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# **Editorial by James Read**

Summer is an incredible time to enjoy life here, and for me that is all about the people we live alongside. Maybe you'll enjoy the lilting melodies of John Chapman somewhere in our region (page 20) — or try our new Artisan



Coffee Shop! Maybe you'll be captivated by the mystery of local ley lines (page 14). Maybe you'll sample the fun and friendship at the Social Club (page 18) or go along to the Shefford Craft and Produce Show (page 27) or enjoy the beauty and inspiration (and produce!) of Warden Abbey Vineyard at its Open Day (page 30). And there's so much more to read about here. We hope you enjoy this issue of the magazine.

But for many, the usual summer of long lazy days will be a more concerning time amid the rising costs of food, fuel, travel... and pretty much everything else, while incomes stay broadly the same and many forms of investment are also suffering.

It was good to see our Central Bedfordshire Council leader committing to help residents cope with the rising cost of living, including funding for councillors to support their communities. CBC support already includes 7,000 households with children eligible for free school meals which have received supermarket vouchers and 5,000 older people who have received financial support. The newly announced Individual Councillor Grants allow local councillors to spend extra money where it will make the most difference, based on local knowledge. The principles and commitment are great, but people will hope the numbers get better. The existing Ward Councillor Grant Scheme is being extended by just £1,000 to each councillor.

Cllr Wenham also recognised the important role of voluntary and community groups. Because, as important as money, is the time and effort that we each bring to the challenges facing us all – by spending some of our own time to help out with the organisations that are the fabric of the place where we live.

I recently heard of a remark someone had made about the people who are part of the various groups and committees across the village. "It's all the same people running all these things!" they said. I had to laugh. Those of us who could be accused of being "All the same people" do NOT want it that way. We want to do just a little bit, alongside lots of other people. The village as a whole needs far more people involved – from the Parish Council, to the Village Hall Committee, to the village magazine, to the Social Club and even the church. Later in this issue you can also find important ways to volunteer in support of local policing, in civilian oversight roles. "All the same people who do" are actively seeking "All the other people who could".

You could start by getting involved in the magazine each month... we need an extra editor (and there are smaller roles too)! And you know what? All this volunteering stuff is really fun. It's at the heart of community life, and you'll make great friends. Email us to get involved! New faces in the village are especially welcome!





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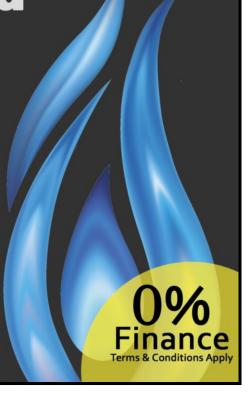
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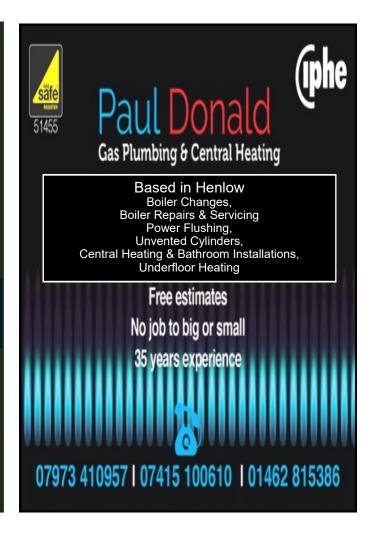
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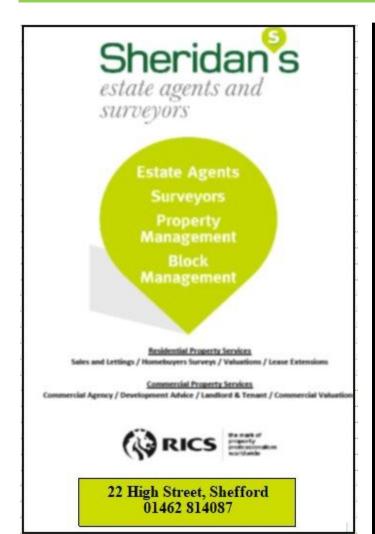
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### Letters to the Editors

Dear Editors,

The Advertorial by Davidsons Homes in the July edition requires some clarification.

The investment programme of £1.86m should be seen as a public relations exercise and not as a benevolent gesture.

S106 is a regulatory obligation that has to be made against any 'large' development. From Croudace's 78 houses, the village received a £1.8m Village Hall.

Davidsons Homes (145 houses) are allocating the majority of the funding to schooling within the area. Whilst this is noble and required, the need for extra school places is created through such developments and is not a direct benefit to Meppershall itself.

This development alone will add 400-500 residents to the village and will add 200+cars within the village.

If Davidsons really want to add value to Meppershall itself, then they could consider:

- 1. A full pedestrian crossing opp 114 Shefford Rd the green road marking that leads to the path on the field opposite.
- 2. A full pedestrian crossing at the top of the Shefford Rd hill (by the 30mph sign) again for the path crossing the road, especially relevant with the speed traffic is coming up into the village.
- 3. A few thousand trees to compensate for the additional CO2 that their construction traffic is creating and for the extra residents that will be in the village after completion.

One final point – can we be advised what contribution Bovis made to the village for their 68-house development?

# Name supplied

# **Financial Contributions Of A New Development**

There has been much discussion on what exactly Davidsons Homes is contributing to local facilities and services as it brings so many new houses, residents and cars to the village. We checked with the Parish Council and can share the following objective info.

All developments over 10 houses are obligated to provide funding to the local community using specific government formulas to calculate the specifics ("Section 106" or "S106") - reflecting the local infrastructure needed when new residents arrive.

The draft Unilateral Undertaking (the agreement on what Davidsons need to provide to Central Bedfordshire Council for Section 106 purposes) and contributions specifically listed for Meppershall on CBC Section 106 reports are as follows:

- Education Early Years Places at Meppershall Cofe Academy £149,325
- Education Lower School Places at Meppershall CofE Academy £497,748
- Education Expansion at Henlow Academy £500,856
- Education Upper School provision at Etonbury £614,217
- Leisure Play Equipment £85,000.00 (this will be used by MPC for new equipment in the village)

- Waste Provision of bins £7,920.00
- Countryside Access Creation of Right-of-Way £5,550.00

In addition to the above Davidsons have provided funding for:

- Books for Meppershall Library
- Donation of £1500 towards the cost of a new defibrillator at the village hall

The new green open space on the development is a requirement of the development itself, along with its play area. This space is proposed for handover to Meppershall Parish Council (MPC) but there is no funding with the handover (as would normally be the case). MPC will have to pay for its upkeep in perpetuity. Interestingly, if MPC declined the handover then it would most likely go to a management company for maintenance – with costs levied on the residents of the new homes. So MPC is doing what it believes to be best for all village residents.

As always we would welcome any further info or comments that Davidsons, CBC or MPC would like to provide. <a href="Mepp.messenger@gmail.com">Mepp.messenger@gmail.com</a>.

# New Lease Of Life For The Café!

It was great news to find out recently that the Walnut Tree café in the village hall was going to re-open under new management.

Local specialist food entrepreneur Andy Neave, who has over 15 years experience in food and retail, had been running Artisan Food evenings locally specialising in cheese, wine and chilli (as well as a shop in Stockwood Park Discovery Centre, Luton). He has now started up in the village hall on a daily basis, where he and his team (led by daughter Caitlin) will be offering quality coffee, cakes and snacks from local suppliers. The new café is known as the *Artisan Coffee Shop*.

Andy's ethos is primarily to "support local, support home", and with very few exceptions this is what you get. Bread and cakes are from a Letchworth specialist; a range of jewellery is on display from a local craftsperson. But he's long had a "thing" for chilli, and the chilli farm at Blunham is to blame. They are the main supplier for his range of artisan chilli-based products available to buy from the café, but keep an eye out for an exception – a range of chilli jams produced by New York firefighters on shift in the station house kitchen is soon to arrive, with proceeds to their own charity. Other products sold are also home-produced, maintaining the emphasis on small, specialist suppliers. Even the firefighters jam is small-scale, and produced part-time of course!

As well as village residents dropping in for a drink and a chat, Andy welcomes and wants local groups to continue to pop in, like the Gnomes, Book Club, Craft Club etc., and will have some special deals, such as coffee and cake for £5. Afternoon Teas are available on a pre-book basis, with or without alcohol. We arrived too early for this, but the bacon roll smelled very tempting...



The Artisan Coffee Shop team, led by Caitlin (left)

So we hope that Meppershall residents will take the opportunity to pop in and try the Artisan Coffee shop – a local enterprise, and a local facility we were afraid would disappear.

So many cakes, so little time...

\*

# **Meppershall Parish Council – Approved Minutes**

# **Meppershall Parish Council – Approved Summary of Minutes**

An Ordinary Meeting of Meppershall Parish Council (MPC) took place on Monday 13th June 2022.

### Chairman's announcements

- The Chairman attended the Beds Police Community Priority Setting meeting and the presentation received at the meeting has been circulated to all MPC councillors. Discussion at the meeting was held regarding the Special Constable for Meppershall, Shillington and Gravenhurst. Beds Police are aware of Meppershall issues including drug dealing and anti-social behaviour. Priorities for the area will be drugs and speeding. Action: The Clerk was asked to arrange an advert for Speedwatch volunteers with Shefford and Campton and possibly Gravenhurst and Shillington.
- Central Beds Council (CBC) Cheering Volunteering event was attended by Cllr Thompson and Mr Pain. There were circa 150 attendees for afternoon tea. It was a positive event with CBC Cllr Tracy Stock presenting on behalf of CBC.

- Cllr Thompson and Mr Pain took the opportunity to promote Meppershall to attendees.
- Crime statistics for the village last month show 6 reported crimes.
- Unfortunately Cllr Shephard has resigned from MPC. We wish him well for the future. The Clerk has advised CBC and appropriate notices have been issued and displayed.

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

- A507 An accident on the A507 recently blocked the road at the Beadlow bends. This is an accident hotspot. Cllrs Liddiard and Brown are putting pressure on the CBC portfolio holder to improve the safety of the road in this location and will be asking for a reduction in the speed limit to 40mph with the installation of average speed camera. They will be raising this issue at the next full meeting of CBC's Council.
- M1/A6 link road This has now received full planning permission and construction will start as soon as all land is in CBC ownership.
- Cllr Parsons joined the meeting.
- Polehanger bus stop Cllr Liddiard will be attending a remote meeting with CBC officers and the Clerk on Friday 17th June.
- Office of the Police & Crime Commissioner (OPCC) & Rural Matched Funding (RMF) applications – Cllr Liddiard has requested an update from CBC officers on both the MPC OPCC and RMF highways projects/applications.
- The Pigling The Clerk was asked to forward MPC's views on the revised application after a decision is made at this meeting.
- MOT Testing Centres CBC has opened two new MOT Testing Centres in Sandy and Dunstable. They will not carry out vehicle repairs.
- Walking and Cycling Strategies CBC will be consulting on new walking and cycling strategies in July 2022.
- Grants Schemes There are still funds available to apply for from both the Ward Councillor Grant Schemes and the Community Assets Grant.

### Questions / comments from the public:

- Mobile mast capacity Since the recent new dwelling developments, the mobile service (voice & data) has become almost unusable in parts of Meppershall, I have two mobiles for work and personal (SKY & O2) on two different providers. After a lot of calls and research, it was confirmed there are 3 Telefonica masts supporting Meppershall and the surrounding area. 2 masts are now at full capacity, the 3rd almost full too. Currently no 5G. Therefore, during peak times, the quality of the signal is lost as, basically, capacity is exceeded. What is the plan from CBC to work with phone companies to provide sufficient coverage and why is this not considered in the planning process? See response below
- Fibre for Meppershall Parts of Meppershall such as Orchard Close still do not have Fibre. Evidence can be provided that there is no plan to resolve, the Fibre only goes to the Exchange Box in Shefford. What is the plan to resolve

this as part of the government commitment to Fibre coverage? Cllr Liddiard has received responses from CBC Officers and will forward these to the Clerk. In summary residents need to lobby companies regarding coverage and he will investigate what lobbying CBC can do for additional masts.

• Will the A507 Pedestrian Bridge be saved? *Cllr Liddiard – It may be moved but not a response that can be given with any certainty.* 

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

- **a. IT and Communications** Cllr Thompson will assist councillors with gov.uk email set up and Cllr Addy to provide a photo for the website.
- b. Stocken House Green Space Davidsons are seeking to find alternative entrances into the green space should issues arise in the future with the retained strip of land. No response has been received from CBC after requesting information for changes required to the Unilateral Undertaking. Clerk to chase CBC for an update.
- **c. Electrical Connection from Old Road Meadow** All paperwork has been completed including the Wayleave Agreement with UKPN. MPC is awaiting confirmation of completion.
- **d.** Wry Close Allotment Track Update from Clerk subsequent to MPC request that The Sugar Loaf PH find an alternative method of anchoring their gazebo so that it does not involve use of the allotment track owned by MPC. To confirm action taken and any further action required.
  - The Clerk and Cllr Thompson arranged an onsite meeting with The Sugar Loaf PH Lease Holder on 23rd May however he did not attend and therefore a conversation was held over telephone. During the conversation the Landlord refused to remove the anchorings and refused to accept that MPC are the sole owners of the track. The Clerk after consulting with the Chairman contacted our Solicitor at Ross Williams and requested that she write to The Sugar Loaf PH landlord setting out our position (letter forwarded to councillors). MPC must consider what to do if the Sugar Loaf PH does not remove the anchorings as requested and contact/advice has been sought from both our solicitor and Beds Police. Subsequent to receipt of the letter from our Solicitor the Lease Holder of The Sugar Loaf PH asked to meet with the Clerk and Cllr Thompson on site on 13<sup>th</sup> June to discuss positioning of anchors. The Lease Holder is requesting that the anchorings remain in situ, having explained the difficulties in moving them, and has made a proposal for letting and maintaining part of the allotment track accordingly.

The Clerk advised that:

- Standing Orders section 7 state as follows: 7.1. A resolution shall not be reversed within six months except either by a special motion, which requires written notice by at least 3 councillors to be given to the Proper Officer in accordance with standing order 9, or by a motion moved in pursuance of the report or recommendation of a working group. As the requirements of Standing Orders have not been met the resolution made in April 2022 stands.
- A key legal restriction is contained in the Allotments Act 1922, whereby there is a general prohibition on any "trade or business" being conducted on the

allotment garden or any part thereof. An allotment garden must, by definition, "be wholly or mainly cultivated for the production of vegetable or fruit crops for consumption by the occupier or his family". In letting part of the allotment track, which forms part of our allotment land, to a commercial business such as The Sugar Loaf PH who is using the marquee for trade we would not be adhering to the Law.

Resolved that the allotment track area is made safe by erecting safety fencing around it, that the Clerk seeks advice from the NSALG on the interpretation of the Law and that the Clerk seek advice from marquee installers on whether there is an alternative way of anchoring the marque that does not involve the allotment track.

### **Finance**

### a. Purchase Orders

- Resolved to approve purchase of glass units, blinds, filing storage and costs for works to changing room ceilings.
- Resolved to approve cost to repair Festival of Britain sign as provided by Projects in Wood & Artisans in the Yard at circa £400+VAT.
- The Clerk has chased delivery of the defibrillator ordered in February and has been told that deliveries are expected in July. The delay is due to a shortage of microchip parts. An alternative defib has been offered but this would mean accepting a different model to those already installed and maintained by MPC. Councillors agreed that MPC should not accept the alternative at present and review the situation in September.
- **b.** 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 for consideration

- CB/22/01804/OUT Greenwoods, Land North of Higham Road and East of the A6 Bedford Road, Barton Le Clay, Bedfordshire - Outline Application: Erection of up to 3,750 residential units (Use Class C3 etc). All matters reserved except for details of access to and from the A6, Higham Road and Gravenhurst / Barton Road. Resolved that the Council objects to planning application 22/01804.
- To endorse the Gravenhurst Parish Council objection to planning application 22/01804.
  - Resolved that the endorse Gravenhurst Parish council objection to planning application 22/01804.
- CB/22/00799/FULL The Pigling, SG17 5LL Erection of two detached dwellings with associated garages and carport. *Resolved that the Council objects to planning application 22/00799*.

# **Neighbourhood Plan**

Re-consultation of MNP Draft Plan policy has started and will end on 29th June 2022. A new grant application for 2022-2023 has been approved by Groundworks. Our consultant is working on the updates to the draft NP.

# **Highways and Transport**

- a. **OPCC** and RMF grant funding update from Clerk The Clerk has not received an update on either the OPCC or RMF grant funding. *Action: Cllr Thompson to write to Richard Wenham and the PCC regarding the lack of communication and movement on the part of CBC. Where possible an MPC councillor should attend the next CBC Full Council meeting and pose the question regarding updates.*
- b. Update on proposed action to deal with vehicles driving along the Hoo Road bridleway - The Clerk has been discussing the issue of vehicles using the Hoo road bridleway with our CBC Right of Way Officer is proposing installation of a drop-down horse barrier close to Chapel Road and is contacting relevant landowners for permission. Once these works are completed then repairs will be made to the bridleway.
- c. Update on discussions with CBC on bus stop locations in the village Meeting with CBC officer scheduled for Friday 17th June to discuss. Cllr Liddiard, Cllr Thompson and the Clerk to attend. It was noted that new bus stop signs have appeared at the Care home and outside 19 Shefford Road.
- d. To consider joint street and speed watch initiative with Campton and Shefford - Due to a lack of volunteers, street and speed watch initiatives in a number of adjoining parishes may cease. Meppershall has been asked if it would like to consider a joint initiative with both Campton and Shefford. Councillors agreed that this would be a good initiative to be part of and asked the Clerk to proceed.

### **Environment and Leisure**

- **a. Centenary Field -** The Clerk and Cllr Morgan reported that:
- MVH have questioned the bund uniformity in size and whether they are large enough. The Clerk is investigating this.
- Areas behind the Village Hall have been stripped, top soil added and seeded.
   The recent downpours have caused issues with seed run off and so the contractors have been back to site twice to reseed.
- Drains have been installed behind the village hall. The main Centenary Field drain install differs to the original plans due to land heights and falls.
- The sports pitch has been scarified, top soiled and reseeded. The grass seed previously in situ was not football grass seed. Contractors will return in a fortnight to review.
- Track around the fenced sports pitch has been installed.
- Corner of sports pitch build out has been completed.
- Install of gym equipment pending.
- Hire request To consider request of availability and hire rates for Centenary Field (required once a week during term time 3:30-4:30pm for children to do Rugby/Cricket sessions with a coach) - A request has been received (from a home-education group hiring MVH twice per week) looking to hire from September 2022 any green space near the Village Hall once a week for an hour for a group of 15-20 children aged 5-10 to play rugby and

- cricket on, (whatever we think is appropriate). These activities are separate to the main Home education group but there is some overlap. Resolved that the Council approves the hire at a cost of £15 per hour subject to necessary completion of documentation.
- b. To consider request to plant a commemorative tree in hour of a deceased village resident - The Clerk was contacted on behalf of a group of friends who, 20 years ago, studied part time on a Horticultural course at Shuttleworth College. One of their members, Wendy Reece, lived in Shefford Road in Meppershall and was very involved in the community but sadly died a few years ago. Both she and her husband are buried in our Parish Church graveyard. The group of friends have tried to arrange a suitable memorial for her but have had offers of tree planting rejected by Shuttleworth College, St Mary's Church and The Woodland trust do not have a suitable scheme. In this year when tree planting is so encouraged the group is asking MPC if we have a suitable location in Meppershall where we would be prepared for the group to plant a tree, preferably a native tree (species to be agreed with MPC) together with a plaque in Wendy's memory? The group are aware that future maintenance has to be considered and the species and location of any new tree has to be considered carefully. Resolved that the Council approves the installation of a tree(s) on Centenary Field in memory of Mrs Reece by her group of friends in the autumn and that the Clerk specify type to be installed.

### **Personnel Committee**

a. To receive minutes of Personnel committee meeting held on 5th May 2022 - Resolved that the Council receives and approves the minutes of the Personnel Committee meeting held on 5th May 2022.

**Close of the meeting -** The Chairman closed the meeting at 9:17pm and reminded everyone that the next meeting would be the 25<sup>th</sup> July 2022 in the Village Hall.

John Thompson - Chairman - Meppershall Parish Council

\*

# **Central Bedfordshire Council News**

Recent announcements from CBC include a new Deputy Lord Lieutenant, a proposal to close Watling House in Dunstable and an opportunity for school governors to nominate themselves to be part of the Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

The new Deputy Lieutenant is Professor Dame Helen Atkinson DBE, FREng. Her role is to assist the Lord-Lieutenant and Vice Lord-Lieutenant in their support for Central Bedfordshire on behalf of HM The Queen, including work with voluntary and community groups, armed forces and business, seeking to bring kindness, opportunity and cohesion in Bedfordshire. She brings a strong background of international professional experience and is Pro-Vice Chancellor for the School of Aerospace, Transport and Manufacturing at Cranfield University. Made CBE in 2014 and DBE in 2021 for services to engineering and education, she was the first woman President of the Engineering Professors' Council and is married to the Bishop of Bedford.

CBC is proposing to close its Watling House office in Dunstable, based on "market conditions." A consultation with the public is ongoing. Face to face appointments will no longer be possible at Watling House, but CBC suggests Dunstable leisure centre and library and the Grove Theatre could be suitable alternatives. CBC is seeking engagement in the public consultation process.

CBC is seeking nominees for two replacement volunteer parent governor representatives on their Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee. Any parent governors of academy and maintained schools within Central Bedfordshire can self-nominate. They may currently be involved in a lower, primary, middle, secondary or upper school.

The Council's Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee scrutinises performance, considers children's services policy and offers comments that inform the Council's Executive in making decisions. Parent governor representatives are a nonpolitical voice for parents in the area on education issues and parents' concerns. They attend meetings of the Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee, and working groups etc. The closing date for nominations is 4pm on September 12, 2022. More info from Rebecca Preen tel. 0300 300 4193; email rebecca.preen@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk.

\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*

# Important Community Roles With The Police And Crime Commissioner

The Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC) is seeking to fill important roles related to community involvement in policing and police governance. For info and applications email <a href="PCC@beds.police.uk">PCC@beds.police.uk</a> or go to the Bedfordshire OPCC website.

Firstly, OPCC is seeking members of the local community aged 16 and over who live in Bedfordshire to be members of the **Stop and Search and Use of Force Scrutiny Panels**.

The role of the **Stop and Search and Use of Force Scrutiny Panels** is to provide independent scrutiny of the use of Stop and Search and Use of Force by police across Bedfordshire. This includes things like giving feedback on Stop and Search and Use of Force practices, being a voice for community concerns to influence police actions and achieving greater transparency and community involvement in the use of Stop and Search and Use of Force powers across our area.

Ultimately the aim is to improve public confidence and trust in the way that these powers are used. Panel members also have opportunities to advise on policy, training and tactical considerations in these areas. Panel members review data and sometimes assess individual cases to identify areas of concern and good practice.

Secondly, OPCC is recruiting **Volunteer Independent Custody Visitors**. These are volunteers from the community who work in pairs to check on the treatment of people detained by the police and the conditions in which they are held. They check that their

rights and entitlements are being maintained. Volunteers should be good listeners, non-judgmental and unbiased. The scheme offers protection and confidentiality to detainees and the police and provides reassurance to the wider community.

Like the panel members, Independent Custody Visitors come from all sections of the community and must be 18 or over and live in Bedfordshire. They must have lived in the UK for at least three years before applying. No specific qualifications are required - training and support is provided. To avoid conflicts of interest, serving police officers, people serving the police or OPCC staff or people with some other connection to the criminal justice system are unsuitable for the role.

Independent Custody Visitors can call at Police Stations unannounced at any time. With agreement, they can speak to detainees and take up any concerns with custody staff, making a short report of their findings. The aim is to provide assurance that anyone arrested by the police and held in custody is treated fairly and has access to appropriate facilities.

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# **Meppershall Messenger Annual General Meeting**

A small band of volunteers met at the Village Hall on 25<sup>th</sup> June for the AGM of the village magazine. Here is a quick summary of the meeting.

Overall, the meeting focused on the great appreciation from the village for those volunteering to support the magazine in so many different ways. It focused on the good standing of the magazine at the present time in terms of its finances, social media engagement, content and regular publication. And it focused on the fact that we cannot take that for granted, with some people having to leave the team and the need to find new volunteers to come and help. New volunteers will not only help get everything done, but will bring their experience and views to make sure that the village magazine stays true to what people want to see in it, many years into the future.

The magazine is now printed on 100% recycled paper – thanks to Mick Ridley for encouraging this transition. Its electricity is now provided via the British Gas Eco Tariff. So we have reduced our carbon footprint.

Financially, the magazine has had a reduced advertising revenue in recent years owing to lockdown. We offered advertisers a concessionary year to reflect our online-only period of publication, during which costs were greatly reduced – but at the same time, printing costs were greatly reduced. The magazine benefits from a good financial balance at the present time, reflecting the need to save up for a replacement printer which is expected to be purchased in the 2024-25 period. The printer has done half-a-million copies to-date and has a lifecycle of around one million copies. It is used not only for the magazine, but for other community printing, which earns a modest additional income for the magazine.

The Meppershall Messenger is hugely grateful to its advertisers and our advertising manager, Andrew Pain, whose excellent work has maintained our base of support and achieved full payment of advertising invoices.

The committee said a fond farewell to Mick Ridley and made plans for a thank you gift to him in honour of four years as co-editor. A presentation was duly made to Mick on 22<sup>nd</sup> July, pictured here: left to right, James Read (Editor), Mick Ridley (outgoing Co-Editor), John Thompson (Treasurer).



The editors' report reflected the successful return to a printed magazine in October 2021, while also noting how successful online publication appeared to be during lockdown. There is an opportunity to develop an online publication that would be more attractive and readable than the current Acrobat PDF format – but that will require time and skills that the magazine does not currently have within its volunteer team.

The content of the magazine continues to embrace everything submitted to it — with editors reserving the right to decline offensive or misleading content. The team are very grateful to the many regular contributors who write all kinds of different articles and information for the village community. The meeting discussed the critical need for people who are new to the village to get involved, submit ideas, information, letters, articles etc, to ensure the magazine continues to develop as the village does.

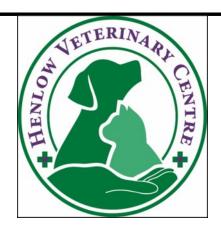
Thanks were expressed to Colette House who has supported the magazine in so many ways down the years, most recently with assiduous proof reading each month!

Andrew manages the monthly distribution and all roads are covered. There are some corners of the village that need a volunteer 'postman' to cover their own road. Huge thanks to our regular posties including Ian, Neil, Viv, Graham, new team member Steve, and others. The magazine has proven popular with the sales offices of the new developments, as a way of informing and welcoming new residents.

The meeting ended with a discussion of ways to engage and inform residents new and old about the opportunities to shape and support the magazine. The challenge of achieving greater involvement and volunteering is not limited to the Messenger but to so many other parts of village life.

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# Meppershall And A Mid Bedfordshire Ley Line

The term "Ley Line" carries a variety of meanings to different people. For many, the next phrase that might come to mind is "crop circle" and possible "aliens." There is a wealth of online chatter on the mystical, spiritual and supernatural beliefs linked to ley lines. Some describe them as "a grid of earth energies circling the globe" - being seen across the world from South America to the Middle East and Northern Europe. Some say they can be located with divining rods. The 'Earth Chamber' at the Clophill Centre was constructed to harness the power of local "positive earth energy lines" for meditation and spiritual practices. These aspects of ley lines are intriguing and interesting, and while this short article simply recognises some local long-distance alignments through our village, it certainly raises more questions than it answers.

A village magazine named "Meppershall Musings" — which existed before the Meppershall Messenger — published an article in the 1970s written by Sue Chapman with a wonderful review of of a 15.5 mile ley line running from Westoning to Ashwell. Quite separately, we had noticed something similar over the years of living in Meppershall, during many walks out to Shillington Bury and well beyond. The view to the west is stunning, with Pulloxhill water tower out on the horizon. But in a moment of revelation, looking at the view, it becomes clear that the ancient church at Lower Gravenhurst is in a perfect line between that spot on top of the hill at Pulloxhill, and our own church in Meppershall. Online mapping websites, including Ordnance Survey, allow us to explore that line in much more detail today. Doing that reveals a whole range of ancient and important sites lined up on the very same line — east and west of Meppershall. We don't claim to detail the course of the suggested ley line — others with more local expertise continue to do that, and opinions differ.

But we have plotted some of the broad alignment here. Proceeding along the line heading west from Meppershall, we see a perfect alignment with important historical features in the formal gardens of Wrest Park. First of these is the Archer Pavillion, built 1709-1711 by Thomas Archer for Henry de Grey, Duke of Kent. Archer was a renowned architect who was responsible for the most famous features of Chatsworth House. His Wrest Park pavilion copied the plan of the University Church of Rome, laid out as two intersecting triangles to form a six-pointed star. The Archer Pavillion would have hosted hunting parties and includes accommodation and catering rooms.

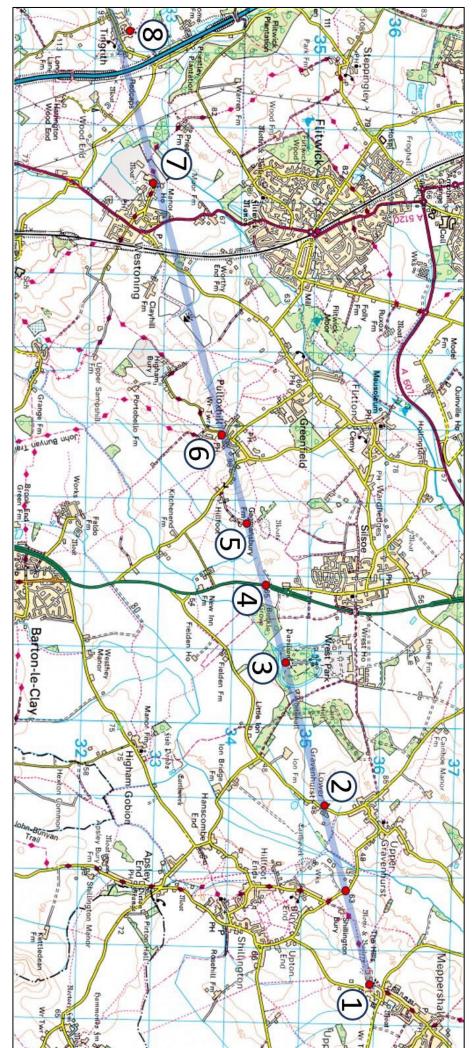
Just west of the Archer Pavillion is a collection of Romano-Greek altars. The most famous is dedicated to Mithras (a Mithraic Altar) – a Persian god with ritualistic links these days to freemasonry. The altars were purchased and placed there in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century by the de Grey family. Were they deliberately positioned on the ley line, close to another line linking Great Offley, Deacon Hill, Higham Gobion and Silsoe?

Further west, the line continues through the ancient mounds and deserted medieval village at Gagmansbury, over the very highest point on the A6 at Silsoe (itself an ancient route) and right through the parish churches at Pulloxhill and Westoning. At Tingrith, it perfectly follows the main road (High Street). It is tempting to think that further exploration would show its continued route out across Buckinghamshire.

# Possible Ley Line Through Meppershall – Extending West From Meppershall

- A line in the landscape linking positions of historic interest
- Historical and landscape features

1 – St Marys Church Meppershall2 – St Marys Church Lower Gravenhurst3 – Mithraic Altar and Archer Pavillion, Wrest Park 5 – Gagmansbury 4 – Highest point on A6 south of Silsoe ©Crown copyright 2022 Ordnance Survey. Media 054/22. 8 – St Nicholas Church, Tingrith 6 – St James the Apostle, Pulloxhill St Mary Magdalene Church, Westoning



It becomes even more interesting when you track the course of the ley line (if that's what it is) to the east of the village. Coming through the castle mounds west of the church, the manor house and the church itself, the line heads east close to the site of the St Thomas Chapel at Chapel Farm (some believe it goes right through the chapel). Based on our mapping, the line may take a course slightly north of the chapel, closer to the junction of Fildyke Road, Chapel Road and the footpath known locally as Cow Lane. Other local knowledge holds that it goes right through the St Thomas Chapel.

As shown in the second map here, the next place on the line appears to be Arlesey, close to St Peter's church, and near to the ancient crossing point on the River Hiz by the railway station. That bridge is listed in a 1566 survey of Etonbury Monastery, when it was already ancient (though much repaired and replaced in recent centuries).

Further east still, the church of St Guthric at Astwick sits close to the line – and the crossing point on the River Ivel very nearby seems to closer still. Astwick is an ancient hamlet where Saxon burial remains have been found and where the house at Astwick Bury boasts a garden with historic moats.

Further east still, the line meets the prominent church at Ashwell, high on the downs on the Cambs-Herts borders. Astonishingly, it then seems to follow the course of the Icknield Way at Ashwell. Beyond our map, it continues into Cambridgeshire, directly through the churches at Meldreth and Fowlmere. With a small change in direction it meets the churches at Thriplow, Whittlesford, Sawston, Babraham, and beyond.

So... what's it all about? Ancient Britain was a tricky place to survive. With very few navigational aids, straight lines and lines of sight from one place to another were important. Having key locations along straight lines helped people locate themselves while travelling. The line described here runs true east-west and may also have provided a reference point for the rising and setting sun through the seasons. And is it really a straight line – or a roughly straight alignment intended to link key locations?

The Icknield way is believed to have already existed when the Romans arrived, being used up to 6,000 years ago in the neolithic period. Its exact course is not clear. Two parallel sections exist between Baldock and Royston, one near Ashwell. It is not straight like a Roman road, but it is tempting to think that the alignment of a ley line with the Icknield Way at Ashwell is more than coincidence. Does it string together prehistoric sacred sites that remain important for the cultures and religions of today?

Then there is the historical theory linked to the Saxon invasion. While landing on the East Anglian coast, archaeology has shown that the Saxons rapidly settled long distances inland, including on the Thames Valley. Did they forge a straight line, through Mid Bedfordshire, founding hill top settlements as they went (perhaps on top of the defeated locals); settlements and sacred sites that are still prominent locations for us, today? Or does the line, and the places on it, relate to some deeper meaning – something more mystical, something we do not know? Why did the de Greys of Wrest Park place their classical altars on the line – was that just chance? What do you think?! Email us at Mepp.messenger@gmail.com.

# Possible Ley Line Through Meppershall – Extending East From Meppershall

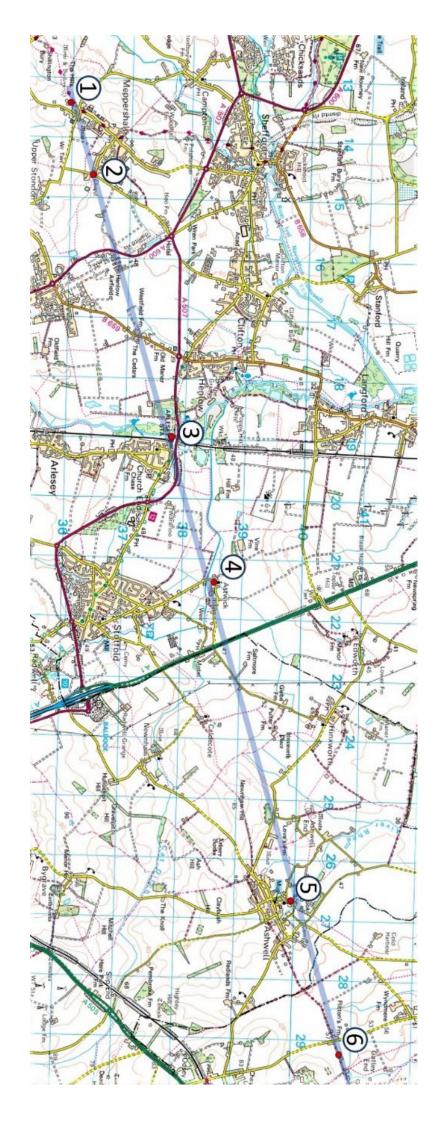
A line in the landscape linking positions of historic interest

Historical and landscape

features

- 1 St Marys Church Meppershall
  2 Chapel Farm and the Chapel of St Thomas, Meppershall
  3 Ancient crossing point on the River Hiz at Arlesey 6 – St James the Apostle, Pulloxhill
- 4 Church of St Guthlac, Astwick
- 5 St Marys Church, Ashwell

6 – Ashwell Street (Icknield Way) ©Crown copyright 2022 Ordnance Survey. Media 054/22.



# **Meppershall Social Club**

MSC hopes this finds you all well and that you have enjoyed some truly tropical weather.

We have an abundance of events throughout August and September and we hope there is something for all to enjoy...

### **AUGUST**

12th August KARAOKE

20th August LEECH, live covers band with tunes from artists including The

Who, The Jam, Rolling Stones, Pink Floyd, Bowie & T Rex to name but a few. Entry for this event is FREE for members & £5

for non members in advance £10 on the door.

27th August ABBA ALIKE, fabulous tribute band, tickets £15, available from

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26th August VINYL NIGHT.

**SEPTEMBER** 

3rd September REBEL VIBE, covers band performing original Reggae tunes.

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10th September BOOTLEG BEE GEES, a great tribute act, tickets £15, available

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9th September KARAOKE.

16th September EAT FEAST returning for the final time this year, with live music,

vocalist and disco.

### Also starting September...

KILLER POOL starting Sunday 4th September from 6pm and on the first Sunday of every month thereafter.

POOL COMPETITION on Sunday 18th & Monday 19th September from 6pm, £5 entry fee, cash prize for the lucky winner.

QUIZ NIGHT starting Sunday 11th September from 7pm and on the 2nd Sunday of each month thereafter.

BBQs will be will be taking place on various dates throughout August (weather permitting).

**And don't forget** MSC also have BINGO on Friday evenings, eyes down at 7pm.

SNOOKER, full size table, £2 per hour | POOL TABLE, £1 per game | DARTS, free.

MSC will also be re-commencing Dominoes in the Shefford & District League in September, If you are interested in playing, then please pop in to add your name to the list.

All events will be advertised on Meppershall Social Club & Meppershall Notice Board Facebook pages. We hope there is something for all! If not, please do let us know what you would like to see at YOUR social club, just head to our Facebook page to send a message.

MSC wish you a safe summer & we hope to welcome you soon.



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# **Meppershall Busker Making Musical Magic**

Earlier this year walking across the Market Square in Hitchin, my spirits were lifted by the mellow voice of one man and his sound system – floating his voice and melodies through the spring sunshine to those bustling around the shops or relaxing over a coffee.

And then I realised that voice belonged to Meppershall's own John Chapman! We caught up with John to learn more about his musical endeavours.

"I started busking after several years of Karaoke at the Village Halls got me going. I have freedom to sing when I want, where I want, in public places. And yes, it is quite legal as long as I respect positioning and sound level and don't sing for too long (an hour or so is the norm which gives me about 16-20 songs).," he explained.

"I began in 2019. The pandemic stopped me for two years, except that I went out in my front garden one nice summer evening in 2020, purely out of frustration, and started singing. Neighbours came out in their gardens and a socially-distanced moment ensued. We had five such street "parties." I was joined in song by my wife Chris and daughter Karen, all in accordance with the lockdown rules. We even did a Christmas song special in the freezing cold which really brought Orchard Close together. We did some more in 2021," he continued. "This year so far we have had a Jubilee street party."



John got his performance kit from Amazon. He was able to try different PA systems until he found a really good mobile HiFi on sale at a good price. Now he travels around the region performing whenever he can.

"I tend to go to markets which attract a lot of people of all ages and where, traditionally, there has always been entertainment. I sing mainly ballads and love songs from the fifties to the present day. Currently I have over 150 backing tracks to select from," he said.

He told us that the reaction he receives from the public is overwhelmingly lovely - from all age groups. "It is great for me to have people smiling and making lovely comments," said John. "Some pop coins on my mat which pretty much funds my car costs - but last Christmas Eve at Letchworth I had an especially successful time."

"People really do like live singing and busking brings that to them for free. Little children are really interested and love to creep up and pop a coin on the mat before high-tailing it back to their parents! It still amazes me that people of all ages will show appreciation with a coin and even apologise when they have no cash on them but make a nice comment."

Recently John tried a new spot at Woburn Sands. There were already a couple of other people performing, so he was simply able to move on to Biggleswade where he spent a good day in the sunshine.

"Songs can bring back memories and quite often bring tears to our eyes at those thoughts... people often share those feelings with me. I cannot think of a better hobby at my age. There is so much enjoyment made from my music," he concluded.

Keep up the good work John – the time you (and Chris and Karen) spend sharing your music brings a lot of happiness and smiles to the village and across our area.

\*

# **Shefford Library Events**

**Friday 19th August** - 2.00pm - 3.00pm

**Sublime Science Workshop** 

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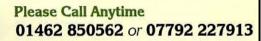
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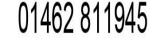




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### Meppershall GNOMES

### Survey.

We are currently carrying out a survey to understand what the village needs from our group and how we might provide that.

Some of you may have noticed we had our gazebo at the Eat Feast recently and where we were asking villagers to complete our questionnaire. If you see us at a village event please do come over and fill one in – it will only take a couple of minutes.

### Coffee Mornings.

We are pleased to say that our monthly coffee mornings are going to continue in the newly opened Artisan Food & Coffee Shop in our Village Hall. The July meeting was well attended and a success thanks to Andy & his Team.

We meet on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Thursday of each month at 10.30 am.

Our next Coffee mornings are Thursday 11<sup>th</sup> August and 8<sup>th</sup> September.

Come along for a coffee and a chat. It's a good way of meeting new people in our village.

Everyone welcome – you do not need to be a Gnome!

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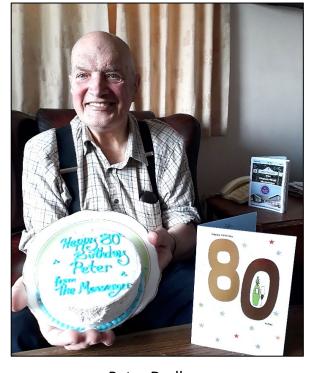
As well as great hands-on treatment, the friendly team at Shefford Osteopathic Clinic also offers practical lifestyle advice. Find out how osteopathy can help you. Please call us on 01462 811006. We'll help you to live life before and after surgery.

\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*

### **Birthdays**

Congratulations on two 80<sup>th</sup> birthdays celebrated in July! Wishing you both a great year ahead and hoping you had a wonderful and special day.







Peter Dudley

Jean Primett

In August we wish happy birthday to Joan B who will be 86 – and in September to Jennifer P who will be 84 and Wendy J who will be 80! Best wishes to you all.

### Parish Church of St Mary The Virgin (Church of England)

Church Road, off Campton Road, Meppershall www.stmarysmeppershall.org.uk 🕆 facebook.com/stmarysmeppershall



### **Rector: The Reverend Veronica Goodman**

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Anne Parsons 01462 813333 Email: annie10639@gmail.com

### Message from St Mary's...

I write hoping that you have all made plans to help you rest, refresh and recuperate over the summer - whether actually going on holiday or not - and that you have a great time. As September arrives I appreciate that some who are not constrained to school holidays will take the chance to go away, and hopefully at bargain prices!

However September will arrive with its traditional Back to School, Back to Work, and back to the normal routines of daily life for most of us.

September also comes with a "Back to Church" invitation!

On the 11th September we will celebrate our Patronal Festival. There are many feasts of Mary the mother of Jesus that we could choose as our Patronal festival, but the Sunday nearest the 8th September the Birthday of the Blessed Virgin Mary, seems a good time - with Mary - to reaffirm our "Yes!" to God as we come together again to worship and fellowship after the comings and goings of the Summer.

September the 18th this year is officially "National Back to Church Sunday". This is a great opportunity to welcome those who may have been to church before for a wedding, baptism or funeral. Lots of people that too, have been to church when they were younger for Sunday school — but haven't been back since. So if you have been thinking - I keep meaning to give it a try - please do come for Back to Church Sunday.

September 25th will be our Harvest Celebration this year, as we thank God for the food we eat, the hands that make the food and the farmers and fishermen who grow and supply it. Once again we will be collecting goods suitable for sending to the Need Project locally (as the need for help increases locally) - and we will be making donations of money via the Bishops Harvest Appeal, to help Tearfund tackle the food crisis in Mozambique - where conflict and devastating weather events along with COVID-19 now present the people with severe food shortages.

'For the needy shall not always be forgotten,

and the hope of the poor shall not perish forever.' Psalm 9:18

Our support will help on-the-ground, local church partners to reach the most vulnerable; helping to change lives, transform communities and show God's love where it is needed most. Donations can be made by BACS transfer:

Bank account no: 20776041 | Sort code no: 20-05-03 | Payment Ref: 4100101

Cheques should be made payable to St Albans DBF and sent to 'The Bishop of St Albans' Harvest Appeal 2022', c/o Holywell Lodge, 41 Holywell Hill, St Albans AL1 1HE.

October 2nd will be our Village Pet Blessing Service. As we remember St Francis and his love for animals (Feast Day 4th October), we bring our pets to church to be blessed and remember with thanksgiving, those animals we have loved and lost. (If your pet is nervous or if they might make others nervous, please bring along a photo instead!)

And then we look ahead to October 23rd Bible Sunday, October 30th All Saints Sunday - and our Service of Special Memories (remembering especially those who have died in the previous year), and November 13th Remembrance Sunday, until the Church begins to celebrate Advent and to prepare for Christmas!

These are just some of the highlights of our Autumn Calendar.

Hoping that your Summer is all you hope it will be. And hoping that we will be able to welcome one another back to Church joyfully in September.

### **Church News and Events in August and September**

Sundays	11.00am	Morning Worship every Sunday
		Holy Communion on the 2 <sup>nd</sup> and 4 <sup>th</sup> Sundays (14, 28 August, 11,25 September)
Every Wednesday	10.00am	Holy Communion in church
Tuesday to Saturday	10.00-3.00	Private prayer and quiet time – the church open for you 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: <a href="https://www.facebook.com/stmarysmeppershall/">https://www.facebook.com/stmarysmeppershall/</a>

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

Find us on YouTube:

https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCRjDLGAy8GI6afkO8iALYOA

Why not come and enjoy your local, historic Parish Church on your own, or with friends, or with your family? A warm welcome awaits you in the beautiful setting of the oldest building in the village. Do you need prayers? We have a small group of intercessors who pray confidentially for those who ask for it. Please talk to Roni (01462 339962 / 07533 376880) or Chris Valentine (07701 039324).





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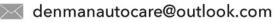
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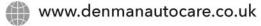
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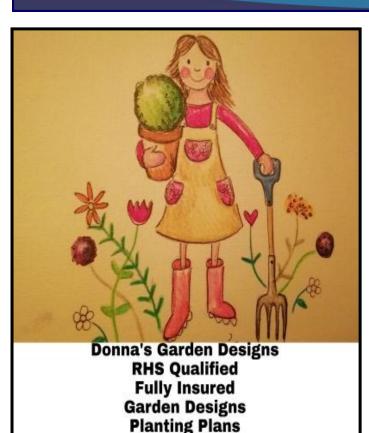
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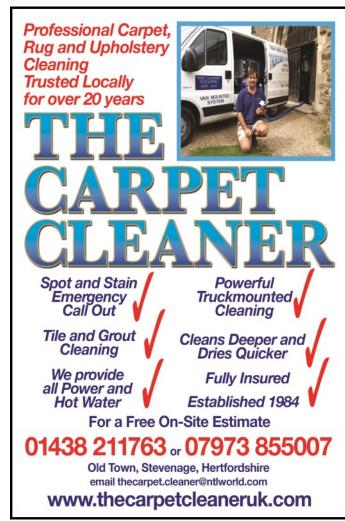
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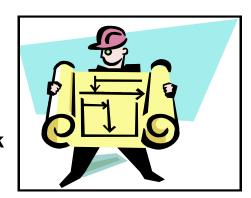
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### **Meppershall Second Sunday Strollers**

Our short hikes in August and September are as follows – we always love to see new faces, we are a friendly bunch, please come along!

Sunday 14<sup>th</sup> August, meet at the church gate at 2pm for a 5 mile walk to Pirton, via Shillington (all Saints Church), Apsley End and walking just north of Shillington Manor and Kettledean Farm with views of the Pegsdon Hills. A mixture of village roads and field side footpaths, largely flat, ending at The Motte and Bailey pub by around 4.15pm. You'll need a lift back, so contact us to arrange a return seat in a car or to drop your own car in advance of the walk.

Sunday 11<sup>th</sup> September, a local loop led kindly by David, meeting again at the church gate at 2pm for an ambling tour of local footpaths, returning to the church no later than 4pm.

More info from Miriam or James on 857836 or find the Strollers at <a href="https://www.facebook.com/MeppershallStrollers">https://www.facebook.com/MeppershallStrollers</a>.

\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*

### Trugs And Trowels Gardening Club, Campton

Trugs and Trowels meetings continue through the summer at Campton Village Hall. The speaker on July 4th was Corrine Price who spoke regarding her time as head gardener at Wrest Park.

### Upcoming events:

- August 1<sup>st</sup>, 7.30 PM. Our talk is on wellbeing in the garden.
- September 5<sup>th</sup>, 7.30PM. Our talk is on the 'head gardeners network'.
- October 3<sup>rd</sup>, 7.30PM. Our talk will be on the Bedfordshire Garden Trust.

### Hot, Hot, Hot In The Garden!

### By Donna Cameron, Donna's Garden Designs, 07833 670934

As we head into August we are still really suffering from lack of rain. It really is much needed for the garden – even if you can water with a hose (or preferably the water butt if any rain water remains in them!) you cannot beat natural rainwater to soak the plants.

To ensure the water is getting to the plants, don't water on the leaves as this does not get down to the root system and could burn holes in the leaves.

Get down to the base of the plant and count to 20 on each plant or pot if it has been a really hot day. Do not water in the midday sun but in the evenings. This ensures it doesn't evaporate but has time to penetrate and doesn't cause leaf burn.

Don't plant anything out in these hot temperatures as new plants will frazzle in the heat and struggle to establish.

Tips to make your garden more drought resistant:

- Dig in lots of organic matter to retain moisture
- Choose plants with grey or silver foliage as they reflect the sun's rays
- Plant small examples so they can establish and thoroughly water in new plants
- Mulch to keep moisture in
- One famous example is Beth Chattos garden in Essex where she transformed the gravel car park into a prairie style garden that didn't need watering at all.



There are a number of plants that once established are pretty care free:

These include lavender (pictured here),
Perovskia, Bergenia,
Euphorbia, Echinops,
Verbena bonariensis
and many of the
ornamental grasses.

### Jobs in the Garden in August:

Water the garden, especially pots

Keep ponds topped up

Prune Wisteria

Prune trained fruit trees so fruits can ripen

Deadhead regularly

Collect seed from garden plants

Cut out old fruited canes on raspberries

### **Shefford Craft and Produce Show**

Saturday 10<sup>th</sup> September 2022



The schedules are now available for the 40th annual Craft and Produce Show will be held on Saturday 10th September in Shefford Methodist Hall. They can be collected from the Post Office, Crafty Cafe, the Library, the Newsagents and other places around Shefford.

There is something to inspire everyone who enjoys gardening, cooking, handicrafts, photography... You can enter a truss of tomatoes, 5 runner beans, or a selection of salad vegetables.

If you like cooking why not make some strawberry tarts or a Marmalade cake? You can make some poppies for the Yarn Bomb that is planned for the Shefford Remembrance Service in November or create a Remembrance flower arrangement.

If you make cards you could enter one in the handicraft section. The Show has a celebratory theme as it is the 40th Show so there are several categories that feature red – a jar of red jam, a photograph of something red.

As usual there are classes for children youth groups. There is lots to choose from.

### Please give us your support...

We would like the Show this year to be a special celebration. Our Fun Quiz Competition is now available for £1. To obtain a sheet please phone 01462 812575 or 815433. The Show opens for viewing at 2pm when delicious refreshments will also be served and there will be a super raffle.

The Committee of Shefford Craft and Produce Show



### The Meppershall Players



The Players have now cast this year's Pantomime Aladdin and are busy rehearsing, sorting costumes, scenery, music and all the other little things that go into making our pantos fun for the whole family. We will be performing Aladdin on Saturday 3rd & 10th December, Matinees 3pm Tickets £10 & £5 Concessions (17yrs & under & 60yrs & over). Evenings 7.30pm. Tickets £10 & £5 Concessions. We've tried to keep our ticket prices as low as possible.

Tickets can be purchased online from:

www.ticketsource.co.uk/themeppershallplayers and are on sale NOW. For non-internet sales and enquires call 01462 816336

Our next Ultimate Decades Disco is on Saturday 8th October 7.30pm-11.30pm at STMA (Shefford Town Memorial Association) Digswell Hall. We'll be giving it a party feel 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 are £5 - another fun for all the family event (the same price for the young and young at heart).

Tickets for The Ultimate Decades Disco are on sale NOW and can be purchased online from www.ticketsource.co.uk/themeppershallplayers For non-internet sales and enquiries call 01462 816336.

If you're over 18yrs and would still like to be involved in this year's Panto behind the scenes or front of house please contact Karen on the number below or come to our meetings on Monday evening at the STMA 10, Hitchin Road, Shefford.

The Players will be taking their Summer Break in August so there will be NO Players Meeting on:

Monday 15th, 22nd & 29th August 2022

We will be meeting back on Monday 5th September.

\*

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 of all ages who have an interest in amateur theatricalities, Whether it be on stage or off indulging in all areas of theatrical performances, set building, costumes, directing, acting, makeup, song & dance, etc.

Interested? We look forward to meeting you.

Karen Mitchell (Players' Secretary) 01462 816336

## CARE COORDINATORS IVEL VALLEY SOUTH PRIMARY CARE NETWORK



## WHO WE ARE & WHAT WE DO

We are here to coordinate & support your care, offering non-clinical & non-judgemental advice.

We support with navigating your healthcare pathways & connecting with community and social care services. We have time to listen to what matters most when managing your health & wellbeing.

We work closely & can make referrals on to the health & wellbeing coaches & the social prescribing team

## CONTACT US

BEDCCG.CARECOORDINATOR.IVS@NHS.NET FOLLOW OUR FACEBOOK PAGE- IVEL VALLEY SOUTH PCN

### **SURGERIES WE WORK WITH**

SHEFFORD LARKSFIELD LOWER STONDON ARLESEY N FLITWICK

### Ivel Valley South Care Coordinators - Who we are & what we do

We support with navigating healthcare pathways, offering non-clinical & non-judgemental advice & connecting you with community groups and social care services. We can create a health plan by understanding your needs & by listening to what matters most to you when managing your health & wellbeing.

We can support you with:

- 1-to-1 conversations with those who want support with health & wellbeing without the need of a clinician
- Conversations with time to explain your needs
- Feelings of isolation & loneliness
- Connecting with community & social groups
- Booking transport to appointments
- Understanding health literacy & appointment outcomes
- Connecting you with NHS care services
- Referrals to health & wellbeing coaches and social prescribers

You can self-refer via email - bedccg.carecoordinator.ivs.nhs.net or speak with your clinician or reception at your GP surgery.

You can also follow us on Facebook - Ivel Valley South PCN

### Warden Abbey Vineyard Open Day And Wine Sale

Warden Abbey Vineyard, Old Warden, Bedfordshire

Open Day and Wine Sale with local food and crafts at Warden Abbey Vineyard, near Old Warden: Sunday 11th Sep 11-4pm.

Our big day of the year, and main fund-raiser! Come and find out the story of the medieval vineyard and abbey, why and how the monks made wine, and how volunteers now care for the vines all year round. Taste and buy our wines, take a tour and browse the local food and craft stalls. There will be a petting farm, BBQ, ice cream and other refreshments. The vineyard is run as a community and education project by Bedfordshire Rural Communities Charity.

See www.wardenvineyard.org.uk for tickets and directions.

Advance booking for entry and tours is recommended.

Entry: Adults £4 online, £5 on the day.

Children under 16 free. Guided tours £5, self-guided tours free.



## JIM THE SWEEP

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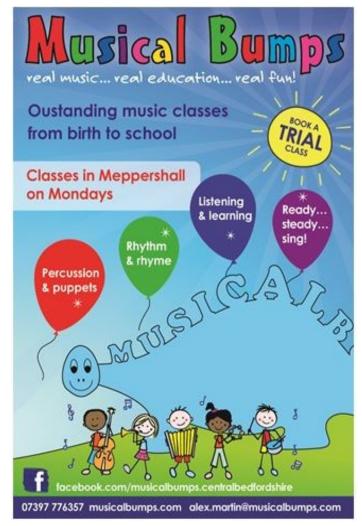
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## **WARDEN ABBEY**

The Community Vineyard

## Open day and wine sale Sunday 11 September

- · local artisan food and craft stalls
- guided vineyard tours
- · free self-guided tours
- petting farm
- · BBQ and refreshments

**11am to 4pm** 

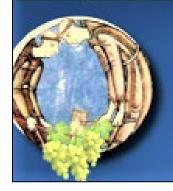
Entry:

Adults £4 online, £5 on day

Under 16s go free

**Guided tours £5** 

Advance booking for entry and tours is recommended



The Vineyard is situated between Old Warden and Cardington

The community vineyard

WARDEN

ABBEY

Bedford Road, Old Warden, Bedfordshire SG18 9LS

### **Financial Matters by Paul Savuto**

### **Retirement Planning - GETTING TO GRIPS WITH THE BASICS**

### PREPARING FOR THE LIFESTYLE YOU WANT IN RETIREMENT

Retirement planning involves visualising your key goals for your retirement years and setting up a plan to help you achieve those goals through financial planning. When visualising your retirement, you need to ask yourself:

- Do you have a bucket list which may mean spending more in retirement?
- How much money will you realistically need to live on during retirement?
- What pension savings do you have and what income will these provide?
- What age do you want to retire at?
- Do you want to retire fully or consider a phased retirement?
- What State Pension are you entitled to and at what age will this be paid?
- Are other considerations such as passing money down the generations important to you?
- Any additional capital needs in retirement that impact your retirement savings?
- How long can you expect to live?

This last question is an unknown, but with increased longevity and better medical care, you could realistically expect to look forward to 20 years plus of life in retirement.

### UNDERSTAND YOUR PENSION FREEDOMS

In 2015, the government introduced 'pension freedoms' which are measures designed to give you greater choice over how you pay into and withdraw money from your pension pot. This has made it easier to access your pension fund earlier and in a more flexible way.

You can, for instance, choose to keep your pension pot invested and draw cash from it (drawdown), take a tax-free cash lump sum out of it, purchase an income for life in the form of an annuity, or even withdraw and spend the whole lot. However, each option comes with its own benefits and drawbacks, and there's certainly no such thing as a one-size fits-all solution at retirement. There are also other important considerations like taxation, investment strategy, and the need for cash-flow planning to work out how much to take from a pension to ensure it lasts comfortably throughout retirement. We can help you consider all your options.

SHOULD I CONSOLIDATE MY PENSIONS? Most people will acquire different pensions throughout their working life. It may be possible to consolidate them, but it's important to take advice first, as you may lose out on valuable benefits or guarantees or incur exit fees.

IS IT A GOOD IDEA TO TAKE A TAX-FREE LUMP SUM? Whether you choose drawdown or an annuity, you can normally take 25% of your pension pot as a tax-free lump sum. However, if you don't have immediate plans for the money, it makes little sense

to withdraw it from your tax-efficient pension and leave it in a taxable savings account, earning little interest.

<u>CAN'T I JUST TAKE ALL THE MONEY OUT</u>? Pensions are designed to provide you with an income throughout your retirement. Taking out more money than you need to, or starting withdrawals sooner, will mean you have less to live off in the future or you could even run the risk of running out of money completely. You could also end up paying more to the taxman than you need to.

IS IT BEST TO CLEAR MY MORTGAGE AND DEBTS AS A PRIORITY? Ideally you would want to have a debt free retirement, but ultimately it depends on your individual circumstances and the wider picture. For example, if your interest rates are low, it may be preferable to leave money invested in your pension where it can continue to grow. There are lots of scenarios to consider and it will depend on your individual needs and circumstances. Also, if you pay off your mortgage, will your pension income reduce considerably and leave you property-rich, but cash-poor?

WHICH IS BETTER – AN ANNUITY OR DRAWDOWN? An annuity provides certainty, in that it provides you with an income for life, but it lacks the flexibility that drawdown can provide and once you have opted for an annuity, you can't change your mind. Choosing how you will take your income in retirement will possibly be the biggest financial decision of your life, so it pays to get advice.

WHAT IS THE MAXIMUM INCOME I CAN TAKE WITHOUT RUNNING OUT IN LATER LIFE? There is a fine balancing act between taking the income you want, to be able to enjoy your first retirement years, but also leaving sufficient for your later years.

This is where professional advice is invaluable in helping you to understand what income levels are sustainable. We can also advise you on the best investment strategy for your attitude to risk and advise you on the merits of taking 'natural income' or capital withdrawals.

### The value of financial advice

Throughout our lives, we are all likely to face the need to take financial decisions that can have a major impact on our wealth. Whether you're buying your first home, becoming a parent for the first time, investing for the future, or about to retire – a carefully thought through financial plan can make a positive difference, throughout your life – no matter what stage you're at. You might think professional financial advice is only necessary when it comes to complex investments or pension planning, but even a seemingly straightforward financial goal could involve numerous decisions and a range of different products and providers

### The numbers bear out

Over the years, research has produced some interesting findings that highlight the benefit of advice when taking major financial decisions. The results show that those who take advice are likely to accumulate more wealth, supported by increased saving and investing in equity assets, while those in retirement are likely to have more income, particularly at older ages. One study highlighted that receiving professional financial advice over a five-year period, resulted in a total boost to wealth (in pensions and financial assets) of £47,706in a decade.

Evidence suggests that fostering an ongoing relationship with an adviser leads to better financial outcomes. Those who reported receiving advice at both time points in the analysis had nearly 50% higher average pension wealth than those who only received advice at the start. Sadly, many people who buy complex investment, insurance and pension products don't take the hugely important step of asking a financial adviser for help before making their decision. \*Between 2001 and 2006 1 ILC, Revisiting the Value of Financial Advice, 2019

### True value

Although the financial outcomes are important, we appreciate that the value of financial advice comes in different guises and can include enhancement of return on investment, peace of mind, achieving goals and realising opportunities, all combined with future security, ultimately ensuring you have enough money. Our aim is to work hard, so your savings have the best chance of growing for the future – without giving you sleepless nights in the process and help ensure you aren't taking too much, or too little risk with your money.

### A vital part of the advice process

Getting into the habit of meeting with us regularly to update your objectives and any changes in your personal circumstances which may affect your finances, such as buying a house, losing your job or receiving an inheritance, is essential. We will devise a strategy and asset allocation which complements your investment goals. Where necessary, we will take action to rebalance your portfolio. Failure to rebalance after a good run in performance, could leave your portfolio with a risk level that is inconsistent with your strategy

### Investors – remember:

- What you must decide as an investor is how much risk is right for you
- While the process of building a portfolio includes strategies to reduce risk, it cannot be eliminated altogether
- Volatility is an inevitable part of stock market investing
- It's important to realise the likelihood of price fluctuations and accept that a degree of risk is all part of investing
- Regardless of what amount you have to invest, we can help recommend the most cost-effective way to achieve a mix of investments, suitable for you.

#### **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, I'll be happy to talk to you and answer any questions you have. FCA 225814.



### **Mid Beds Cancer Group**

### Log in 'Online' from anywhere!

Informal cancer group for patients, families, friends, carers who wish to meet others for support, sharing & information. People with valuable experience and from relevant organisations have been of great benefit to us all.

### We meet on the first Saturday of every month

Our next online meeting will be on Saturday 3 September 2022, 11am. Do join us...

Join Zoom Meeting https://us02web.zoom.us/j/3348518015

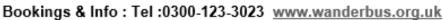
Meeting ID: 334 851 8015 Password: cancertalk

We are always available to speak to individuals anytime. This year we have arranged a special outing/lunch at the Luton Hoo on Saturday 6 August 2022.

Email: <a href="mailto:daksha.trivedi@btconnect.com">daksha.trivedi@btconnect.com</a>
Tel: 01462 813943; M: 07961 377526

Macmillan Cancer Support, registered charity in England and Wales (261017), Scotland (SC039907) and the Isle of Man

### MEPPERSHALL - WANDERBUS





### <u>Certain Routes/Times have changed - VALID FROM 6th June 2022</u> Please check and see W5 – New Destination

As from 6 <sup>th</sup> June 2022 "Stops at	all Bus Stops on R	equest"
W2 BEDFORD - 1st & 3rd 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
WA BLOOK FORWARDS	OUT.	DETUDU
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 BIGGLESWADE - A1 Retail Park/Town Centre - Every Friday	OUT	RETURN
Rectory Rd / High St. – all stops	10.00	RR
Shefford Rd. – all stops	10.03	RR
Biggleswade A1 Retail Park / Town Centre	10.25/10.30	
Town Centre – o/s Asda / A1 Retail Park		12.10 / 12.15
W6A CAMBRIDGE - 4 <sup>TH</sup> Wednesday of Month	OUT	RETURN
Shefford Rd – all stops	08.48	RR
High St - all stops / Rectory Rd	08.50	RR
Cambridge, Downing St. – o/s John Lewis	10.10	14.15
W8A ST ALBANS - 2 <sup>nd</sup> Wednesday of Month		
	08.48	DD
Shefford Rd. – all stops High St. / Rectory Rd – all stops	08.50	RR RR
St Peters St. o/s Santander Bank / pick up opp Bank	10.25	14.00
St Peters St. 0/8 Santander Bank / pick up gpp, Bank	10.25	14.00
W10 ST NEOTS - 2 <sup>nd</sup> 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 <sup>rd</sup> 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	1313
/ John Lewis (Stop E3)	10.10	13.15
Tooliii Ecimia (Stop Ea)		13.13
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
WAA WELWAN CARDEN CITY 4st Thursday of March	OUT	DETUDN
W14 WELWYN GARDEN CITY - 1st Thursday of Month	OUT	RETURN
Rectory Rd. / High Street, All stops	09.14	RR
Shefford Road, All stops	09.16	RR 43.45
WGC Central Bus Station	10.00	12.15

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

E: Thewanderbus@gmail.com

Buses available for PRIVATE HIRE - Call for Quote.

## WANDERBUS Excursion Programme 2022

DATE	DESTINATION	Entrance Fee as per current website	Bus Fare
Sunday 14 <sup>th</sup> August	PITSTONE GREEN MUSEUM/HERTIAGE PARK, nr Tring. A fascinating blend of attractions from the past capturing the spirit of a bygone age. Regular attractions include: Pottery Demonstrations, Tractor rides to Windmill, Lace Makers, Craft Stalls Model Railways, Avro Lancaster Cockpit, Crossley Gas Engine. Hot snacks and drinks, filled rolls, sandwiches& cakes	£9.00 p.p.	£12.00 p.p. Pick up 11.30/12.00 Depart 16.15
Thursday 25 <sup>th</sup> August	GOTHNA GARDENS, Ashwell. Private tour of the gardens with tea. Country house garden with wildlife walk and formal surprises including a topiary garden, rose garden (over 150 species), a woodland garden and tea lawn.	£12.50 including tea	£7.50 p.p. Pick up 13.00/1330 Depart 17.00
Thursday 29 <sup>th</sup> September	ASCOTT HOUSE & GARDENS, nr Leighton Buzzard. An old English black & white timber manor house dating back in parts to C17 <sup>th</sup> . Acquired by the Rothschild family in 1873. Housing an exceptional collection of paintings, fine furniture and superb porcelain. Extensive gardens.	£13.00 p.p. House & Gardens or £8.00 Gardens only. Free to National Trust	£12.00 p.p. Pick up 11.30/12.00 Depart 15.30
Thursday 28 <sup>th</sup> October	BICESTER VILLAGE SHOPPING CENTRE, Oxon.  Home to more than 160 luxury fashion & lifestyle boutiques of many of the leading brands offering savings of up to 60% off the recommended retail price.  Dine at Soho House & Co's farmhouse restaurant and café of the splendour of Café Wolseley.	Free Entry	£20.00 p.p. Pick Up 10.00/10.30 Depart 15.15.
Thursday 24 <sup>th</sup> November	CHRISTMAS MARKET - TBA		

Please note that May trip is a Saturday & August a Sunday trip

To Book: **Call 0300-123-3023**. Or email: <a href="mailto:thewanderbus@gmail.com">thewanderbus@gmail.com</a>. We require a deposit of £5.00 p.p. for any excursion. Post a cheque to Wanderbus, 5 The Pastures, Upper Stondon, Beds SG16 6QB or bank ransfer to: CAF Bank Ltd, Sort Code: 40-52-40 Acc: 00013118, Wanderbus Ltd. (Use your name as reference)

### **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. Carragher, 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 <u>anthony.brown@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk</u>

Mark Liddiard <u>mark.liddiard@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk</u>

**Parish Council Clerk** 

Alessandre Marabese clerk@meppershall-pc.gov.uk

**Member of Parliament:** 

Nadine Dorries 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

### **Food and Supplies**

Budgens Stores, Post Office, High Street

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

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 Brightwell	07817 392325
Shefford Guides, Angie Griffiths	07957 462519
HATS Drama Group, Linda Winfield	07941 987757

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

Kathy Georgiou 01462 629313

### Meppershall Village Hall

Trustees <u>trustees@meppershallvillagehall.co.uk</u>

Bookings <u>bookings@meppershallvillagehall.co.uk</u> 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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Collating Dates 2022/23					
October 2022 Issue	October 3 <sup>rd</sup>	February 2022 Issue	January 30 <sup>th</sup>		
November Issue	October 31 <sup>st</sup>	March 2022 Issue	February 27 <sup>th</sup>		
December-January Double Issue	November 28th	April 2022 Issue	March 27 <sup>th</sup>		
Please contact John Thompson to confirm arrangements					
(contact information above).					

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.