgerow whips (small plants) on their site frontage. John Burgess and Co Ltd are yet to plant their replacement. Both developers should be planting a mixed native hedgerow that must remain in place. In both instances issues concerning 'highways visibility splays' were the reason stated for removal of the hedgerows.

If readers would like to review drawings of proposed planting please use the links below.

Stocken House / Davidson site:

<https://bit.ly/3H1vr5l>

Land opposite 34-42 Shefford Road / Burgess site:

<https://bit.ly/3p0NdzM>

**Alessandra Marabese – Clerk to Meppershall Parish Council**

## Eunice Was No Match For Luke And George

As mentioned in our editorial, Meppershall was already preparing for the arrival of Storm Eunice as weather forecasts worsened and the Met Office issued its 'red warning.' The Facebook Meppershall Noticeboard was buzzing into life with chatter and offers of help clearing up in the days to follow.

The first offer was from Luke Harris - and George Prowle and Derek Litchfield were soon also pitching in to offer him their help too. Their good work on Friday 18<sup>th</sup> February, when Eunice struck, was crucial in helping to keep Shillington Road safely clear of fallen tree debris – so, with many others around the village, we wanted to say a big THANK YOU to all of them.







Luke was kindly contributing his skills, experience and equipment after a number of jobs in different kinds of maintenance and gardening work. He grew up in the village and currently splits his time between DJ Granger Grounds Maintenance (David Granger) and working on his own business, Eternally Green Garden Services. Some will also know him for giving his time to spread salt in snowy and icy weather on Crackle Hill Road.

One of the more intriguing tasks he has had with DJ Granger is the maintenance of local water towers – including the famous Meppershall Water Tower!



**Luke**



**George**

George also kindly volunteered his time to clear damage left in the wake of Eunice. He works at Polehanger Farm and many readers will have seen him grow up in the village. It's a big **thank you** to them all. We wish them every success and we hope Eternally Green Garden Services goes from strength to strength.

## Meppershall Parish Council – Approved Minutes

An Ordinary Meeting of Meppershall Parish Council (MPC) took place on Monday 10<sup>th</sup> January 2022.

### Chairman's announcements

- Reported crime statistics for Meppershall show that the number plummeted in December from 13 to 7 which is a positive sign.
- NALC (National Association of Local Councils) have issued their response to DEFRA's environmental consultation and included the concerns raised by MPC and many other parish councils.

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

- Population – Predicted population growth figures for Central Bedfordshire have been released. Current population = 294,000. Prediction (2031) = 321,000.
- Council tax collection – In 2021 CBC collected 96.1% of council tax due (against an average for England of 95.7%).
- Council tax 2022-23 – Consultation currently underway. CBC wishes to increase council tax by an overall 1.95% (1% for social care and 0.95% for frontline services). Despite revenue from council tax CBC will still need to find savings of £5.9million.
- Grass cutting subsidy – Query has been raised with CBC officers regarding the subsidy paid to parish councils that has not increased in many years despite costs increasing.
- Footpath replacement – The footpath outside the Sugar Loaf PH is to be resurfaced on 31st January 2022.
- Schools for the Future – A meeting will be held on 20th January when it is hoped to confirm timings for the Shefford and Stotfold cluster move to two-tier. Children will continue to attend their current schools until changes are made and consultations conducted.
- COVID update – COVID numbers are the highest they have ever been with more people in hospital. CBC is urging residents to get vaccinated and have their booster.
- Government grants – More grants are now available to businesses in the hospitality sector and applications can be made via the CBC website.
- A00176 Traffic Calming Notice – Ward Councillors are interested in MPC feedback regarding agenda item 738.a (proposed traffic speed calming tables outside 32 Shefford Road).

#### **Questions / comments from the public:**

- CBC is to be commended for their organisation of the vaccine centre at Priory House and the minibus issuing lateral flow test kits that recently visited Meppershall. When we hear about what is happening elsewhere in the country, we realise how lucky we are in this regard. *It was requested that the Chairman email the CBC Director of Public health to offer our appreciation.*
- Are businesses being notified of the business grants available from CBC? *ML – Yes, previous applicants are being notified.*
- Housing developments along Shefford Road (Stocken House and land opposite 34 to 42 Shefford Road) have removed all of the historic hedge. Will the hedge be replaced with proper semi mature hedging plants rather than whips? *Clerk to check planning permission granted and email Planning Officers.*

#### **Procedures, Consultations and Legal**

- i. **Co-Option** – No new requests received. The Clerk was asked to submit another article to the Messenger.
- ii. **Procedures**
  - a. *Council resolved re-adopt MPC COVID Safe Risk Assessment until April 2022.*

- b.** *Council resolved to approve proposed MPC Meeting Date Schedule until March 2023 (meeting in July to be changed to 25th July).*

**iii. Consultations**

Councillors considered their responses to budget consultations from CBC, Bedfordshire Fire and Rescue and Bedfordshire Police. CBC plan to increase council tax by 1.95% (1% for adult social care and 0.95% for funding other services). Beds Fire and Rescue propose to increase council tax by 1.99%. Beds Police want to increase council tax by £10 a year for a band D property but have provided no more information. All budget proposals are under consultation. *Council resolved that the Clerk respond to in support of CBC and Beds Fire and Rescue budget consultations but question proposals made by Beds Police for lack of information and clarity. Carried.*

**iv. IT – Website and Email**

CLlr Standbridge reported that the gov.uk domain changeover will take place after Friday 14th January (website first and then emails to follow). Changes have been made to the website – dedicated Gnomes page added and addition of Noticeboard for stories. Views of the site have increased by 20%.

**v. Stocken House Green Space**

- i. Ross Williams continues to liaise with Davidson's solicitors. The Clerk has arranged to meet with Mr Alderman who has agreed to assist with monitoring of planting on site. Reports from residents indicate that planting has taken place in some areas.
- ii. Councillors considered an invitation to attend the showhome launch on 29<sup>th</sup> January, from Davidson's PR company Liberty. They have been in communication with both Messenger editors and the Meppershall Academy (contributed £1.5k to books for school). They have invited local residents who have been raising money for charity to the event and will be contributing to their charitable efforts. In discussing donations, the Clerk mentioned potential donations to an MPC defibrillator fund and Liberty have confirmed today that Davidsons will contribute £1.5k to this. Future residents must be made welcome and feel part of the village. *Council resolved that the Chairman and the Clerk attend the Davidson's show home launch event on behalf of MPC.*

**vi. Collaboration with Gravenhurst Parish Council**

Councillors considered the sharing of resources with Gravenhurst Parish Council and any ensuing actions as the Clerk works for both Parish Councils and it may be beneficial for both organisations to share resources e.g.: computer, laptop, mobile phone, however an agreement between both organisations would need to be drawn up to do this. *Council resolved that the Procedures and Legal working group put together an agreement for sharing of resources with Gravenhurst Parish Council for approval at the next meeting.*

**vii. Futures Working Group**

Councillors considered the remit, set up and membership of a 'Futures working group' as a next step on from the Neighbourhood Plan, to look at the medium future of the village and how residents may want it to grow. It is envisaged that the working group although supported by MPC would be made up of village residents. Councillors agreed that they would be unhappy to see



a Futures working group that was focussed entirely on residential development even if it would be important to consider whether the village could accept any more development greater than 50 dwellings. The working group should also focus on community, facilities, landscape, environment etc. and should look to address issues such as do we want Meppershall to be considered a commuter village as opposed to promoting local employment. *The Clerk and Cllr Parsons were asked to put together a scope / remit of the working group for the next meeting.*

## **Finance**

### **i. Purchase orders**

*Cllr Thompson did not participate in agenda items 735.a.i to iii having previously declared an interest. Cllr Parsons took over as Chairman of the meeting for these agenda items.*

- i. Council resolved the purchase of tables and chairs for MVH Beech meeting room at a cost of £779+VAT and that they be gifted to the Village Hall (Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 s.19).*
- ii. Council resolved the purchase of 2 x lockable filing cabinets for MPC archive storage (to be sited at MVH) at cost of £206.88.*
- iii. Councillors considered the purchase and installation of a defibrillator to be located at Village Hall in a location approved by MVHT. It was noted that the Shefford Road end of the village is beyond a reasonable distance from the Village Hall for access to a defibrillator and therefore MPC should seek to identify a location for a fourth defibrillator in the village. Council resolved that the Clerk purchase and organise the installation of a defibrillator, housing unit and sign, to be located at the Village Hall, and then seek to organise training via Community Heartbeat.*

*Cllr Standbridge did not participate in agenda items 735.a.i to iii having previously declared an interest.*

- iv. Councillors considered purchase of a mobile phone from Cllr Standbridge at a cost of £40 and confirmed that the mobile phone was in excellent working order. Council resolved that the Council purchase a mobile phone from Cllr Standbridge at a cost of £40.*
- v. Councillors considered the cost and selection of mobile phone SIM only contracts for MPC employees and payment methods. The Clerk advised that virtually all mobile phone SIM contracts require payment via a direct debit card unless opting for a more expensive business. Contracts option information was provided. The Clerk offered to reclaim the cost via expenses or to research the use of a Unity Trust Corporate MultiPay Card (MasterCard Charge card - £50 set up and £3 per month charge). If Councillors chose to opt for a Corporate MultiPay Card then Financial Regulations would need to be altered. Council resolved that the Clerk apply for a Unity Trust Corporate MultiPay Card, amend Financial Regulations and organise mobile phone contracts with Smarty.*

### **ii. Precept and budget 2022-2023**

- i. Councillors received a 2021/2022 actual v budgeted spend report that included predicted expenditure until the end of this financial year. The*

report did not include a grant request received from CPRE Bedfordshire for £500 which would go towards supporting their team of planning volunteers and the overall work CPRE do. Councillors agreed that the grant request from CPRE warranted support and should be included in this year's expenditure. *Council resolved to approve CRPE Grant request for £500 (LGA 1972, s137).*

- ii. Councillors considered the proposed 2022/2023 budget and reserves; the Clerk responded to questions raised on expected expenditure, income and VAT recovery. Minor changes were made to the proposed budget in the meeting. *Council resolved to approve the 2022/2023 budget as amended.*
- iii. Councillors considered proposed 2022-2023 precept options and based upon the approved budget explained the impact on both general and earmarked reserves. Councillors discussed the merits and impact of each option and also other increases in council tax proposed by CBC, the Fire Service and Beds Police. *Council resolved to approve and to set a precept of £59,235 which equates to Band D Council Tax charge of £61.55 (increase of 2.00% or £1.22 on 2022-2022). Clerk to write an article for the Messenger.*
- iii. **Document approval** - *Council resolved to alter the banking mandate to include Cllr Addy and that Bank Statements and Reconciliation reports 151 and 152 Current Account and 026 Savings Account be approved and signed.*
- iv. **Orders for the payment of money** – *Council resolved that the schedule of payments as presented be approved and authorised for payment by Cllrs Thompson or Parsons.*

### Planning and Housing

- a. **Planning applications** – None received for consideration.

### Neighbourhood Plan

The grant application for £2740 has been received. The plan is under review by the Clerk and Mrs Chapman.

### Highways and Transport

- a. **CBC Highways Consultation** – Councillors considered a response to A00176 Traffic Calming Notice (2 x raised tables located near 34A and 36 Shefford Road and 28 Shefford Road. *Council resolved that the Clerk requesting a single raised table.*
- b. **OPCC grant funding update from Clerk (traffic monitoring and VAS installation)** - Data from the traffic monitoring conducted pre-Christmas not yet received. Confirmation that monitoring tubes on Fildyke Road were in the wrong place and were moved was received on 14<sup>th</sup> December. A meeting with the CBC Highways Portfolio Holder, Cllr Ian Dalgarno is now planned for 21<sup>st</sup> January with both Cllrs Liddiard and Morgan in attendance.

### Environment and Leisure

- a. **Centenary Field** - The pitch area has been secured with new combination locks. Revised quotations are still pending from Sherriffs. Cllr Morgan and Cllr Standbridge will organise a video to publicise the current situation, explain the works that will commence in March / April and the implications of the works

on access. Cllr Thompson wished to thank all those who has assisted in moving the Heras fencing facing the Village Hall off site.

- b. Allotments** - A few plot holders' payments are pending and the Clerk is actively chasing these. Two plot holders have given up their plots. *The Clerk was asked to put an article in the Messenger regarding plot vacancies.* Councillors also noted that a number had received complaints from plot holders regarding the allotment track holes. *Council resolved that the Clerk organise / purchase of 'sieved' road plainings for delivery to the allotments.*
- c. Great British Spring Clean** – Councillors considered participation in the Great British Spring Clean between 25<sup>th</sup> March to 10<sup>th</sup> April 2022 and agreed that they would like the village to participate. *Council resolved that the Clerk organise publicity for a village spring clean on Saturday 26<sup>th</sup> March, check stocks of litter pickers and other accessories required, and order 10 hoops, 12 litter pickers and gloves as required.*

**John Thompson - Chairman - Meppershall Parish Council**

## Centenary Field Update

Meppershall Parish Council is pleased to announce that the ownership of Centenary Field has been finally transferred from Croudace Homes to MPC.

It has taken time to complete the transfer after development finished on site because of the need to reach an agreement over the poor state of Centenary Field post development; field drainage is inadequate and water is pooling to the rear of the village hall, the pitch surface is uneven and requires refurbishment, landscaping is poor in areas and trees need replacing.

In the coming months, MPC will be working on refurbishment, management and maintenance. Before the summer of 2022 we have planned:

- Installing of land drainage on Centenary Field and to the rear of the Village Hall.
- Landscaping repairs on Centenary Field and around the Village Hall together with re-seeding and measure to prevent unauthorised encampments.
- Creation of a track / path around the fenced pitch that links to current paths.
- Refurbishment of pitch including new top soil and reseeding.
- Installation of new outdoor gym equipment.
- Necessary signage and information boards.

We hope that works will be carried out concurrently and are discussing with contractors and the Village Hall best timings for works which includes making allowance for the weather.

Where possible we will ensure that areas are open for use by residents and Village Hall hirers but, for safety reasons and also to ensure that works carried out such as grass seeding are given time to grow and re-establish, planned works will require the closure of areas of Centenary Field and around the Village Hall. We do not envisage closing play areas although they may be fenced off field side to prevent entry into the field whilst works are happening. Refurbishment of the pitch will mean that it cannot be used until 2023 and therefore this area will remain locked. We hope that people will respect areas that are closed for use.



Later in the year we also plan to:

- Install new play equipment
- Plant trees to include two oaks to commemorate HM The Queen's Platinum Jubilee.
- Clear areas of the copse with a view to starting on creating an area of contemplation and remembrance for future use.

As work progresses, we will provide updates for residents in the Messenger, on our website [www.meppershall-pc.gov.uk](http://www.meppershall-pc.gov.uk), on Facebook (MPC and Meppershall Noticeboard) and obviously at our monthly meetings (every second Monday of the month at the Village Hall from 7pm). You can also contact the Clerk at [clerk@meppershall-pc.gov.uk](mailto:clerk@meppershall-pc.gov.uk) for more information.

**Meppershall Parish Council**

## **Parish Council Precept**

In addition to the Police, Fire Services and Central Bedfordshire Council, our Parish Council receives money from your council tax bills. This is called the precept.

At the Parish Council meeting on Monday 10th January, Meppershall Parish Council agreed to request a precept of £59,235 for the financial year 2022-2023 to be raised through council tax payments from all the dwellings within the parish area to help support parish council services and activities.

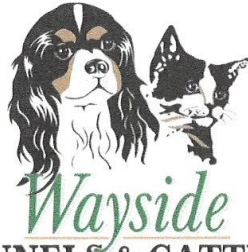
This is an increase of 2.00% compared to the previous financial year's contribution. Using a Band D Council Tax dwelling as an example, this is a £1.22 increase over the whole year. In 2022-2023 it will be £62.55 per year, in 2021-2022 the contribution was £61.33 per Band D dwelling.

In the financial year April 2022 to March 2023 we expect to spend near to £300,000. This includes:

- £67,000 on new play equipment at Centenary Field
- £20,000 on new play equipment at Old Road Meadow
- £20,000 on new outdoor gym equipment at Centenary Field
- £14,000 on a track around the fenced pitch at Centenary Field linking to existing pathways
- £40,000 on land drainage and landscaping in and around Centenary Field
- £25,000 on pitch renovations
- £2,000 on visual display boards
- £13,500 on allotment renovations
- £3,000 on new trees
- £20,000+ on speed reduction measures

There are general running costs of the village too including grass cutting, environmental maintenance of areas including Old Road Meadow, allotments as well as other expenses.

As always Councillors have looked carefully at what is needed in order to keep any increase to a minimum, and to ensure that the reserves are sufficient to cover any unforeseen expenses as well as the agreed level of running costs.



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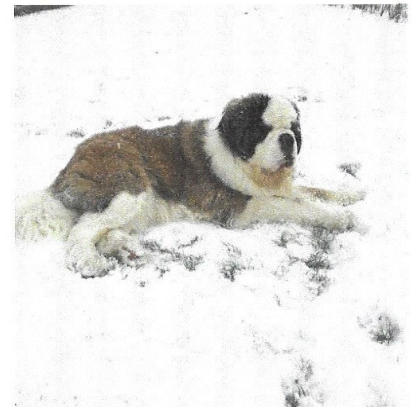
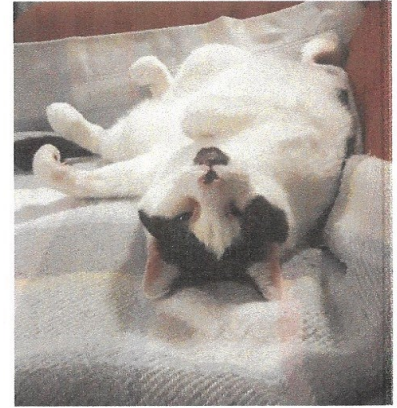


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We will continue to make use of grant applications and funds secured from developers to support our expenditure.

**Alessandra Marabese – Clerk to Meppershall Parish Council**

## **Your Village Needs YOU! Future Strategy Group**

In 2008, at the prompting of the Parish Council, a group of parishioners and representatives of village organisations began work on preparing the Village Plan. This was an attempt to identify the characteristics that made Meppershall what it was and to reflect and record villagers' aspirations and hopes for the future of their place.

The Village Plan was reviewed and updated, beginning in 2014, published in 2017 and included some aspirations which present residents may recognise. In 2017, under the provisions of the Localism Act, parishes were given the opportunity to prepare a Neighbourhood Plan, the details of which would be recognised in policy planning by the local authority and would be mandated for consideration by planners and developers. Again, a group of Parish Councillors and villagers worked to prepare Meppershall's Plan and the results will be put to the village for approval shortly.

It was never the intention that the Neighbourhood Plan should be the unchanging and final word on the future of the Village. Now it is your turn to engage in the next stage, the preparation of a Future Strategy for our village.

It has never been more true to say that decisions taken out in the wider world will impact on us here, whether we like it or not. What the village can do though is to consult, plan and document new aspirations and guidelines for the planners of the future. To this end the Parish Council are prepared to support and facilitate a Future Strategy group to consult, consider and prepare a plan for the next stage in our village's future.

If you would like to be involved, or wish to learn more, please contact the Parish Clerk at [lovemeppershall@meppershall.org](mailto:lovemeppershall@meppershall.org)



\*\*\*\*\*



## **Davidsons Homes Unveils Two Showhomes At Its New Development In Meppershall**

Davidsons Homes has thrown open the doors to the pair of showhomes and the brand-new sales office at Woodlands Rest, off Shefford Road.

The development was launched by Councillor John Thompson, Chairman of Meppershall Parish Council, and the Parish Clerk Alessandra Marabese.

Simon Tyler, Sales Director for Davidson's Homes South Midlands, said: "It is always a red-letter day when we can finally welcome visitors onto a new site and the launch of Woodlands Rest was a particularly memorable occasion.



“We pride ourselves in not only delivering new housing to an area, but also to making a positive contribution by working alongside the local community. It was therefore a privilege to welcome representatives from the Meppershall Parish Council, which is an integral part of the local community, to Woodlands Rest.”



John Thompson, Chairman of Meppershall Parish Council, said: ““The Clerk and I were pleased to launch the latest housing development here in Meppershall at Woodlands Rest.

“Whilst the Parish Council cannot endorse any single developer in Meppershall, it does and will work with all developers to secure positive outcomes for current and future residents of the Parish of Meppershall.

“In this case Davidsons Homes are working with the Parish Council on the formal adoption and maintenance of the Public Open Space including the play area at Woodlands Rest. This will enhance the Councils green spaces provision and will benefit all our residents.”

Davidsons Homes is to build 145 2- 5 bedroomed new homes at Woodlands Rest, comprising 94 houses for private sale and 51 affordable homes for rent or shared ownership.

As part of the planning agreement for the development, Davidsons Homes will be contributing more than £1.8 million to sustain and improve local services and infrastructure, as well as creating public open space and a play area within the development.

More than £1.7 million of the funding will go towards education, including £614,218 for upper schools, £500,857 towards middle schools, £497,750 for lower schools and a further £149,325 towards early years learning.

The two showhomes that have been unveiled at Woodlands Rest are the four-bedroom Barnwell and Winchester house types. Both are now available to view by appointment.

Simon said: “We are building a selection of two to five-bedroom homes which will appeal to a wide range of homebuyers. Following the opening of our two showhomes, buyers in Meppershall will now be able to experience first-hand the quality and finish of a Davidsons Homes property.

For more information, visit: [www.davidsonshomes.co.uk](http://www.davidsonshomes.co.uk).



# Join Meppershall CERT WhatsApp Group Can you help?



## What is a CERT?

A CERT (Community Emergency Response Team) is made up of organisations and volunteers willing to respond to a village emergency and to provide support. They are vital in increasing our resilience during emergency incidents such as fires, flooding, disease outbreak, major transport disruption or a loss of utilities.

## How does a CERT help the community?

During an emergency, a village CERT may be called in to action by Central Bedfordshire Council to work alongside other emergency responders. As volunteers members are all local, they bring a level of expertise and local knowledge that the emergency services often rely on. We spend the vast majority of our time preparing for large scale emergencies that fortunately rarely occur, however it is often the small-scale emergencies that can have a negative impact on a community and cause disruption.

## Who knows what's going to happen?

What would we do if our village water supply suddenly ceased together with the gas supply because a burst water main has ruptured a medium pressure gas main? Water should be restored within 2 days, but the gas supply could take up to 5 days. It's freezing and the forecast is -2 degrees at night over the next week. Snow is also predicted. Villagers need to be careful not to overload the electricity network as this could blow the sub-stations causing widespread power outages. Who will help our vulnerable residents and help the emergency services co-ordinate help for all? The residents of Lockerbie never imagined a 747 falling from the sky and landing in their village! **Who would have thought that we would see trees uprooted on the roads of Meppershall?**

## What makes a good CERT volunteer?

### Essential Qualities

- Effective communicator and able to follow instructions
- Logical problem solver and team working
- Aware and respectful to the Emergency Services
- Respectful, friendly and honest
- Willing to work in the elements

### Desirable Qualities

- Able to work under pressure
- Knowledge of local area
- First Aid Trained
- Full UK Driving licence

## Want to join us?

Want to join our WhatsApp group who react and assist in the event of an issue in the village? If interested in joining us please email the Parish Clerk at [lovemeppershall@meppershall.org](mailto:lovemeppershall@meppershall.org) with your contact details and how you think you can help the Meppershall CERT. The Clerk will then contact you with more information.

## NEW TEAM MEMBERS REQUIRED

**Meppershall Parish Council needs 2 new team members; if you think you would like to join the team contact the Clerk on 07930 813808 or email [clerk@meppershall-pc.gov.uk](mailto:clerk@meppershall-pc.gov.uk)**

### **What is a councillor?**

Councillors are elected or co-opted to represent a 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 due to previous resignations.

### **What do councillors do?**

Councillors have three main components to their work:

1. Decision making - Through meetings and attending committees with other elected members, councillors decide which activities to support, where money should be spent, what services should be delivered and what policies should be implemented.
2. Monitoring - Councillors make sure that their decisions lead to efficient and effective services by keeping an eye on how well things are working.
3. Getting involved locally - As local representatives, councillors have responsibilities towards their constituents and local organisations. These responsibilities and duties often depend on what the councillor wants to achieve and how much time is available, and may include:
  - Going to meetings of local organisations such as the Beds Police Priority Setting Meetings
  - Reviewing planning applications
  - Participating in litter picks
  - 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. Obviously there are some councillors who spend more time than this - and some less, but in the main, being a parish councillor is an enjoyable way of contributing to village life, and helping to make it a better place to live and work.

As a councillor representing the parish you will help keep it a great place to live and work. You will be supported in your role and will be expected to undertake training. You should be comfortable working electronically. You should have a positive outlook and a can-do attitude and be willing to work as part of a team.

If after reading this notice you are interested in applying please visit our website <https://meppershall-pc.gov.uk/parish-council/members-of-the-council/> for more information and contact the Clerk to the Council on 07930 813808 or email [clerk@meppershall-pc.gov.uk](mailto:clerk@meppershall-pc.gov.uk)

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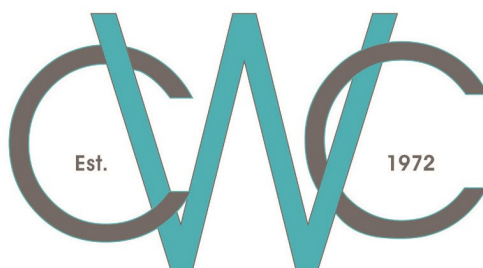
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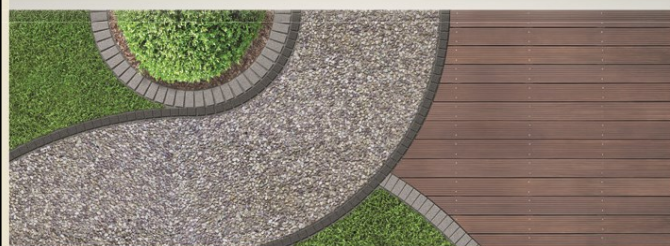
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## Changes Approved For Schools For The Future Programme

Central Bedfordshire Council has approved changes to the Schools for the Future programme, aimed at providing greater clarity for schools and parents and supporting a fair and equitable approach across the whole of Central Bedfordshire.



Schools for the Future is an ambitious, long-term programme to raise education standards in Central Bedfordshire by ensuring the area has the right schools, in the right places, delivering the best education, and moving towards a two-tier educational system is part of achieving it.

The changes to the programme's principals and policies – approved by the Council's Executive (February 8) – were made in response to the authority adopting its Local Plan in July 2021, which sets out how Central Bedfordshire will develop over the next 20 years.

The Council used the opportunity to check the pupil places needed in future aligned to the new Local Plan, while acknowledging feedback from schools involved in the programme, which highlighted that schools would welcome more transparency and clarity about the parameters of the programme.

These new principles and policies include:

- Support for a target to improve learning outcomes to above the national average at Key Stage 2, Key Stage 4 and Post-16
- The council no longer making initial proposals for changes to academies, as they are not the key decision-maker. They will now welcome two-tier proposals from Academy Trusts, which are supported by the Department for Education.
- Proposals for two-tier conversion will be matched against Central Bedfordshire Council-validated pupil place requirements
- Schools for the Future capital investment will not support early years or post-16 proposals
- Proposals to improve and create SEND places will continue but SEND investment will be a parallel programme led by Children's Services and not directly managed by the Schools for the Future programme
- A new Design Principles Policy that sets out what can fairly and equitably be funded across the schools still in the three-tier system
- A new six-point criteria, which the council will consider all conversion proposals against

Cllr Sue Clark, Executive Member for Families, Education and Children, said: "Schools for the Future is now at a positive turning point, and with the new revised principles and policies that will underpin the programme, we can begin to work towards publishing an outline phasing plan for the new primary / secondary system in each area.

“The aim of this is to give all schools and parents the confidence that the programme will benefit all pupils in all the schools now looking forward to the new primary / secondary system.

“We believe the revised Schools for the Future principles and policies will provide clarity, transparency, affordability, and fairness to all schools who are partners in the programme. We are now very well placed to move forward at a quicker pace with the support of all our Schools for the Future partners.”

## **Meppershall Pipeline Updates**

Anglian Water has issued a further newsletter to local communities regarding the construction of the Meppershall Pipeline. This is a new 9KM that runs from the pumping station site between Flitton and Ampthill, just north of the A507, to the Anglian Water facility at the top of the hill down to Shillington just outside Meppershall. As previously covered in The Meppershall Messenger, it will be laid just south of Windmill Farm overlooking the view to Shillington, over open fields to the Cow Bridge and up the other side of the valley, north of Wassledine, to Campton Road in Upper Gravenhurst.

Enabling works are expected to commence in February or March including ecological protection measures and removal of vegetation in certain places. Work compounds are also expected to be set up, including a location in Meppershall on the road to Shillington opposite the water works. Another will be located north of Gravenhurst on the road to Campton – with a larger compound just off Clophill Road outside Gravenhurst.

Traffic controls, temporary signage, road closures and footpath diversions should be expected in certain places. The pipelaying itself is planned for Spring and Summer and the pipeline will be constructed west-to-east – meaning that pipelaying in Meppershall will come later in the overall project (summer).

By that time, remediation will be taking place along the route of the pipeline, including replacement of topsoil, restoration of access routes and fencing, reinstatement of road surfaces, reinstatement of drainage and replacement of vegetation. Where hedges and trees are removed, replacements will be made at the end of the project.

The pipeline forms part of wider strategic plans for new pipelines across the Anglian Water region, covering an area from Scunthorpe in the north, to Norwich and Ipswich in the east and Meppershall and Milton Keynes in the south and west. Together, the works aim to improve the network of pipes to provide more options for the supply of water across the region – improving the environmental impact of water extraction, assuring supplies and strengthening resilience to periods of drought. Depending on other works, the Meppershall Pipeline could be in use within the year. More info is available by phone on 03457 145145 (reference 57182308) or by email [StrategicPipelines@anglianwater.co.uk](mailto:StrategicPipelines@anglianwater.co.uk). Find the newsletter at [bit.ly/Mepp-pipe](https://bit.ly/Mepp-pipe).





**Join the Meppershall Great Spring Clean**  
**Saturday, 26<sup>th</sup> March 2022**  
**Let's bin the litter together!**

Over the last two years outdoor spaces have mattered to us more than ever. Once again, this spring Meppershall Parish Council are joining Keep Britain Tidy and participating in their Great British Spring Clean campaign #BigBagChallenge.

Our Great Spring Clean has one simple aim: to bring residents together to clear up the litter that blights our village environment.

On Saturday 26<sup>th</sup> March, starting at 10am we are calling on all Meppershall residents to help improve our village environment and take part in Meppershall Great Spring Clean. We aim to collect and safely dispose of litter from our streets and green spaces, recycling as much as possible. All we ask is for 2 -3 hours of your time!

So please get the family involved and join the Meppershall Great Spring Clean and help us make a stand against litter.

How can you get involved?

- Sign up to help by emailing [lovemeppershall@meppershall.org](mailto:lovemeppershall@meppershall.org) (please sign up so that we can plan for the number of people wanting to help).
- Meet at the Village Hall at 10am on Saturday 26<sup>th</sup> March for a briefing and to collect supplies.
- Spend 2-3 hours collecting and sorting litter.
- Have welcomed refreshments at the Walnut Tree Cafe on us.

Taking part is not only good for the environment, but for our mental and physical health too. It is easy to feel overwhelmed by the challenges we have faced these past two years, but small acts can help us improve our surroundings and our mood for everyone.

Event organised and supported by Meppershall Parish Council and Meppershall organisations working in partnership.



## GNOMES (Meppershall Good Neighbours)



**Good  
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The Meppershall Good Neighbour Group is now in its 9<sup>th</sup> year helping the community. Identified by the acronym **GNOMES** - *Good Neighbours Offering Meppershall Excellent Services*, our logo – a friendly Gnome offering a hand - says what our volunteers are all about. Since starting in 2013, our **Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) cleared volunteers** have carried out hundreds of jobs, helping many residents of the village.

Whether that has been through befriending visits, helping people access their local GP or hospital, checking fire alarms or changing light bulbs and many other varied tasks to help residents when they needed that helping hand. For more information, please read our leaflet, search for, and join our Fb 'Meppershall Good Neighbour Group', and on the village website <https://meppershall-pc.gov.uk/gnomes/>



Without volunteers we can't provide our services or even run the organisation. **Do you have some spare time to help someone?** Believe it or not even an occasional hour makes a big difference. You can help us with our webpage, FB page and our research, give practical help to local people, help get an elderly resident to their GP appointment or become a regular phone-holder. Please contact the GNOMES on [gnomes.secretary@meppershall.org](mailto:gnomes.secretary@meppershall.org) or call 07760 793921. **We welcome support from students on their Duke of Edinburgh awards. Please contact us if you are interested and speak to your school/college.**

In March 2015, GNOMES held their **first Coffee Morning**, and this has become a regular feature, after a break for Covid lockdowns, we resumed in October 2021. It continues to be held on **the 2<sup>nd</sup> Thursday of every month**, from **10.30am – 12pm** at the Meppershall **Walnut Tree Café**. Everyone is welcome to have a chat, so please come along and just ask for the Gnomes, Caroline, Carolyn, Martin, and Kim when you arrive. We usually sit at the back right of the café.



Gnomes have been actively involved in several of the village events, *Christmas Advent Window, Scarecrow Festival, Meppershall Lower School events and village fetes*. In 2022 we will be undertaking research about neighbourliness in the village.

We would love to hear ideas and suggestions from the residents and even better if you can help us with this, please contact the secretary **(Continued...)**

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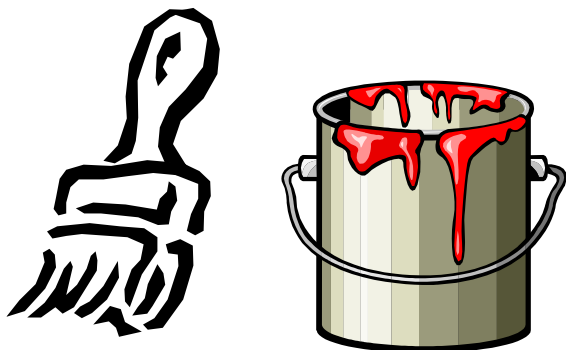
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Please look out for Gnomes events and support us, be it by joining our Fb page, helping us with our research and social media by joining our friendly group of local villagers and calling us if you or a neighbour needs help (Please ask them first!). Thank you from the Gnomes and their Committee Caroline, Carolyn, Martin, and Kim.

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\*\*\*\*\*

### **Trugs and Trowels**

Trugs and trowels gardening club would like to invite you along to our next gardening club meeting, 7th March, 7.30pm in Campton village hall. Entrance is £3 including refreshments. We will be joined by Martin Towsey, Woburn Estates manager, who will take us through his day-to-day of looking after Woburn Safari Park, the Estate House and gardens along with the quaint village of Woburn. As if he hasn't got enough to do, he will share his other vast responsibilities too!

All welcome, hope to see you there.

Maryika  01462 851729

\*\*\*\*\*

### **A Host Of Golden Daffodils... By Donna Cameron**

Warmer stretches are coming and lighter evenings are here, which means more time to spend in the garden! I love coming home after work to see how everything in the garden is doing. You can almost see everything growing!

This is such an optimistic time with such anticipation for the flowering season for the months ahead. Knowing that from these little seedlings great things will flourish.

In today's society everything has to be instant. Nature forces us to slow down, to enjoy the little things and teaches us to be patient and appreciate things.

As the Snowdrops begin to fade, March puts on its own show. New plants take centre stage with fresh green shoots and buds swelling. Delicate blossom on the trees. Sweet

scented violets and pale lemon primroses and of course the jolly bobbing heads of daffodils.

They seem to be on every wayside welcoming in the springtime with their smiling golden faces and trumpeting in the spring.

Daffodils traditionally represent the start of spring, rebirth and new beginnings. Hence their association with Easter. They used to be known as 'Lent Lilies' and are related to the Amaryllis family.

Introduced into gardens in 300BC and brought to Britain by the Romans. They thought the sap had healing powers, but actually can irritate the skin. Today it is being used in the research of dementia.

It wasn't until the 19th century that they became very popular and started to be classified. With lots of varieties in varying colours and form. There are over 25 different species and 13,000 hybrids.

I love buying a bunch from the supermarket for a £1 and watching them open up. You can't get better value for money! If you receive them as a gift they are meant to ensure happiness!

If you wanted to mix a bunch with other flowers it is best to put the Daffodils in a separate vase for 24 hrs so the sap doesn't poison the other flowers.

In the garden, after flowering leave the leaves to yellow and only then cut back so the goodness goes back into the bulb for flowering next year. To help add some soil improver to the soil next spring. A field of daffodils can flower for up to 50 years!

They truly are a lovely flower so if you haven't got any in your garden they are a must!

Happy Spring Time!



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### **Jobs For March In The Garden**



Plant roses and shrubs

Prune roses if not yet done so

Plant shallots, onions and early potatoes

Lift and divide clumps of perennials

Top dress pots with new compost

Cut grass if dry

Cut back dogwood grown for colourful stems

Weed

Protect shoots from slugs

Cut back hedges before birds nest

Start off Dahlias in a warm greenhouse



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**Churchwardens:**

Chris Valentine 01462 815971 Peter Clark

**PCC Secretary:**

Anne Parsons 01462 813333 Email: [annie10639@gmail.com](mailto:annie10639@gmail.com)

### ***Message from St Mary's***

I love it when a coincidence occurs! Perhaps, like me, you have been on holiday far from home and suddenly bumped into someone from home or work who you were not expecting to see. Most memorably, it happened to us as a family when we were thousands of miles away in the Rockies of Western Canada. I was reminded about such coincidences during the recent stormy weather. Storms Dennis, Eunice and Franklin recently made their presence felt in Meppershall and across the whole UK. As the wind speeds increased, church ministers across the country would have been preparing their Sunday sermons – and what a coincidence that was too. As I turned to look at the reading set by the Church of England for the weekend it was none other than the account of Jesus calming a ferocious storm as he and his disciples crossed a lake in a small boat. In the middle of the lake, with a fierce gale blowing, the disciples feared for their lives. But, Jesus calmed the storm and the account reminds us that, before setting off in the boat, he had reassured the disciples that they were going to reach the other side of the lake – something they lost sight of as their boat lurched in the tempest and storm.

Life can be full of the stress and anxieties caused by the trauma of events over which we have no control and yet, whatever faith we hold (or none) the human spirit is fundamentally one of hope and resilience. During difficult times, we are often able to look forward with hope to a brighter future appearing on the horizon. And, like the disciples, we often find that comfort and hope from those who journey with us. So, let's be thankful for those who journey with us, for those who support and encourage us along the way. But, during this season of Lent, let's commit to be that encourager to the people around us – to help others lift their eyes to the horizon and see hope and expectation in things to come. This is of course also the message of Lent as we look forward to the hope and expectation of Easter and the resurrection.

**Keith Callard**

**Reader, St Mary's, Meppershall**

## Church News and Events in March

Sundays	11.00am	Morning Worship every Sunday including Holy Communion on the 2 <sup>nd</sup> and 4 <sup>th</sup> Sundays (13 <sup>th</sup> and 27 <sup>th</sup> March)
Every Wednesday	10.00am	Holy Communion in church
Tuesday to Saturday	10.00-3.00 for you	Private prayer and quiet time – the church open to sit and visit during the day
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>

Come and enjoy your local, historic Parish Church on your own, or with friends, or with your family. The church community is a diverse bunch of people of all ages and you are bound to find new friends. A warm welcome awaits you in the beautiful setting of the oldest building in the village.

We observe COVID-safe practices and have returned to a service in church every Sunday. If you are planning to come to a service, it is helpful if you can drop us an email or phone call so we can plan seating to ensure social distancing. At the time of writing we are not doing teas and coffees after services but we hope to resume that in line with national guidance in due course.

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).

### Meppershall Second Sunday Strollers

The Strollers' March hike is a 4-mile loop at the eastern edge of the Chilterns, just a few miles from Meppershall and an area well worth exploring if you are new to the area. We'll meet at 2pm in Pirton on Sunday 13<sup>th</sup> March, by the church entrance opposite The Fox. Our route rises up on Wood Lane (an ancient track), looping around High Down House and Wellbury and returning on the course of the Icknield Way to St Mary's, Pirton. More info from Miriam or James on 857836 or find the Strollers at <https://www.facebook.com/MeppershallStrollers>.





## The Meppershall Players



Rehearsals are well under way for 'The Jubilee Variety Show' at the STMA Digswell Hall, 10 Hitchin Rd, Shefford SG17 5JA on Saturday 14<sup>th</sup> May 2022. We will be doing a Matinee performance at 3pm **all tickets £5**, and an evening performance at 7.30pm tickets £10 & Concessions £5 (3yrs-17yrs & 60yrs and over) This is a fun for all the family show. Seating is at tables and we encourage you to bring your own picnic/afternoon tea to the matinee, and your own supper to the evening performance. Tickets are on sale **NOW** and can be purchased online at [ticketsource.co.uk/themeppershallplayers](https://ticketsource.co.uk/themeppershallplayers) or call 01462 816336 to reserve.

As this is our 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary we're hoping to put on, and attend some fun events. One such event we'll be attending is the STMA Annual Summer fete on Sunday 5<sup>th</sup> June (on the STMA Digswell recreation grounds). We're planning to have the ever popular Tombola stall and a piece for the arena (so fingers crossed for lovely sunny weather).

We're also hoping to have another Ultimate Decades Disco with more of a Party feel. We'll be encouraging you to bring your own supper and shake your booty to all the amazing sounds of the 60's 70's & 80's. All tickets will be £5, again another fun for all the family event (the same price for the young and young at heart).

Our Pantomime this year is 'Aladdin' which will be performed on Saturday 3<sup>rd</sup> & 10<sup>th</sup> December 2022 with Matinee at £5 for all seats and evenings at £10 & £5 Concessions. Tickets for this show are on sale **NOW** online at [ticketsource.co.uk/themeppershallplayers](https://ticketsource.co.uk/themeppershallplayers)

The Players AGM will be held on Monday 6<sup>th</sup> June at 7.45pm at the STMA Digswell Hall This is open to members and non-members and a great way to meet the Players if you're interested in finding out more about us.

\*\*\*\*\*

Find the Meppershall Players on Facebook (Meppershall Players Community) Instagram, 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**

## Meppershall Social Club

Well we're into the 3rd month of the year already, how time flies! MSC hope you're all well.

This month at the social club sees the return of Gordy & Toms Karaoke/disco & A & Bs Vinyl Resurrection Roadshow, please look out for details on Meppershall Social Club & Meppershall Noticeboard FB pages.

### Saturday 26th March

MSC are hosting a CHARITY QUIZ NIGHT in the Oak Hall. This is to provide a further Defibrillator for the village to be located most likely towards the end of Shefford Road, doors open 7.30pm for an 8pm start, teams of up to 6, £5 per person, bring your own nibbles, only drinks purchased on the premises may be consumed. You must book your table in advance, please text Gemma on 07968 529282 or pop into bar to reserve, payment will be collected on the night. Please support this very worthy cause, you never know when YOU might need it!

Don't forget Friday night is **bingo night**, eyes down at 7pm (over 18s only).

MSC also have **Darts, Snooker & Pool** available for your enjoyment. SKY & BT SPORTS are also available, showing on a giant 10ft screen & 2 large screen TVs.

New to the village!? Then please do pop in. We are situated on Walnut Tree Way, a state of the art building which has regular groups & clubs for a variety of activities as well as the Social Club. A very warm welcome awaits you.

Thank you to those of you that have joined/renewed your membership. Membership is still available & entitles you to reduced priced drinks & free or reduced entry to events, pop into bar to purchase.

MSC are child, disabled & dog friendly.

MSC look forward to welcoming YOU soon, stay safe.

## Birthdays

We send best wishes this month to...

Barbara H (who will be 88)

Elsie L

Richard I will be 88

Tony E will be 83



Many happy returns and best wishes from everyone at The Meppershall Messenger!



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*Macmillan Cancer Support, registered charity in England and Wales (261017), Scotland (SC039907) and the Isle of Man (604). Also operating in Northern Ireland*



Meppershall Social Club

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**Saturday 26th March**

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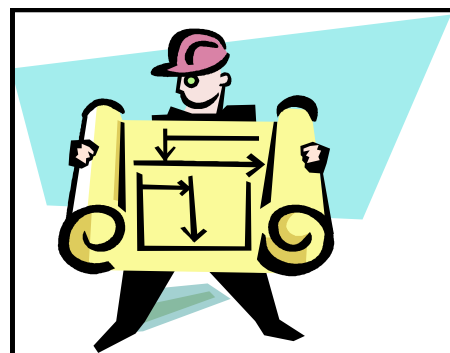
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## **Financial Matters by Paul Savuto**

### **Protect your retirement from the risk of mental decline**

Retirement – that magical time when we can finally live our lifelong dreams. Increased life expectancy means that many of us can now expect a longer retirement, but this comes at a cost: the increasing prevalence of age-related cognitive decline, which could leave us vulnerable to costly financial errors. According to the Alzheimer's Society, there are almost 885,000 people living with dementia in the UK, and estimates suggest that between 5% and 20% of over-65s suffer from mild cognitive impairment (MCI), a condition in which someone has minor problems with cognition, such as memory or thought process.

#### **Protecting your finances**

Planning for the possibility of cognitive decline is an essential part of preparing for retirement. Although many people still have the capacity to live independently and make decisions for themselves, MCI has been linked in scientific studies to poorer financial capacity and an increased susceptibility to scams.

#### **Getting the timing right**

Over 80% of investors surveyed<sup>8</sup> thought the ideal time to transfer financial control would be 'sometime after they had begun to experience some cognitive decline but before they became completely incapable.' Respondents thought there was a higher than one-in-three chance of a mistimed transfer, partly attributable to a reluctance to relinquish control, which exemplifies the need to start planning sooner rather than later, so that any future transfer takes place on your terms.

#### **Opening up conversations**

Although it may feel awkward, preparing for the possibility of cognitive decline requires careful planning, not only having legal documents in place but also starting conversations with your family and those you trust about money and your goals for the future, in advance of its possible onset. This means that everything is out in the open and close connections are more likely to notice if you begin making decisions about your money that appear to contradict your objectives.

We can assist you with planning and in starting these conversations with your family well in advance and help you better plan for the future, giving you a greater sense of ownership and control over your plans.

### **Rise of the 'Late Financial Bloomers'**

Research suggests a new group of consumers – Late Financial Bloomers – are set to change the face of retirement.

#### **Marriage and divorce**

A series of socioeconomic factors, including later home ownership, are the main drivers behind this shift. Marriage and divorce trends are also key contributors: on



average, first marriages now take place four years later than they did 20 years ago; similarly, divorce rates peak 20 years later than they did two decades previously. Childbirth plays a role too. More women over 40 now give birth each year than those under 20, which means a growing proportion of the population will be supporting children through education later in life rather than focusing on retirement planning.

### Plan ahead

Currently, Late Financial Bloomers account for just 6% of retirees, but this figure is set to rise significantly over the next 15 years. This shift towards later financial security means more people will face complex retirement journeys, thereby increasing the need to plan ahead.

### Tackling pension scams head on

With pension scam losses totalling millions each year, the Financial Conduct Authority (FCA) has reaffirmed its commitment to tackling scams in order to ensure the long-term health of the pensions market. In a speech to delegates at the Pensions and Lifetime Savings Association, the FCA's Executive Director of Markets Sarah Pritchard said steps have been taken to stop scams reaching consumers, "We want people to be better protected from the risks of scams and know how to protect themselves against them. Our ScamSmart campaign... gives knowledge and tools to help people protect themselves from scams." Simple steps We can all take simple steps to protect ourselves against potential scams.

These include:

1. Make sure you check who you're dealing with
2. Don't give out personal information you wouldn't share with a stranger
3. Don't feel pressurised into making quick decisions.

Good news – new measures. New regulations came into force on 30 November 2021 to protect pension savers and stop suspicious scam transfers, as pension trustees and scheme managers received new powers to intervene. Previously pension providers were not allowed to refuse to carry out a transfer where the saver has the right to do so, even if they were suspicious, but the new regulations will enable trustees to prevent a transfer request if they see evidence of 'red flags.'

### **GET IN TOUCH**

DGS IFA Ltd are Independent and Chartered Financial Advisers. We 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](mailto:ps@dgsifa.com), I'll be happy to talk to you and answer any questions you have. FCA 225814.

## Win A Boost Of Colour! By Amanda Devaure-Croft

*Amanda Devaure-Croft, Colour & Style Coach - [www.colourstyleglow.co.uk](http://www.colourstyleglow.co.uk)*

After two long years of varying levels of COVID restrictions, life is set to return to normal. But for many of us 'getting back to normal' may no longer feel normal at all.

The happiness and excitement of resuming life as we know it may also come with a large dose of anxiety, loss of confidence or lack of motivation.

You are not alone; this kind of response is normal. We have lived in a state of heightened stress for two years. We have feared getting sick, infecting others, losing loved ones and losing our jobs. We have worried about the long-term impact on our children, our security and our futures. We have all lived through a significant amount of change in a very short space of time. Our homes became havens of protection and safety. No wonder 'normality' might feel so strange or even threatening now!

Studies show that quarantine makes people more likely to develop a wide range of symptoms of psychological stress and disorders such as low mood, insomnia, stress, anxiety, anger, irritability and emotional exhaustion. I know I recognise several of these.

There are all kinds of things we can do to boost our mental wellbeing. But did you know that one of the simplest and most powerful tools we can use is colour?

The colours we choose to surround ourselves with have profound effects on how we think, feel and behave. When light hits our eyes a chemical transmitter is sent to the part of our brain which governs metabolism, body temperature, appetite, blood pressure, sleep and sexual functioning. This creates actual physiological changes within us. Electrical impulses also pass through the part of our brain that processes our emotions, stimulating a psychological response.

This means that different colours can stimulate or soothe, calm or energise, make us feel angry or happy, hot or cold, tired or hungry. We can harness the power of colour to give ourselves a boost and to nurture and support ourselves as needed:

Orange: a playful, friendly and energetic colour that stimulates social interaction

Yellow: a happy colour that boosts self-confidence, positivity and optimism

Pink: a soothing and nurturing colour that can help reduce anxiety

Blue: a serene and approachable colour that calms the mind

Turquoise: a uplifting and rejuvenating colour that energises the mind

Green: a restful and balancing colour that helps to relax and feel at ease

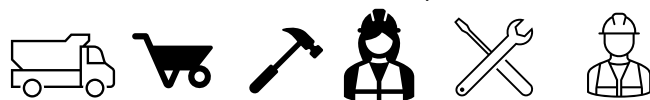
Surrounding yourself with colours you love is a simple way to improve your wellbeing. However, when it comes to the colours we wear it is worth paying a little more attention. We all know that some colours look better on us than others. But we might not know why. It's because colours interact with one another. The same colour can look radically different depending on the colour we place next to it. When we get dressed it is the colours in our skin, hair and eyes that interact with the colours we wear.

The right colours can help us appear healthier, more alive, younger, more radiant, vital, energetic, and in harmony with ourselves. Conversely, the wrong colours can make us appear sallow, jaundiced, pale, unhealthy, harsh, or dull I know which option I'd prefer!

I teach people how to wear colour from my studio in Meppershall and am giving away a colour analysis worth £165 in my Mother's Day competition. To enter, nominate someone special in your life saying why they should win. Visit me on Facebook or Instagram @colourstyleglow, comment on the competition post and share. Alternatively, send your nomination to [colourstyleglow@gmail.com](mailto:colourstyleglow@gmail.com). The winner will be picked at random on Sunday 27th March. Visit [www.colourstyleglow.co.uk](http://www.colourstyleglow.co.uk) or give me a call on 07516 577795 to find out more about how I can help you to harness the power of colour.

### **NEED SOMETHING DONE? LOOK IN THE MESSENGER FIRST!**

WHATEVER YOU NEED A SPECIALIST OR TRADESPERSON FOR, THERE'S PROBABLY ONE ADVERTISING IN HERE, LOCAL TO YOU.



OUR ADVERTISERS INCLUDE:

*PLUMBERS AND HEATING SERVICES, ELECTRICIANS, PLASTERERS, DECORATORS, BRICKLAYERS, CAR/GARAGE SERVICES, GARDEN SERVICES, HANDYMEN, CHIMNEY SWEEP, WINDOW CLEANER, CARPET CLEANER, WINDOW/DOUBLE GLAZING SPECIALIST, FLOORING, VETS, DOG GROOMER, KENNELS/CATTERY, OPTICIAN, PHYSIO/MASSAGE, BEAUTY SALON, BUILDING/HOUSEHOLD SUPPLIES, ACCOUNTANT, FINANCIAL SPECIALIST (...even counselling/hypnotherapy services if it's all too much!)*

**Look in the Messenger first. It may even be the only place you need to look!**



# TAKE A RIDE ON THE..... WANDERBUS

Check out  
all the  
photos on our  
blog

## We continue our journey...

John from LivingLife catches the Wanderbus to St. Neots!

### THE ROUTE

On the 2nd Thursday of the month the W9 & W10 services go to St. Neots - a charming riverside market town in Cambridgeshire.

### THE JOURNEY

The W9 picks-up at Shefford, Clifton, Henlow, Langford, Broom, Southill, Stanford and Caldecote, and the W10 pick-ups at Meppershall, Shillington, Stondon and Stotfold. I jumped on the bus at Stotfold at 9.45am and we were soon heading up the A1. Our driver today was Clive, and typical of Wanderbus drivers, he greeted me with a friendly smile.

Our drop-off point was Market Square in the town centre, arriving at around 10.15am, and the return bus departing at 12.15pm from the same place, as such, you have two hours to explore!

### THE DESTINATION

The Wanderbus to St. Neots coincides with Market Day, so, my first port of call was to visit the market stalls. It's a good little market, with finshmongers, butchers, fruit and veg, bookstore, and clothes stalls.

The butcher's stall was basically a huge lorry, and the butcher was wired up with a microphone and public address system keeping things lively and entertaining. I purchased x5 packs of Dry Cured Oak Smoked Bacon for £5 (absolute bargain and the bacon was delicious). I also purchased two large packs of sausages. Great produce at fantastic prices.

Next up, I wanted to do a quick tour of St. Neots with my camera to take in the sights and capture some piccies. There's quite a lot to see as you explore the historic side streets and arcades in the town centre, and you will discover plenty of independent coffee shops and cafes on your way, there are also some impressive churches to visit, plus a walk along the river side is a must. Please check out our blog on the website to view all the photos.

During my tour I discovered the 'Refill Shop', a fabulous little shop whose ethos is plastic-free whole food, promoting sustainable living and zero waste. The Refill Shop is located on St. Mary's Street and is well worth a visit.

Wanderbus is a fabulous community service, and it is important that the service is used, however, there were only five passengers on the W10 service and the expression 'use it or lose it' sprung to mind. So please support your Wanderbus and help keep this service going.



# MEPPERSHALL - WANDERBUS

Bookings & Info : Tel :0300-123-3023 [www.wanderbus.org.uk](http://www.wanderbus.org.uk)



## NEW TIMETABLE & NEW ROUTES - VALID FROM 3<sup>RD</sup> OCTOBER 2021

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

As from 3 <sup>rd</sup> October 2021		"Stops at all Bus Stops on Request"	
<b>W2 BEDFORD</b>	- 1 <sup>st</sup> & 3 <sup>rd</sup> Wednesday of Month	<b>OUT</b>	<b>RETURN</b>
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
<b>W3 BIGGLESWADE</b>	- Every Monday	<b>OUT</b>	<b>RETURN</b>
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
<b>W5 BALDOCK (Town Centre / Tesco)</b>	- Every Friday	<b>OUT</b>	<b>RETURN</b>
Rectory Rd / High St. – all stops		10.00	RR
Shefford Rd. – all stops		10.03	RR
Baldock – Tesco		10.25	12.15
<b>W6A CAMBRIDGE</b>	- 4 <sup>TH</sup> Wednesday of Month	<b>OUT</b>	<b>RETURN</b>
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
<b>W8A ST ALBANS</b>	- 2 <sup>nd</sup> 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
<b>W10 ST NEOTS</b>	- 2 <sup>nd</sup> Thursday of Month	<b>OUT</b>	<b>RETURN</b>
Rectory Rd. / High Street, All stops		09.18	RR
Shefford Rd, All stops		09.20	RR
St Neots - Market Place		10.15	12.20
<b>W11 MILTON KEYNES</b>	- 3 <sup>rd</sup> Thursday of Month	<b>OUT</b>	<b>RETURN</b>
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
<b>W12 HITCHIN</b>	- Every Tuesday	<b>OUT</b>	<b>RETURN</b>
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
<b>W14 WELWYN GARDEN CITY</b>	- 1 <sup>st</sup> Thursday of Month	<b>OUT</b>	<b>RETURN</b>
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 – 4<sup>TH</sup> Thursday of Month – call For Details – 0300-123-2023**

**E: [Thewanderbus@gmail.com](mailto:Thewanderbus@gmail.com)**

**Buses available for PRIVATE HIRE – Call for Quote.**

## Useful Contact Details In Meppershall

### DEFIBRILLATORS – outside School and Post Office/Village Stores

### 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

Drs. Garragher, Neal and Akhtar

109 Station Rd Lower Stondon SG16 6JJ 01462 850305

Shefford Dental Practice, 34 High St Shefford 01462 814020

Shams Moopen Dental, 99 Hitchin Rd Shefford 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

#### 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 3163105  
(Or 105 from a landline)

#### Central Beds Council

0300 300 8301

CBC councillors:

Tony Brown [anthony.brown@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:anthony.brown@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk)

Mark Liddiard [mark.liddiard@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:mark.liddiard@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk)

#### Parish Council Clerk

Alessandre Marabese [clerk@meppershall.org](mailto:clerk@meppershall.org)

#### Member of Parliament:

Nadine Dorries [Nadine.Dorries.MP@parliament.uk](mailto:Nadine.Dorries.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 Mon & Sun

**Whitbread Wanderbus service**

Stephanie Kirby [thewanderbus@gmail.com](mailto:thewanderbus@gmail.com)

**Food and Supplies**

Budgens Stores, Post Office, High Street 01462 811252

Rogers Bakery, High Street 01462 813398

The Sugar Loaf, 25 High St 01462 654334

Mobile Fish & Chips (Happy Plaice), Tuesdays 3.30 -7.00, Sugar Loaf

**Schools**

Meppershall Academy, High Street 01462 813293

Meppershall Pre School Village Hall Tamsin Osborn 07816 357159

[meppershallps@gmail.com](mailto:meppershallps@gmail.com)

Robert Bloomfield, Shefford 01462 628800

Samuel Whitbread, Stotfold 01462 629900

Henlow Academy 01462 813733

Redborne Upper 01525 404462

**Organisations**

Meppershall Players, Karen Mitchell 01462 816366

Meppershall Good Neighbours (GNOMES) 07760 793921

Meppershall Brownies, Suzanne 07817 392325

Shefford Guides, Angie Griffiths 07957 462519

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

Kathy Georgiou 01462 629313

Meppershall Village Hall

Trustees [trustees@meppershallvillagehall.co.uk](mailto:trustees@meppershallvillagehall.co.uk)

Bookings [bookings@meppershallvillagehall.co.uk](mailto:bookings@meppershallvillagehall.co.uk) 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 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 12<sup>th</sup> 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.

### **THE TEAM**

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<b>Collating Dates 2022</b>			
April 2022 Issue	March 28 <sup>th</sup>	July 2022 Issue	June 27 <sup>th</sup>
May 2022 Issue	April 25 <sup>th</sup>	Aug-Sept Double Issue	July 25 <sup>th</sup>
June 2022 Issue	May 30 <sup>th</sup>	October 2022 Issue	September 26 <sup>th</sup>
<b>Please contact John Thompson to confirm arrangements (contact information above).</b>			

***Please note that dates in the above table show when collating will take place, at 2.30pm in the Village Hall, for the corresponding month, displayed to the left. The issue being collated usually relates to the following month. However, please continue to look out for updates and alterations to usual plans during the coronavirus social distancing measures.***