



Contents

Editorial By James Read.....	2
Letters	3
The Meppershall Messenger Needs You	5
Bedfordshire Fire And Rescue Service Volunteers Needed	6
Meppershall Parish Council – Approved Summary of Minutes – 9th January 2023.....	7
Meppershall Parish Council – Approved Summary of Minutes – 16 th January 2023.....	11
Parish Council Precept.....	11
Central Bedfordshire Council: Fixing Potholes Across Central Bedfordshire	12
Know Your Village Potholes	13
Your Vote Matters: Be Ready For Photographic ID	14
Central Bedfordshire Council (CBC) News.....	14
Meppershall Social Club	17
Shefford Osteopathic Clinic: Arthritis	18
Meppershall Great Spring Clean.....	19
March For Men’s Health!	20
Community Defibrillator Seminar Invitation	21
Parish Church Of St Mary The Virgin (Church Of England)	22
Church News and Events In March	24
Meppershall Second Sunday Strollers	24
Financial Fitness: Building Retirement Resilience By Paul Savuto	26
Birthdays.....	28
Trugs and Trowels Gardening Club (Campton)	28
March Madness By Donna Cameron	29
The Meppershall Players @ STMA	30
Henlow Amateur Theatrical Society – HATS	31
Meppershall Wanderbus Timetable	32
Meppershall Wanderbus Excursions.....	33
Useful Contact Details In Meppershall	34
The Team And Collation Dates	36

Editorial By James Read

The arrival of spring in this part of the world is always magical. Our cover image may well have been inspired by a March scene in the churchyard - a wonderful watercolour painting by Arthur Sibun. We are very grateful for



the opportunity to include it here this month. Each season brings its own special pleasures but spring really does feel like a new start each year here in Meppershall.

The church message from Rector Roni (page 22) speaks of our chance to offer something back in return for the blessings and feel-good that Spring gives us. And it's the little things, isn't it? We can't all be famous leaders of great causes. But just a greeting to people on the street makes the world a little bit better. Each of us – and the places where we live – are at their best when we look upwards and outwards.

It's not just the birds that are in good voice. A new Community Choir has attracted huge participation with over a hundred voices at its first sessions in February, drawing a lot of Meppershall singers too. Meeting at St Michael's on 2nd, 16th and 30th March, you can find them on Facebook under "Shefford Community Choir".

Potholes remain a big theme for village chatter – there's lots more info in this issue and a plea to turn chatter into action by reporting pothole locations (see pages 13-14).

Crime also features prominently. Councillor Seaman is looking for anyone interested in supporting a Neighbourhood Watch Scheme (page 3) – particularly thinking of the new developments (there's a colour advert too). Thanks also to Joyce Harknett for compiling and sharing some excellent vehicle crime prevention advice (pages 3-5).

Meppershall still enjoys lower levels of crime than surrounding locations. In December one burglary, one vehicle offence and one violent offence were recorded. There were some 60 offences in the same period in Shefford (including 16 thefts from the vicinity of the Tesco Express), 18 in Clifton, 8 in Shillington.

Strong communities where we know each other, respect and appreciate our differences and contribute to the good of the community tend to be lower crime locations. One amazing way to start this spring is with the Meppershall Spring Clean (litter pick) on 18th March (page 19). A longer-term volunteering opportunity can be found on page 7 (Beds Fire & Rescue). Or maybe you'll just do your bit to make the verges and flower beds that bit more beautiful for you and your neighbours (pages 30-31). Community involvement seems to be on the up, which is great! The Meppershall Messenger itself has had some wonderful new offers of help – and we need more. The village pantomime earlier in the new year was well attended with lots of fun and audience participation (page 31). A small gang of helpers turned up to help remove the last security fencing around the newly opened Centenary Field. Now for the Coronation of HM King Charles III, and the Meppershall Village Fair on 1st July (the first in the new Village Hall and Centenary Field)... It is definitely spring time! Enjoy!

YOUR NEW LOCAL DENTIST

NEW
PATIENT
EXAMINATION
NOW ONLY
£49



@SilsoeDentalClinic



SILSOE DENTAL
CLINIC

A brand new state of the art private dental clinic is now open in Silsoe. Local, Principal Dentist, Dr.Salaman Iqbal & his team offer a full range of high quality private dental treatments including;

Emergency Appointments, Direct Hygienist access, Dental Implants, Cosmetic Dentistry, Root Canal Treatment, Tooth Extraction, Invisalign, Dentures & more.

Register for your private appointment & consultation today.

01525 868 600
www.SilsoeDental.co.uk
[Hello@SilsoeDental.co.uk](mailto>Hello@SilsoeDental.co.uk)

First Floor, 4 The Gateway, Blackthorn Place, Silsoe, Bedfordshire, MK45 4PZ
(Next door to Co-op Food -Silsoe, Mander Farm Road)

Please mention the Meppershall Messenger when responding to advertisements

TJ PLUMBING SHEFFORD Ltd

☎ 07976 310574

✉ info@tjps.co.uk

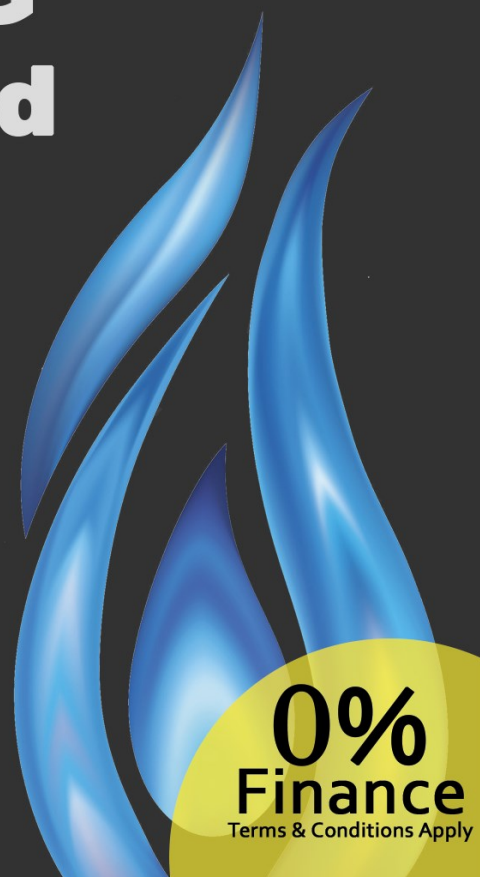
Boilers, Heating & Powerflushing...

Get in touch with Emma or Terry
on 01462 860043 for a free quote

We provide the full range of plumbing
and heating services to customers across
Bedfordshire & Hertfordshire



see our new website www.tjps.co.uk



Independent Financial Advice provided by



Who are we?

We are Chartered Financial Planners At DGS our decisions are based on what is best for our clients. We do not sell our business by offering our clients a first class financial advice service that is tailored to their individual needs. Whatever your goals we are able to implement a plan to help you achieve them. We view the relationship with our clients as long term, and pension funds, or a regular income to sustain you in retirement, the advisers at DGS and adapting our advice as our clients circumstances change.

✓ Savings & Investments

✓ Employee Benefits

✓ Retirement Planning

For a FREE financial health check contact
Paul Savuto - Meppershall based
Chartered Financial Planner

07834 499595

or e-mail ps@dgsifa.com

DGS Independent Financial Advisers Limited,
6 Parkway, Porters Wood, St Albans, Hertfordshire, AL3 6PA

✓ Inheritance Tax Planning

✓ Mortgages

✓ Protection

Please mention the Meppershall Messenger when responding to advertisements

Budgens

OPEN: Mon– Sat: 7AM—8PM
Sun: 8AM—8PM

Big range, big brands, *great* prices
Costa Coffee now serving.
Check out our monthly specials for
even *better* value!
See you soon....



51455



Paul Donald
Gas Plumbing & Central Heating

Based in Henlow
Boiler Changes,
Boiler Repairs & Servicing
Power Flushing,
Unvented Cylinders,
Central Heating & Bathroom Installations,
Underfloor Heating

Free estimates
No job to big or small
35 years experience



07973 410957 | 07415 100610 | 01462 815386



Monday - Friday 9.00 - 5.30 •
Saturday 9.00 - 12.00

Telephone
01462 811852

14a Clifton Road, Shefford,
SG17 5AE

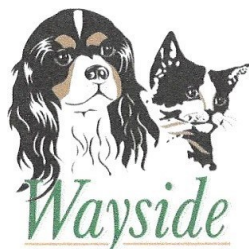
Independent Family Business established over 35years

Eye Examinations • Contact Lenses
Ocular Coherence Tomography with Retinal Photography

Free NHS Eye Examinations & Free Children Spectacles (conditions apply)

www.hingopticians.co.uk

Please mention the Meppershall Messenger when responding to advertisements



Wayside KENNELS & CATTERY

GIVE YOUR PETS A HOLIDAY TOO

www.waysidekennelsandcattery.co.uk
CHAPEL ROAD, MEPPERSHALL, BEDS, SG17 5NQ

01462 813261

ESTABLISHED OVER 40 YEARS

FULLY LICENCED AND INSURED

MODERN LUXURY HEATED KENNELS AND CAT CABINS WITH INDIVIDUAL COVERED RUNS

DOGS GET REGULAR INDIVIDUAL USE OF OUR EXERCISE FIELDS

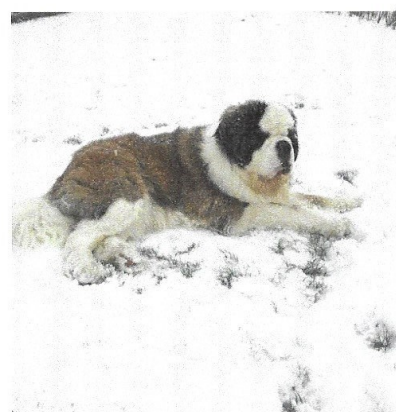
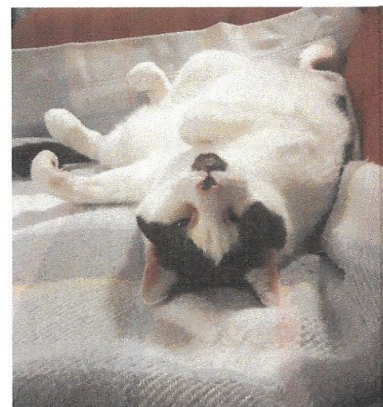


FULLY VACCINATED DOGS AND CATS
ONLY, INCLUDING THE KENNEL
COUGH VACCINE FOR DOGS

FULL GROOMING SERVICE AVAILABLE
FOR BOARDERS

VIEWINGS WELCOME BY
APPOINTMENT PLEASE

DAY BOARDING AVAILABLE



Sheridan's
*estate agents and
surveyors*

Estate Agents
Surveyors
Property
Management
Block
Management

Residential Property Services

Sales and Lettings / Homebuyers Surveys / Valuations / Lease Extensions

Commercial Property Services

Commercial Agency / Development Advice / Landlord & Tenant / Commercial Valuations



RICS

the mark of
property
professionalism
worldwide

22 High Street, Shefford
01462 814087

Canine Studio Dog Grooming

CONTACT

07795067357

- Bath and Pamper
- Full Grooms
- Puppy Grooms
- Nail Clipping
- Teeth Cleaning
- Fully Insured

Unit 9 Rectory Farm Business Centre Upper
Stondon SG16 6LJ

Please mention the Meppershall Messenger when responding to advertisements

Letters

Dear Editor,

On behalf of Meppershall Parish Council I would like to welcome all new residents of Emery Gardens (new Bovis / Vistry Homes) and Woodlands Rest (Davidsons Homes) to our village. We hope that you enjoy our village life and all it has to offer.

The Parish Council constantly reviews crime rates in the village and we have noted that in the past few months there has been an increase in theft of vehicles and vehicle parts, not to mention an increase in anti-social behaviour.

As a village we have few options available to us to combat crime but it would be a great help to local residents and the village as a whole if someone would like to start up a Neighbourhood Watch Scheme in their own area e.g.: Emery Gardens and / or Woodlands Rest.

Belonging to a Neighbourhood Watch is about people getting together with their neighbours to take action to reduce crime. It is a community initiative owned and run by their members which work by developing a close relationship between community members and the local Police.

Neighbourhood Watch schemes can:

- Cut crime and the opportunities for crime
- Help and reassure those who live in the area
- Encourage neighbourliness and closer communities

Neighbourhood Watch Scheme can also have benefits including a reduction in some home insurance costs as well as a discount on ERA security products.

If you would like to join / create a Watch Scheme please go to:

<https://www.ourwatch.org.uk/Bedfordshire>

Alternatively please contact me via our Parish Clerk on lovemeppershall@meppershall.org and I will help you as much as I can.

Kind regards

Councillor Anthony Seaman - Meppershall Parish Council

Dear Editor,

In the previous issue of the Messenger, it was reported that our crime rate had increased. I believe this is due to the amount of car crime now being committed - largely theft of vehicles outside our homes and catalytic converter theft. I have spent many a restless night lately worrying that something like this may happen to my family whilst we are all tucked up in bed, although I am aware that these crimes can also take place during the day.

I wonder if you would let me share a few handy tips to Meppershall residents on how to stay one step ahead of the criminals? We do have many residents that do not use the internet but will read their Messenger avidly and may find this useful.

Don't let thieves get an easy ride. Follow these simple rules to protect your vehicle from thieves and let's show them that Meppershall will not be their target area.

Keeping the keys safe

Vehicles today are generally more difficult to steal than ever, unless the thief can access your key or fob to clone them. Keep your keys safe, out of view when at home, and away from your front door. It's not uncommon for vehicle keys to be stolen from inside your home by thieves fishing for them through the letterbox.

Keyless entry

Vehicles with keyless entry unlock automatically when the key comes within a short distance of the vehicle. This can be from inside a pocket or bag. If you have to push a button on your vehicle key to open your vehicle, you don't have keyless entry.

Keyless vehicle theft or 'relay theft' is when a device is used to fool the vehicle into thinking the key is close by. This unlocks the vehicle and starts the ignition.

Thieves only need to be within a few metres of your vehicle key to capture the signal, even if it's inside your home. This means that even if your vehicle and home are secure, thieves can still unlock, start and steal your vehicle.

How to protect your keyless entry vehicle

When at home keep your vehicle key (and the spare) well away from the vehicle. Put the keys in a screened or signal-blocking pouch, such as a **Faraday Bag**. These can be purchased for **under £3 each** and will fit more than one set of keys. Reprogramme your keys if you buy a second-hand vehicle. Turn off wireless signals on your fob when it's not being used. It's always advisable to avoid parking in dark and secluded areas. It's worth an extra five or ten-minute walk if it means your vehicle is left in a well-lit and busier street.

Fit good in-vehicle security locks

Bear in mind that built-in steering locks aren't necessarily thief-proof. Many can be forced and broken. Fitting a steering wheel, gear lever or clutch pedal security device can give your vehicle added protection.

Catalytic converter theft

While hybrid vehicles are often targeted, vehicles that sit higher from the ground, such as SUVs and vans, are more likely to be stolen from too. The greater clearance under the vehicle makes their catalytic converter an easier target for thieves.

The Toyota Prius, Toyota Auris, Honda Jazz and the Honda CR-V are all top targets for thieves. It's believed that this is mostly due to the catalytic converter's location being easy to access.

Signs a catalytic converter theft is being committed

- A vehicle being raised using a jack in a car park or residential area
- A loud drilling or cutting sound coming from underneath the vehicle

Prevent it

Although catalytic converter thefts are increasing, there are steps that you can take to protect your vehicle. To keep your catalytic converter safe, you can ask your vehicle dealer for advice on locks or guards that are approved by the vehicle manufacturer and tested to Sold Secure Gold.

Where possible, park your vehicle in a locked garage.

If you don't have the luxury of off-street parking or you're not at home, you should park with the side of the vehicle closest to the catalytic converter near to a fence, wall, high kerb or other vehicles, and avoid mounting the pavement on two wheels. In most cases this is the side where your exhaust pipe is.

Catalytic converter thieves need to get under your vehicle to get a hold of their loot. You should make this as difficult as possible and give them limited space to use a jack and to slide beneath your vehicle to unscrew bolts or cut parts away using power tools.

Some brazen criminals will work in broad daylight, but **parking in well-lit areas** to prevent the thieves from working under the cover of darkness can help.

Lastly (and if the worse does happen) – Car Insurance

Make sure you comply with the overnight parking details you gave the Insurer at the time of purchasing cover. If you said the vehicle would be parked on the drive or in the garage – DO IT! Otherwise, any claim may be declined. I know only too well that it's so easy to pull up to the kerb and simply go indoors especially when it's cold or raining.

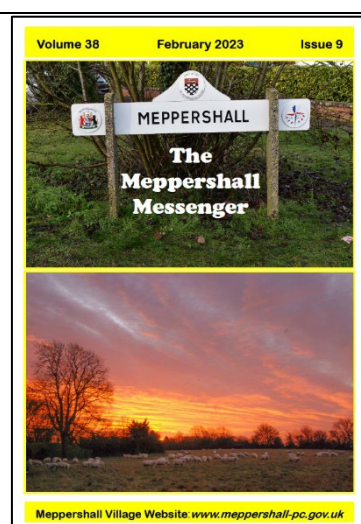
Joyce Harknett

Worried and sleep deprived of Hoo Road

The Meppershall Messenger Needs You

Your village magazine is here because of many volunteers over its 38 year history. Will you do your bit to keep it going in the coming year? Use the contact info on the back page to get in touch and help with collation and production or deliveries – just a few hours each month can help a lot. And the magazine needs your ideas, letters and articles. Email the editor to put something in our next issue! Mepp.messenger@gmail.com.

Help shape the village magazine you want to see.



VOLUNTEER WITH US!



Home
Safety
Support

Fuel &
Home
Heating

Data
Entry

**WHAT
WILL YOU
DO?**

Diversity
& Inclusion
Advocate

Community
Events

Recruitment

Resources
Support

Community
Safety



Bedfordshire
Fire & Rescue Service

Find out more

T. 07543 301604 janet.brennan@bedsfire.gov.uk

Bedfordshire Fire and Rescue Service
Southfields Road, Kempston, MK42 7NR www.bedsfire.gov.uk

HENLOW VETS

22 Bedford Road
Lower Stondon, Beds.
SG16 6EA



Contact: 01462 416416
henlowvets@henlowvets.co.uk

BUSINESS HOURS

Mon - Fri : 8.30 a.m. - 6.30 p.m.
Saturday : 9:00 a.m. – 12:00 noon (Sunday closed)

**NEW - EMERGENCY SERVICE NOW AVAILABLE
(REGISTERED CLIENTS ONLY) CALL 07464 350428**



16 Hitchin Road, Meppershall, Shefford, SG17 5JF

Opening Hours

Mon-Sun: 2pm-9pm
Open 7 Days

01462 814495

www.theairmankitchen.co.uk



THE AIRMAN KITCHEN
Authentic Turkish Cuisine

Please mention the Meppershall Messenger when responding to advertisements

CREATING BEAUTIFUL SPACES,
BESPOKE TO YOU.

“
Call today for a
free consultation!
”

HOT HOUSE INTERIORS

BESPOKE BLINDS & SHUTTERS
CURTAINS, CUSHIONS & WALLPAPER
INTERIOR DESIGN SERVICE

MAIN SHOWROOM AND NEW LIGHTING SHOWROOM NOW OPEN!

Whether you're looking for bespoke blinds and curtains to transform your home, or a statement interior redesign; your home has unlimited potential.

Contact:

T: 01525 840 236 E: sales@hothouseinteriors.co.uk

W: www.hothouseinteriors.co.uk

Address:

Hot House, 11 Bedford Street, Ampthill, MK45 2LU
HH Lighting, 14 Church St, Ampthill, MK45 2EH

Please mention the Meppershall Messenger when responding to advertisements

**Feeling confused?
Difficult experience?
Need some support?
Want to chat?**

**Get in touch for a free
30 minute session, to
see how I can help.**

10% discount for Meppershall residents.

UOK
.support

Jenn

Dip. Couns MBACP

07930 089 123
findyourhappy@uok.support
www.uok.support

One to one counselling for over 18's

Reduce and prevent crime in Meppershall

**Central Beds Neighbourhood Watch Area aims to
create safer, stronger, active communities –
helping residents to be safe from crime and enjoy
a good quality of life, in partnership with
Bedfordshire Police, councils, relevant
organisations and community groups.**

Want to get involved?

**www.ourwatch.org.uk/Bedfordshire
Or contact the Parish Council:
lovemeppershall@meppershall.org**

Please mention the Meppershall Messenger when responding to advertisements

A WARM WELCOME AWAITS...

Visit Chandlers Country Stores
for all your pet supplies, country
clothing, equestrian and small
holding products.



Chandlers

Country
Stores

Chicksands, Shefford, Bedfordshire, SG17 5QB.

01462 810190

BestSalon

OLAPLEX.

WE OFFER OLAPLEX TO DRAMATICALLY
REDUCE BREAKAGE DURING COLOR SERVICE.



01462 817151

Established for 29 years.

Let us make the Best of you

We offer free consultations & free
skin/strand tests. Call in to pick up a
price list and discount voucher at

197 Station Road, Lower Stondon
(Next to the Post Office/Pharmacy)

5 Star Google reviews

Unisex
Hairdressing
Gel Nails
Beauty Therapy
Wedding &
Prom Packages
Ombre'/Balayage
Hair Ups
Accessories & Gifts



Plastering, Cornice,
Painting & Rendering
All aspects of
Lime Works,
Period Properties
a Speciality



**Carl Coxall
Plastering & More**

158 Station Road, Lower Stondon

Tel Home : 01462 817531

Mobile: 07803 383222

VAT Free, No Job Too Small

Please mention the Meppershall Messenger when responding to advertisements

Meppershall Parish Council – Approved Summary of Minutes – 9th January 2023

Chairman's announcements

- Councillors were reminded of the Central Bedfordshire Council (CBC) Topic Session on 23rd January 6-7pm via MS Teams. The topic covered will be Bedfordshire Employment and Skills Academy (BESA), which will detail their local offer. Anyone wishing to attend should respond to the correspondence circulation by the Clerk (clerk@meppershall-pc.gov.uk).
- CBC is also promoting a Carbon Literacy Awareness course on Thursday 26th January organised by Groundworks. Anyone wishing to attend should respond to the correspondence circulation by the Clerk.
- CBC have raised a motion in support of parish councillors, thanking them for the role they do in the community. NALC (National Association of Local Councils) has also issued a similar message.
- The crime statistics for Meppershall show 6 reported crimes which is a reduction from the previous month.

Public Session

Ward Councillors Brown and Liddiard provided an update on CBC activities:

- It is vitally important to retain the Fix My Street reference number for all reported issues as this helps Ward Councillors when requesting more clarity on decisions made by CBC officers.
- CBC 2023-2024 Budget proposals include:
 - No increase in CBC's share of the Council Tax
 - Fire (£5/annum), Police (£15/annum) and Parish Councils may choose to implement increases.
 - No cuts to any services are planned.
 - No change to 2-weekly collections of waste and free garden waste collections will re-start in April 2023.
 - Planned £9 million in efficiency savings.
 - Capital Expenditure of £253 million is included in the proposed budget.
 - An additional £5 million will be invested in Children's services.
 - An additional £1 million will be invested in leisure centres.
 - The proposed budget has a provision of £16 million for inflation costs.
- The contract to build Steppingley Crematorium has been awarded to Spacemaker Developments Ltd, with an 18 month delivery date.
- Ward Councillors have allocated their Community Grant allocation to the Warm Homes programme set up by Shefford Town Council. This will provide for any residents in the ward who need help during this winter. Sites include Shefford Town Memorial Association (STMA), all churches, Library, Shefford Town Council Office.
- CBC has allocated £1.4 million to support vulnerable residents, the continuation of provision of free school meals and funding for local foodbanks.
- Funding of up to £10k is available for eligible residents to make their homes more energy efficient. See:

https://www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/news/article/853/funding_available_to_make_your_home_warmer

- CBC has set up a crisis fund for children's centres. £45k has been set aside for hardship payments to residents who are referred to the NEED project.
- The CBC recycling team have a number of videos on YouTube focussing on what can and cannot be recycled.
- CBC is starting to install EV Charging Points and a bike repair stop is up and running in Shefford.
- CBC is bidding for 'Pocket Parks' funding and wish to develop a site in Shefford off Ivel Road into a small forest / park.
- There are still tree planting grants available from CBC and Ward Councillors still have match funding available for any local community projects.

Questions / comments from the public:

- Potholes on Shefford Road and other village roads are now too numerous, becoming dangerous, some residents making claims against CBC for damages. What can Ward Councillors do to help get them patched or the road re-surfaced? *The Clerk advised that Mrs Thorne has now walked the village and photographed all the potholes she could find in order to log then on Fix-My-Street. ML & AB advised that they would contact Highways Officers with photos provided by Mrs Thorne and request that patching is carried out as soon as possible. The Clerk will be updated on progress made. Council agreed that the Clerk should produce an article for the Messenger to communicate the plan on re-surfacing of Shefford Road, how residents can help with reporting potholes and what to do if a pothole damages their vehicle.*
- Vehicles continue to use the Hoo Road bridleway as a cut through from Shefford Road to Chapel Road. Many vehicles end up trying to turn in the entrance to Old Road Meadow and have caused damage to the gate that is now unrepairable. Signage is not adequate. What can be done to help resolve this issue before someone is hurt? *The Clerk advised that the CBC ROW (Rights of Way) Officer is working towards the installation of a horse gate on the bridleway to stop traffic using it however this will not stop vehicles accessing via Shefford Road or Chapel Road. ML to discuss issue with CBC Highways Officers. MPC to investigate road signage that makes reference to not following Sat Nav directions.*

Procedures, Consultations and Legal:

- Meeting dates 2023-2024** - Resolved that MPC approves the 2023-2024 meetings as amended during the meeting. *Carried.*
- Consultations** - CBC Budget 2023 consultation - *Councillors noted that no increase was planned in CBC's share of the Council tax and agreed that councillors should respond to the consultation as individuals.*
- IT and Communications** - Website usage continues to rise. The MPC Dog Fouling campaign is creating chatter on Facebook.
- Stocken House Green Space** – MPC (Meppershall Parish Council) Solicitor is chasing Davidson's for a copy of the final Agreement for MPC approval and signing in addition to confirmation that CBC have approved MPC's adoption of the green space.

- e. **Wry Close Allotment Track** – The Clerk advised that the utility company representatives have advised that MPC land is no longer required for the gas installation at the Sugar Loaf PH as an alternative supply route had been found.

Finance:

- a. **Purchase Orders** - *Resolved to approve cost of 6 x 'sturdy' bollards as approved by the Clerk and Cllr Thompson, purchase of signage as required by, installation of signage, noticeboards and bollards, wildflowers for Old Road Meadow up to £500.*
- b. **Document approval**
 - i. *Resolved to approve Bank Statements & Reconciliations Current Account 166, 167 & 168, Bank Statements and Reconciliations Savings Account 037 & 038 and MultiPay Card Statements and Reconciliations November to December 2022.*
- c. **Orders for the payment of money**
 - i. *Council resolved that the schedule of payments as presented be approved and authorised for payment by Councillor Thompson.*
- d. **2023-2024 budget**
 - i. **Grant applications:**
 - 1. *Resolved to approve a grant request from the Meppershall Events Committee for £1,500 for the 2023-2024 financial year payable in April 2023 (Local Government Act 1972, s.145.1.a).*
 - 2. *Resolved to approve a grant request from the Meppershall Messenger for £750 for the 2023-2024 financial year payable in April 2023 (Local Government Act 1972, s.142).*
 - ii. **Celebration of King's Coronation and any budget required** - Councillors discussed how MPC and the village may wish to celebrate the King's Coronation in May whilst recognising that MPC does not have the means to organise an event on their own. The Clerk was asked to look at the cost of providing children in Meppershall schools with a gift and to set aside a sum of £1,500 in the 2023-2024 budget for Coronation event spend.
 - iii. **Annual maintenance of gym equipment** - *Resolved to approve Maintenance Service Agreement with Fresh Air Fitness for 2023-2024 subsequent to Clerk assessing other similar quotations and option to cost share with Gravenhurst Parish Council (Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976, s.19).*
- e. **2023-2024 Precept** - Deferred to Extra-Ordinary meeting to be held on Monday 16th January at 10am in the Village Hall.

Planning and Housing:

- a. **Planning applications for consideration**
 - i. CB/22/04621/FULL - Land at Hoo Farm, Chapel Road - Change of use from a caravan storage area to an area for general B8 storage. *Resolved that the Council objects to planning application 22/04621 on the grounds of highways issues, health and safety and character and landscape, and that a request be made for the removal of permitted development rights if the planning application is approved.*

- ii. CB/22/04655/FULL - 11 Coneygate, SG17 5GB - Proposed single storey infill extension and first floor rear extension. *Resolved that the Council has no comment on planning application 22/04655.*
 - iii. CB/TRE/22/00658 - 84 Shefford Road, SG17 5LL - Works to a tree protected by a Tree Preservation Order: (MB/99/00008/T1) - Quercus Robur (English Oak) - 25% reduction of canopy, shape & balance crown where appropriate. Crown lift to 5m over carriageway. Removal of all deadwood within canopy (T1). *Resolved that the Council objects to planning application TRE/22/00658 due to concerns regarding the extent of the proposed works and the effect they will have on the Oak Tree if they are all conducted at the same time.*
- b. Update on applications responded to by the Clerk using delegated powers.**
 CB/22/04178/FULL - The Pigling, Shefford Road, SG17 5LL - Erection of a detached dwelling, a detached double garage, a detached single garage with a store/workshop and parking. The Clerk submitted an objection based on character and appearance of the site, noise and disturbance and lack of consultation with neighbours. A request for conditions to be included on permitted development rights was included should CBC be minded to grant the planning application.

Neighbourhood Plan:

The draft Neighbourhood Plan (NP) has been updated and requires a clarification on a number of points before we can proceed to the next stage.

Highways and Transport:

- a. **OPCC and RMF grant funding update** - Gateway, VAS and 40mph buffer installation planned for 2nd December but date changed to January 9th start. Confirmation received from the PCC that the funding commitment will continue, despite the delays to deliver the scheme.
- b. **Participation in Pan-Bedfordshire Bus Users' Forum** - *Resolved that the Council link into this initiative via the Meppershall Wanderbus.*
- c. **Proposal for road safety improvements on new developments** – Councillor Seaman proposed approaching developers of sites in Meppershall, namely Bovis and Davidsons Homes to see if they would be willing to erect 20mph signage within their sites to assist with road safety as Croudace Homes have done in Walnut tree Way. *Resolved Councillor Seaman approach developers of new sites in Meppershall regarding 20mph zones on their sites. Carried.*

Environment and Leisure:

a. Centenary Field

- i. Update on drainage and landscaping works - The Clerk reported that Sherriffs have completed all their works except verti-draining and over seeding of the outfield which will be completed by Sherriffs in the spring. Mrs Thorne provided positive feedback on the grass within the fenced off area and suggested that the heras fencing could be removed. Councillors agreed that the Clerk and Mrs Thorne would organise a working party one weekend before the school half term pending good weather conditions to remove all the heras fencing.
- ii. Update on gym installation - The Clerk reported that the metal labels have now all been fitted and no other installation snagging is outstanding.

- b. Update on allotment renewals** - The Clerk advised that circa £600 is still due in allotment rent and that she is chasing this.
- c. Update on Dog Fouling campaign** - The Clerk advised that the dog fouling campaign is going well with Facebook posts now starting to instigate online chatter about the issue. Our request for more dog bins is pending as is signage. The Dog Wardens are visiting the village more frequently. A local resident is leaving dog poo bags for others to use attached to the pitch fencing. *Resolved to purchase dog poo bags and dispensers up to £50 (Litter Act 1983, ss.5-6).*

Close of the meeting - The Chairman closed the meeting at 9:25pm and reminded everyone that the next meeting would be the extra-ordinary meeting on 16th January 2023, and the ordinary meeting on 23rd February starting at 7pm in the Village Hall.

Meppershall Parish Council – Approved Summary of Minutes – 16th January 2023

Finance:

a. To review and approve 2023-2024 Budget.

The Clerk and Councillors reviewed:

- The current financial year actual and forecasted income and expenditure report prepared by the Clerk in order to confirm predicted end of year general reserves (carry forward).
- Earmarked reserves both current year and the recommended start position for 2023-2024.
- The proposed 2023-2024 budget as prepared by the Clerk. Amendments were made to the budget in the meeting as the line by line review took place.

Resolved to approve the 2023-2024 budget as amended.

b. To review and approve 2023-2024 Precept request.

The Clerk and Councillors reviewed a number of 2023-2024 precept options and based upon the approved budget discussed the merits of each option and the impact on both general and earmarked reserves. Councillors recognised that the predicted 2023-2024 general reserves would be lower than in previous years but it was hoped that some in year savings could be found and that the Earmarked contingency would not be required.

Resolved to approve and to set a precept of £65,461 which equates to Band D Council Tax charge of £64.43 (increase of 3.00% or £1.88 on 2022-2023). The Clerk was also asked to write an article for the Messenger.

John Thompson - Chairman - 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 16th January, Meppershall Parish Council agreed to request a precept of £65,461 for the financial year 2023-2024 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 3.00% compared to the previous financial year's contribution. Using a Band D Council Tax dwelling as an example, this is a £1.88 increase over the whole year. In 2023-2024 the annual contribution per Band D dwelling will be £64.43.

In the financial year April 2023 to March 2024 we expect to have completed projects initiated in 2022 at Centenary Field and Old Road Meadow. However in 2023 we will be working on the following:

- £3,000 on visual display boards at Centenary Field and Old Road Meadow
- £11,500 on allotment renovations (deferred from previous year)
- £2,000 on a new defib to be installed at the Care Home for all residents to access
- £3,000 on new trees

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.

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

Central Bedfordshire Council: Fixing Potholes Across Central Bedfordshire

A recent update from CBC regarding the issue on everyone's minds...

"We're continuing to fix potholes in the roads as the cold, icy weather plays havoc with road surfaces.

"Freezing conditions before Christmas and into the New Year, combined with periods of prolonged rain, have seen roads suffer in all parts of the UK, with potholes and defects appearing in carriageways.

"In Central Bedfordshire, since the start of April 2022, around 2,000 potholes have been repaired as we work hard to maintain over 800 miles of roads. In addition to our



funding, £2.5million from the Department for Transport's Pothole Fund is helping with this work.

"To step up work on repairing the potholes, cutting-edge technology will also be deployed in the form of four Jetpatcher machines. This road repair system leads to safe repairs, reduces costs and takes only half the time to fix potholes when compared to traditional repair methods. This will enable us to reduce the pothole backlog and minimise disruption for road users and residents during the work.

"We're also investing £20 million in the highways network in the 2022/23 financial year and have over 200 improvement schemes in our Highways Annual Plan for this same period, of which 80% have already been completed.

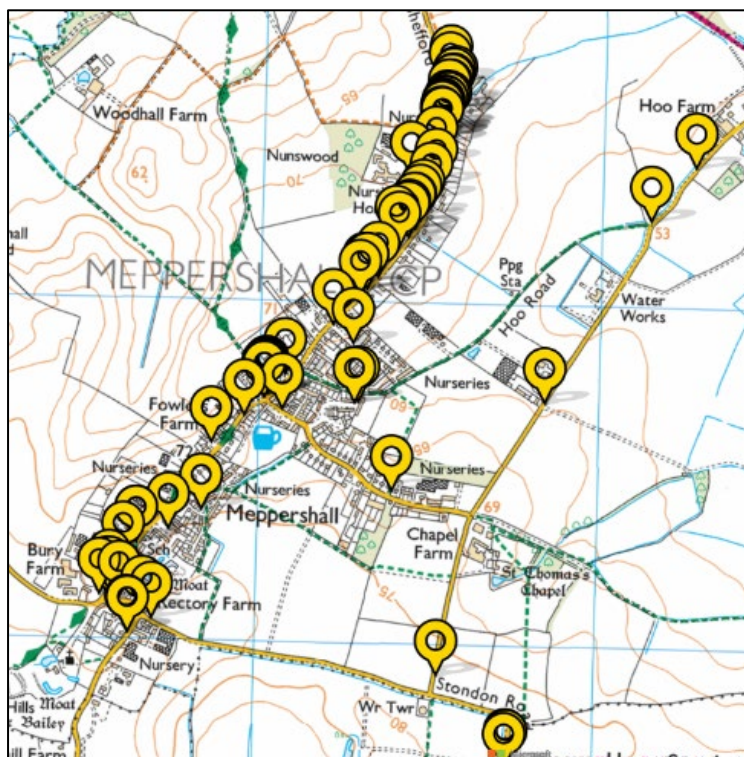
"If residents notice any issues on our road network, they are asked to report them on Fix My Street so we can investigate the problem further.

"In an emergency, dangerous potholes or other safety-related issues can be reported to our highways 24 hour emergency team on 0300 300 8049."



Know Your Village Potholes

For months now residents and those using our village roads have put up a courageous battle navigating around the many potholes that blight our streets. For some the journey is bouncy and akin to a Formula 1 race track (minus the speed) but still with the destination reached; unfortunately for others the drive has ended in a pit stop at the local garage.



The depth of the pothole problem has reached an all-time low in Meppershall. So much so that at the beginning of January parish council staff walked all our streets and logged each pothole found with photos and measurements on the Central Bedfordshire Council Fix My Street website that alerts them to problems on the highways. The image here shows what was logged. Our Ward Councillors have this

information and are pushing CBC to get patching crews out as soon as possible. These will be temporary repairs due to current wet and icy conditions.

So why not resurface Shefford Road? The Parish Council understands that the cost to re-surface Shefford Road could be close to £250k. Construction of new dwellings and approved road improvements are yet to be completed along Shefford Road and it is highly unlikely that CBC will spend money on resurfacing until they are. That said we are putting pressure on them to do what they can to alleviate the problem.

So what can you do to help? If you see a new pothole or any other highway problem please log it on Fix My Street:

<https://fixmystreet.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/> If you don't log it then CBC don't know it's there and can't arrange to fix it.

Make a careful note of the Fix My Street reference number when you log the pothole on the system. That number is a unique case reference which can be used to track what happens to your report and what action is taken.

How do I make a claim against Central Bedfordshire Council for damage to my car? If you are unlucky enough to have suffered damage to your vehicle due to potholes, you can ring the Council on 0300 300 8049 to make a claim. Just be aware that damage alone does not mean you are guaranteed to receive compensation. The Council may be able to claim that it wasn't aware of the pothole or they had taken appropriate actions.

Alessandra Marabese – Clerk to Meppershall Parish Council

Your Vote Matters: Be Ready For Photographic ID

The Election Act 2022 comes into force for the Local and Parish Elections on 4th May. The most significant change is that anyone voting in person will require some form of accepted photographic ID. You can find a list of the accepted forms of ID at:

https://www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/info/32/electoral_registration_and_elections

If you don't have one of the approved forms of photographic ID, you can apply for the free Voter Authority Certificate (VAC) via the government portal here:

<https://www.gov.uk/apply-for-photo-id-voter-authority-certificate>

Central Bedfordshire Council (CBC) News

Improvements at the Flying Horse roundabout on the A507 west of Meppershall

Work will soon start on a redesigned Clophill roundabout improvement scheme. The contractor, Octavius, will be on site from Monday 20th February. Construction costs have risen significantly since the original budget for the work was set in May 2021 (before construction costs soared). This has created a further opportunity to reassess the plans, redesign the roundabout and further address public concerns.

The amended scheme retains the footbridge as well as the existing A6 bridge over River Flit. The length of new dual-lane approach sections on the A6 south of the Flying Horse and A507 east will also be shorter. This remodelling will bring costs back in line with the budget while, according to CBC, still delivering benefits for road users, local residents, and communities across Central Bedfordshire. Enhanced roundabout capacity will allow more vehicles through the junction at the same time.

CBC says the improvements will reduce journey times, apart from eastbound journeys on the A507 at peak travel times in the evening and northbound journeys on the A6 in the morning peak travel period (because of the shorter dual-lane sections and retained bridges). The scheme also includes 30mph speed limits on the approaches to the roundabout and three new toucan crossings (north, south and west – with the footbridge retained on the eastern arm).

CBC's Principal Project Manager Trish Etheridge said: "The scheme supports the future of Central Bedfordshire by building much-needed extra capacity at this busy junction which will see more traffic in the future, particularly with the planned M1/A6 link road." The scheme is backed by £6.8 million of government "Levelling Up" funding. Read more at www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/clophill.

Bedfordshire Employment and Skills Academy (BESA)

Central Bedfordshire and Bedford Borough residents aged 19+ can learn new skills and build confidence applying them with a wide range of free face-to-face and online workshops, provided through BESA. Their range of shorter or longer English and maths courses includes City & Guilds Functional Skills Level 1 and 2 qualifications in English and maths – as well as courses on money and creative skills. Whether you want to build confidence with your written and spoken communication at work, understand the maths used in everyday life, or support your children with reading and maths schoolwork as a parent or carer, BESA may have something important to offer, supporting your next steps in work and life. Find out more about upcoming skills workshops at www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/BESA-contact-us.

BESA also offers careers advice, support for CV writing and career action planning. They can help with job applications, interview skills and give advice on the right courses for you.

Face to face and remote appointments are available – get in touch with BESA via email at ncs@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk or for further support, call 0300 300 8131.

Apprenticeships

BESA can also advise on apprenticeships - a great opportunity for anyone 16+ to earn whilst you learn. You'll spend 80% of your paid time in the workplace learning job-specific skills, and the remaining 20% will be dedicated to off-the-job study. There are over 500 different apprenticeship standards and BESA offers Level 3 Business Administrator (18 months); Level 3 Early Years Educator (24 months); and Level 3 Teaching Assistant (21 months). Use the contact info above to learn more.

Delivered via CBC, some of the funding for BESA has come from the UK Education and Skills Funding Agency as well as the European Social Fund of the European Union.




**DAVIDSON'S
HOMES**

WOODLANDS REST

SHEFFORD ROAD, MEPPERSHALL, SHEFFORD SG17 5LL

WITH JUST ONE LOOK, YOU'LL KNOW YOU BELONG.

Prepare to enjoy all that Meppershall offers.

There's the scenic walks, the village pub, the local shops and, of course, our feature-rich 2, 3, 4 & 5 bedroom homes. Each one exudes individuality and comes with ways to help make your move easier and more affordable.

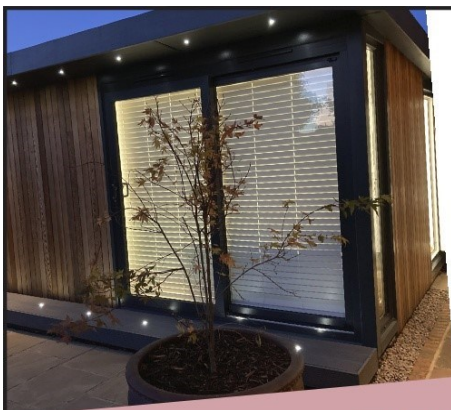
Talk to us today about our superb new homes, and begin to
feel part of something better.

CALL 01462 354 313 VISIT davidsonshomes.co.uk

Open 5 days a week Thursday – Sunday 10.00am – 5.00pm & Monday 12 noon – 5.00pm

Images are for illustrative only. Details correct at the time of going to press.

Please mention the Meppershall Messenger when responding to advertisements



Browzers



TREATMENT STUDIO

- Laser Hair Removal • LVL • Microblading • Tattoo Removal
- Eyebrow Wax & Tint • Vitamin B12 boosters • Red Thread Vein Removal
- Microdermabrasion Facials • Treatment for Onychomycosis (toe fungal)

Call, email or text to book -
We have availability 7 days a week, including evenings

Browzers Studio, 42 Coneygate, Meppershall SG17 5GB

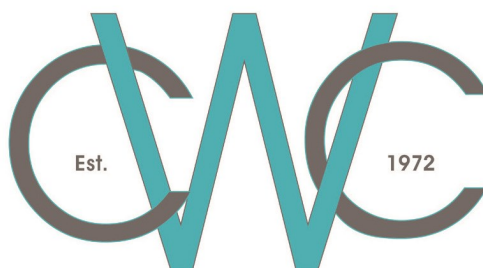
07960 780860

info@browzers.org

www.browzers.org



@browzersstudio



Charles Wilson Carpets Ltd.
The Quality Carpet & Flooring Specialist

- Excellent range of carpets, hard flooring & rugs
- Award-winning service
- Expert fitting team
- Family business (est. 1972 - 2020 in Hitchin, now Shefford!)
- FREE Parking

Find us at Unit 6E, St Francis Way, Shefford, SG17 5DZ
(Near Morrisons, next to the car wash)

Tel: 01462 450 780

Web: charleswilsoncarpets.co.uk

Please mention the Meppershall Messenger when responding to advertisements

The Happy Plaice

FRESHLY COOKED FISH AND CHIPS
EVERY TUESDAY
4:30PM - 7PM
IN THE SUGAR LOAF'S CAR PARK

PRE-ORDER FROM 4PM ON
07833 786 108

THANK YOU FOR YOUR CONTINUED
SUPPORT TO YOUR
LOCAL CHIPPY ON WHEELS!

ALSO AVAILABLE FOR PRIVATE HIRE
FOLLOW US ON FACEBOOK
@MID.BEDFORDSHIRE

the
café 

The Cafe at W&H Peacock is

OPEN

View the salerooms for our upcoming
auctions and then relax with a coffee
and a slice of cake.

Our unique cafe in Bedford Auction Centre with free
wi-fi comfortably seats over 100 customers.

We serve cooked breakfasts, paninis and
sandwiches, light lunches and snacks plus
a range of hot and cold drinks.

Eastcotts Park,

Wallis Way,

Bedford, MK42 0PE

01234 266 366

Visit www.peacockscfe.co.uk

for more details on our opening
hours and to view our full menu.

Computer Repairs

We Speed Up Slow Computers

- No Fix No Fee
- We come to you
- PC & Laptop Repairs
- Laptop screen replacement
- Full Tune Up Service
- Data Recovery
- Virus or Spyware Removal
- Upgrades and systems built to order
- Network Setup & Repairs
- Software Errors Fixed
- Not Booting or Blue Screens
- PC Crashing or Freezing
- Internet & Wifi Setup Service
- Software Installation
- For Home and Business
- At Affordable Prices
- Over 20 years Experience

Call us, we are here to help

henlowcomputers@btopenworld.com

01462-850033

M.J. Ryall

Building Supplies Ltd.

Suppliers of Timbers and all Building Materials

- Paving & Walling
- Fencing
- Bricks
- Calor Gas
- Aggregates
- Plumbing
- Timber
- Tools
- Turf
- Top Soil

Tel. 01462 730169

100 Norton Road, Stotfold SG5 4PG

www.mjryall.co.uk info@mjryall.co.uk

FAB FLOORING

CARPETS & FLOORING

CARPET
WOOD FLOORING
LAMINATE & VINYL
RUGS



Showroom open
Mon - Fri 9-5pm
Saturday 9-4pm

01462 815755 | sales@fabflooring.co.uk | 01462 817612

www.fabflooring.co.uk • Unit 12D Old Bridge Way • Shefford Industrial Park, Beds SG17 5HQ

How are you going to live your life?

Staying active and healthy is vital. We're here to help.

- Support your immune system
- Reduce aches and pains
- Recover from injuries



01462 811006 www.SheffordOsteo.com
14a Clifton Road, Shefford, SG17 5AE

Please mention the Meppershall Messenger when responding to advertisements



**Good
Neighbours
Offering
Meppershall
Excellent
Services**

Meppershall Gnomes

Your local team of insured and DBS checked volunteers.

Missing the village café?

Why not come along to our coffee mornings?

A place to meet friends, old and new,
for tea/coffee and a chat.

Everyone welcome –

You do not need to be a Gnome!



2nd Thursday of each month - 10.30 am

In The Social / Café Area, Meppershall Village Hall.



9th March



13th April



11th May



8th June

Want a lift to join us? Give us a Call – that's what we do!

Need help from the Gnomes?
Give us a call on 07760 793921



Meppershall Social Club

A warm welcome from all at MSC!


With spring around the corner, bringing lighter evenings and warmer temperatures, we hope to see many of you enjoying our lovely patio which overlooks the now fully open Centenary Field, where you can enjoy a refreshing cold drink as well as hot tea and coffee. Come and enjoy our modern facilities - we are disability-friendly, child and dog-friendly and we offer a warm welcome to all.

A reminder that membership fees for 2023 are now due, with no price increase!

Single adult (including children up to 16 years)	£7.50
Couple (Including children up to 16 years)	£15.00
OAP single. (age 60 & over)	£5.00
OAP couple (one age 60 & over)	£10.00
Youth. (age 17)	£5.00

A membership form is enclosed in your copy of this magazine for your convenience - just bring it completed to bar with cash or card payment during our opening hours:

Mon-Thurs	6.00-11.00pm
Fri	5.00-11.30pm
Sat	2.00-11.30
Sun	1.30-10.30pm



MSC are striving to bring you a varied array of entertainment for 2023, as well as our regular Discos, Karaoke, Bingo and Quiz nights. We are delighted to be bringing you the following:

- Groups, bands and solo singers (various genres) - various dates to be announced
- King Charles Coronation Street Party, Saturday 6th May, more details soon
- Adults only comedy and music Drag Queen, Saturday 10th June, more details soon
- Silent Disco, more details soon
- Childrens entertainment, more details soon
- Summer BBQ's various dates
- Family fun day- August
- Food vendors

All of our events can be found in The Meppershall Messenger, on our Facebook page (Meppershall Social Club) and on Facebook Meppershall Notice Board. We are also looking at increasing our advertising to outlying villages & towns, to reach a wider audience, as well as those not on social media.

Upcoming events for March:

- March 4th: Franki Valli tribute act, £15. Please call Helen for tickets, 07989 914941
- March 10th: The fabulous local talent MARKUS, back to entertain us from 8.30pm

- March 12th: QUIZ NIGHT, test your knowledge against opposing teams, max teams of 6, £1 per person, 50% to winners 50% to charity
- March 24th: Sounds of the 70s Disco with A & B's Roadshow from 9pm
- Bingo every Friday, eyes down 7pm, (18 & over only)

On a sombre note, which is affecting many, MSC regrets to announce our prices are increasing from Monday 20th February. MSC has over the past several months absorbed numerous price increases from the brewery, cash and carry, and utilities. Unfortunately we can no longer absorb the increases. MSC regret the increase, however it has proved to be unavoidable. We thank you for your continued support and custom.

Shefford Osteopathic Clinic: Arthritis

Understanding Arthritic Pain

Osteoarthritis – commonly known as Arthritis - is an inflammatory condition affecting the cartilage and bone of a joint. These are both living tissues and, like any other tissues, they can be supported to become healthier.

Around 10 million people in the UK are living with arthritis, (NHS). Women are more likely than men to have Osteoarthritis, especially after age 50.

As Arthritis develops, the affected joints become more painful. With increased pain comes decreased movement, reducing the health of the joint. Arthritis is common in the hip, knee, spine, and hands. Neck arthritis can be associated with headaches.

Treating Arthritic Pain

Osteopaths are qualified to help with arthritic pain. During treatments we can start to regain lost movement in your arthritic joints, providing you with bespoke exercises.

Your osteopath may work to release the tight muscles and improve joint movement. A combination of massage techniques and repetitive movement for the joint is a typical approach.

In the later stages, there is less cartilage to heal, so our results are less effective. However, we may still provide some pain relief, as the compensatory patterns from local muscles and joints can still be altered.

As well as treating and alleviating your arthritic pain as much as possible, our team can also offer lifestyle advice to help reduce and manage your symptoms.

Call us now on 01462 811006 or visit www.SheffordOsteo.com to make an appointment. Please don't tolerate unnecessary pain. We're here to help.



FREE National Geographic Magazine Back copies

30 years of issues available

You are welcome to take as many as you would like.

Call Jean Holden 01462 815161





THE CONIFERS
CANINE HOTEL

**LUXURY
ACCOMMODATION**

HOLISTIC FOOD SHOP

www.the-conifers.co.uk 01525 860339 The Causeway, Clophill ★★★★★

James Cullip
Painting & Decorating

- interior/exterior - all aspects
- wallpaper hanging
- coving
- general household maintenance
- plastering services available
- free estimates
- fully insured

References available

t: 01462 817 122 m: 07899 888 545
e: go_on_james@hotmail.com
www.cullippaintinganddecorating.co.uk

**E.T.
Accountancy
Services** 

Experienced Accountant and Tax Adviser based in Clophill, Bedfordshire providing a full range of accountancy and taxation services to businesses and private individuals.

To arrange a free initial consultation please telephone me on:
01525 590465
or
email emma@et-accountancy.co.uk

*Chartered Accountant and
Chartered Tax Adviser*

Emma Thoulass FCA CTA
emma@et-accountancy.co.uk 01525 590465



🏠 97 Hitchin Road
Shefford
Beds. SG17 5JB

☎ **01462 813338**
✉ denmanautocare@outlook.com
🌐 www.denmanautocare.co.uk

Your local garage for all your vehicle needs. Fast, friendly reliable
And efficient service that does not cost the earth



MOT's £40



Full Service from £195 + vat



Diagnostics £36 + vat

All parts and labour fully guaranteed

FREE COURTESY CAR OR COLLECTION

For all your vehicles needs



RMI



W&H PEACOCK

AUCTIONEERS & VALUERS



Weekly Auctions

Visit the Bedford Auction Centre to enjoy
the excitement of a live auction.

Antique & Modern Furniture • Clocks • Books
Ceramics & Glassware • Pictures & Prints
Bicycles • Jewellery & Watches • Collectables
Garage Tools & Equipment • Household Electrical Items
Office Furniture & Equipment • Retail Products & Stock
Vehicles • Horticultural & Commercial Equipment
Building Materials • Garden Furniture & Effects

Eastcotts Park, Wallis Way, Bedford MK42 0PE
01234 266 366 peacockauction.co.uk



Donna's Garden Designs

RHS Qualified

Fully Insured

Garden Designs

Planting Plans

Horticultural Advice

Hard Landscaping

Donna Cameron 07833670934

donnacameron710@gmail.com

Please mention the Meppershall Messenger when responding to advertisements



A G Plumbing Services (Shefford)

Taps, Tanks, Toilets, Showers,
New Bathroom Installations &
Repairs, Cylinders, Sinks, Drains

- Local Friendly, Fully
Reliable Professional Service
- No Call Out Charge
- Free Estimates
- All Work Fully
- Explained & Guaranteed

Contact Andrew Good: 01462 817220

Or Mobile: 07815 735433

Professional Carpet,
Rug and Upholstery
Cleaning
Trusted Locally
for over 20 years



THE CARPET CLEANER

Spot and Stain
Emergency
Call Out ✓

Powerful
Truckmounted
Cleaning ✓

Tile and Grout
Cleaning ✓

Cleans Deeper and
Dries Quicker ✓

We provide
all Power and
Hot Water ✓

Fully Insured ✓

Established 1984 ✓

For a Free On-Site Estimate

01438 211763 or 07973 855007

Old Town, Stevenage, Hertfordshire
email thecarpet.cleaner@ntlworld.com

www.thecarpetcleaneruk.com



ACE PEST LTD

Fast, efficient, friendly service with very competitive rates

Available - 7 days a week

Local company - Established 1988

We specialise in all pest problems especially WASPS

Phone: 01767 627417

www.acepestcontrolbeds.co.uk



01462 894910

- Residential
- Trade
- Supply only

acorngaragedoors.co.uk

HORMANN

SWS UK

GARADOR

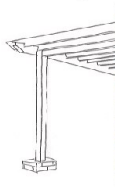
ALUROLL

610, Jubilee Road, Letchworth Garden City, SG6 1NE

30
YEARS
ACORN
Garage Doors



Are you tired of a dull and uninspired garden?
Transform your outdoor space with Ground Grafters - **YOUR PREMIER LANDSCAPING SERVICE**



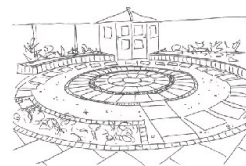
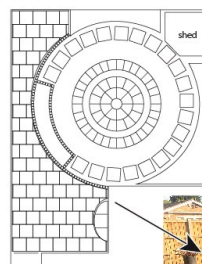
Patios - Paving - Driveways - Fencing - Walls - Gates - Decking - Pergolas - Sheds - Gazebos - Turf - Lighting - Tree work

From **DESIGN TO INSTALLATION**, we've got you covered.
Our experienced, skilled and friendly team will work with you to develop a personalised plan that suits your taste and needs, creating something with the ideal blend of form and function.

Whether you are looking for a simple patio or a complete **GARDEN MAKEOVER**, we will find something that fits to your budget and lifestyle.

So don't let your backyard go to waste. Contact us today to arrange an appointment.

Let us bring your outdoor space to life.



Roy: 07900 908151

e-mail: dig@groundgrafters.com



:Ground Grafters



:@groundgrafters

www.groundgrafters.com

Please mention the Meppershall Messenger when responding to advertisements

Save the Date

MEPPERSHALL GREAT SPRING CLEAN

Saturday, 18th March

10am to 1pm

Meppershall Village Hall Car Park

Our Great Spring Clean has one simple aim: to bring residents together to clear up the litter that blights our streets and green spaces.

Many hands make light work so please come and join Viv and Alessandra and help with our litter pick. Litter picking sticks and bags will be provided but please remember to wear appropriate clothing and footwear.

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.

Can you spare a couple of hours? If so get involved!

1. Sign up to help by emailing lovemeppershall@meppershall.org (we can then plan and prepare equipment for the number of people wanting to help).
2. Meet at the Village Hall Car Park at 10am on Saturday 18th March for a briefing and to collect supplies.
3. Spend 2-3 hours collecting and sorting litter.
4. Meet for a photo call
5. Enjoy refreshments at the end of the litter pick.

Let's keep MEPPERSHALL tidy!



March For Men's Health!

March is Prostate Cancer Awareness Month

Prostate Cancer is the most common cancer in men. 1 in 8 men will get prostate cancer and if you're over 50, or you're black, or have a family history of prostate cancer the risk is increased. 1 in 4 black or mixed black males aged over 45 will have prostate cancer in their lifetime.

Most men with early prostate cancer do not experience any symptoms. If you do notice changes in the way you urinate, this is more likely to be a sign of a very common non-cancerous problem called an enlarged prostate, or another health problem. But it is still a good idea to get it checked out. Possible symptoms include:

- Difficulty starting to urinate or emptying your bladder
- A weak flow when you urinate
- A feeling that your bladder hasn't emptied properly
- Dribbling urine after you finish urinating
- Needing to urinate more often than usual, especially at night
- A sudden need to urinate

The prostate is a gland at the base of the bladder. It is about the size of a walnut but gets bigger as men get older.

The prostate gland produces a protein called prostate specific antigen (PSA). A blood test can measure the level of PSA.

Prostate cancer is not always life-threatening and when cancer is spotted early, treatment is more likely to be successful. Thanks to research, treatments are kinder and more effective than ever.



You can check your risk factor on the Prostate Cancer UK website:

www.prostatecanceruk.org/risk-checker

For information about the increased risk for black males, read more at:

<https://prostatecanceruk.org/prostate-information/are-you-at-risk?scrollTo=black-men>

PCN (Primary Care Network) Care Coordinators are here to help you with any related queries - simply contact us at blmkicb.carecoordinator.ivs@nhs.net

Jaqui Derrick, Care Coordinator for Ivel Valley South Primary Care Network.



Community Defibrillator Seminar Invitation

Register your place

Date – Thursday 9th March

Time – 6:30pm to 8:30pm

Meppershall Village Hall

Residents wishing to attend this 2 hours training session should register their details with the Clerk:

clerk@meppershall-pc.gov.uk

The Community Heartbeat Trust has been asked to demonstrate to willing villagers the use of defibrillators and explain how the equipment works and its benefits to the community in saving precious minutes in the treatment of sudden cardiac arrest.

The more people that know how to use the 3 portable defibrillators installed in our village, the more chance there is of saving the life of a victim of Sudden Cardiac Arrest.

Everybody is welcome to register their interest in attending, and no special skills are required, just your willingness to play an important role in the event of a medical emergency.

In the event of someone collapsing or needing emergency medical help, dial 999 immediately.

If a defibrillator is required, the 999 operator will instruct you on what to do – including CPR if needed – while asking someone else to get a defibrillator. The 999 call handler will provide details of the nearest defibrillator, plus the code to access it.

In Meppershall our defibrillators are currently located at:

1. Meppershall Academy
2. Budgens Village Stores
3. Meppershall Village Hall



HAPPY PETS AT HOME

Caring for your pets in your home since 2018

An ALTERNATIVE to boarding your Cat, Guinea Pig or Rabbit

Let them stay happy and safe at home with a 45-minute visit of one-to-one care, attention and lots of fuss.

Text message on arrival, photos emailed to you and a written account of each visit, giving you peace of mind.

DBS checked, Fully Insured and Client Testimonials

Companionship Visits for your Dog - Daytime, Evenings and Weekends including taking them for a walk and feeding them.

Please telephone June 07950704980, or 01582 881482

Email petvisitsatyourhome@aol.co.uk

RDG

PLUMBING AND HEATING SERVICES

Locally based in Henlow
Well established company
GAS SAFE registered

Tel: 07850 441762

email: robgooda@aol.com



Marc Dellar GARDEN SERVICES

Upper Stondon

- Grass Cutting
- Hedge Cutting
- Strimming
- Overgrown Gardens Cleared



Please Call Anytime

01462 850562 or 07792 227913

Malc's Garden Services



Grass and hedge cutting
 Fence and Shed Repair
 Small General Maintenance
 Telephone: 07921572065
malcsgm@hotmail.co.uk



Jon Lambley WINDOW CLEANER

For quotation call

07796 303908

01462 811945



15 years experience,

Reliable, Professional & Fully Insured

Meppershall based

Philip Allen Tree Surgeon

- 
- Comprehensive trees service
 - Fully insured & all work carried out to BS3998
 - Crown reductions and lifting
 - Felling
 - Hedge shaping and maintenance
 - 24 hour call out
 - Free estimates
 - All materials completely recycled
 - Seasoned hardwood logs available

Contact Phil Allen on
Hitchin 834411 or 07909 716 631
or email on
allentrees@btinternet.com

Seasoned Hardwood Logs

**Bulk & barrow bags
available.**

Meppershall based.

**Free delivery within
20 miles of Hitchin**

**Delivery can be made to
Woodstore/shed.**

Call Patrick Sinclair

Mobile: 07870396007

NEIL BRADSHAW

LOCAL BUILDER

SPECIALIST BRICKLAYER

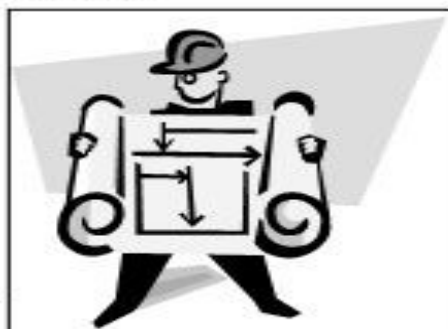
ALL KINDS OF BUILDING WORK UNDERTAKEN

**EXTENSIONS ALTERATIONS GARDEN WALLS,
GROUNDWORK, PATIOS, FIREPLACES**

Shawford House
118a, Shefford Road
Meppershall
Beds. SG17 5LL

t - 01462 815016 or 07774 878244

E - nbradshawbuilders@hotmail.co.uk



Chiropodist

Mobile Surgery

Graeme Harley

m.s.s.ch m.b.ch.a

H.P.C. Registered

**15 New Street,
Shefford**

Tel. 01462 816 458

Mob. 0773 9101 396

**E.T.
Accountancy
Services**



**Experienced Accountant and Tax
Adviser based in Clophill, Bedfordshire
providing a full range of accountancy
and taxation services to businesses and
private individuals.**

**To arrange a free initial consultation
please telephone me on:**

01525 590465

or

email emma@et-accountancy.co.uk

*Chartered Accountant and
Chartered Tax Adviser*

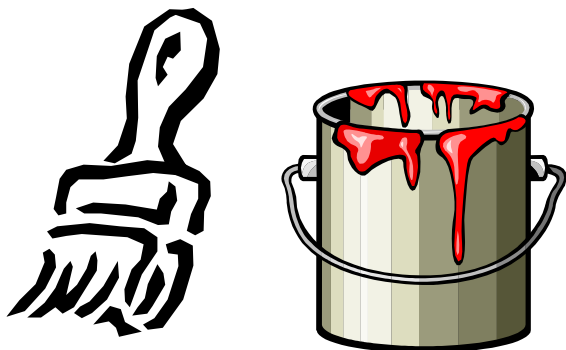
Emma Thoulass FCA CTA

emma@et-accountancy.co.uk 01525 590465

MARTIN ROE

PAINTING & DECORATING

*Quality assured
All aspects*



Telephone: 07973 532430

Derek Harris and Sons Ltd

Landscaping

**Est 1976, Free Estimates,
Friendly & Reliable Service**

**Grass Cutting, Turfing, Patios Laid,
Block Paving, Brick Piers,
Garden Walls, Fencing,
Tree & Hedge Cutting,
Gardens Cleared
Registered Waste Carriers**

Tel: 01234 381854

07885 442800, 07398 268956

www.dhandsons.co.uk



Shefford Building Supplies Ltd

All your building & D.I.Y requirements under one roof.
Key cutting, paint mixing, timber & sheet materials cut to size,
ironmongery,
domestic, electrical
and much, much more.
Free local delivery

TEL: 01462 813381 FAX :01462 811754
44 High street, Shefford,
Bedfordshire SG17 5SD

www.sheffordbuildingsupplies.co.uk



Engraving, Trophies & Occasions

Trophies, medals, plaques,
house signs, glass engraving,
safety signs
and giftware.

All engraving work
undertaken
Fast turn around
Competitive prices

www.engravingsuk.com
engravingoccasions@live.co.uk

Lawton Property Services Ltd

Carpentry & Building

Tel Chris: 01234 381065
Mobile: 07939 004561

Need help with your accounts?

Meppershall based practice offering accountancy
support to local businesses in the community

- Cloud Accounting
- Bookkeeping
- Tax Returns
- Annual Accounts
- Payroll
- VAT Returns



For a free no obligation consultation call 07437 497197
Or email hiadept@adeptaccounts.co.uk

G M ROOFING SERVICES

ALL ASPECTS OF GENERAL ROOFING AND REPAIRS

- REPAIRS AND RE-ROOFING
- SLATING
- TILING
- LEAD WORK
- CHIMNEY POINTING

**NO JOB TOO BIG OR TOO SMALL
PROFESSIONAL & RELIABLE
SERVICE**

Mobile: 07733 478870

BASED IN MEPPERSHALL

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

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

Churchwardens:

Chris Valentine 01462 815971 Peter Clark

PCC Secretary:

Anne Parsons 01462 813333 Email: annie10639@gmail.com

Message from St Mary's...

On Wednesday 22nd February we began our Lenten pilgrimage to Easter. The point of all pilgrimages is not just to arrive at the destination, but also to be changed on the journey.

The most popular question at this time is: What are you giving up for Lent?

People usually say something like - alcohol, chocolate, biscuits, cake, TV... and of course, there may be benefit in giving up or cutting down on some of those things!

But this year why not make a conscious effort to draw closer to God day by day. We were, each of us, made in the image and likeness of God and the point of this pilgrimage, not just through Lent but through life, is to recapture the image and likeness in which we were made... to be transformed... to be “changed from glory into glory, till in heaven we take our place” (as the hymn Love Divine says).

So how can we draw closer to God?

Firstly by making time and space for God - in the same way that if we were trying to draw closer to another human person we would make time and space for them. (Giving up some TV might help!)

Then taking time to pray... To praise and worship and adore, to be thankful, to be sorry or repentant, to intercede for the church and its leaders, the world and its leaders, for our local communities - our friends and neighbours - for whatever we feel “led” to pray for.

I know that many of you read your Bibles regularly - but Lent might be a good time (for some of us!) to spend more time with our Bibles - maybe making time to read the whole of Matthew's (this year's) Gospel, or to focus on one favourite psalm a week, maybe psalm 23, psalm 91, psalm 121, psalm 139 for example.

The Church of England is offering us “Dust and Glory” for Lent. Dust and Glory’s daily meditations encourage us to take a fresh look at the frustrations and failings that every day brings, seek to learn from them and grow closer to God through them. The App is available now to download for free - just Google Church of England - Dust and Glory. Some paper copies are available in the Church for those without the technology!

Because Lent isn’t just for praying and thinking - but is also for doing...

An accompanying children’s version is also available to help children and their families explore how we can live well together, offering a simple daily activity designed to explore the weekly themes.

As a family though, you might also like to devise your own “40 activities for Lent”. There are lots of examples online to give you ideas!

Sometimes it great gifts and grand gestures that change the world - the discovery of germs and antibiotics, brave men and women working in blue light organisations. Mother Teresa simply gathered abandoned babies and dying adults to live or die in peace and comfort - and you might be thinking that will never be me! But sometimes small acts of love or appropriate defiance can change the world too. Trevor Huddleston, who was a white English priest who had gone to work in South Africa because he was appalled at the injustice of apartheid, doffed his hat and smiled and said “Good Morning” to Desmond Tutu’s mother and from that moment the boy decided to find out about Trevor Huddleston’s God - and the rest, as they say, is history. Rosa Parks refused to give up her seat in the coloured section of the bus to a white person and “accidentally” became a famous symbol of resistance to racial segregation. Think too, of the press reaction when Princess Diana shook the hand of the man with HIV, of those who quietly make gowns for still born babies, those who look after a neighbour in need, or who regularly give to a food bank. It is possible to quietly change the world for the better.

And there are plenty of hugely deserving causes at this time inviting us to be generous, and use some of our money to help others: locally, the Need Project of course, and across the world Syria and Turkey, Yemen and so many other places and different needs supported by charities of many shapes and sizes.

We all know that most of the time we are not perfect. Time after time we need to pause, take stock, re-evaluate who we are choosing to be and how we are choosing to live. Lent is just one particular invitation - to pick ourselves up, brush ourselves down, turn around and start all over again!

Lent is an invitation to journey through 7 weeks thoughtfully, prayerfully, actively, so that we arrive at Easter loving God and our neighbour just a little bit more and shining a bit more brightly in the world to the glory of God.

With best wishes, Rector Roni.

Church News and Events In March

Sundays	11.00am	Morning Worship every Sunday
		Holy Communion: 2 nd and 4 th Sundays (12 th , 26 th)
Every Wednesday	10.00am	Holy Communion in church
Church open to visit	10.00-4.00	Private prayer and quiet time – the church open for you to sit and visit each 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>

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).

Meppershall Second Sunday Strollers

We enjoyed a great hike in February with 20 walkers 6 dogs and several new faces. Thanks to everyone who came along and who made it another fun outing in the beautiful landscape around the village. Sticking with our loop walks starting and ending in the village, there are some options to tailor your route to a length that suits you on 12th March

With longer days, we're pushing the full distance to 7.5 miles for a loop of Cockshoot Hill above Shefford – meeting at the church gate at 2pm, walking past the Village Hall (passing at 2.10pm ish), Polehanger, St Michael's Church Shefford and up Cockshoot Hill, before returning via Shefford Harwicke Farm, Campton Plantation, All Saints Campton and back to Meppershall Village Hall via Woodhall Farm and Crackle Hill.

Starting and ending at St Mary's Meppershall gives you the full 7.5 miles. Starting and ending at the Village Hall gives you 6.5 miles; and just doing the Village Hall to St Michael's and back (in the middle of Shefford) is about 3.5 miles. So there are some options to start/finish along the way for a distance that suits you. Back by 5-ish.

Please get in touch if you need more info. We're an informal, dog-friendly group and we would love to have you along for a walk. Find us on 857836 (James and Miriam) or at <https://www.facebook.com/MeppershallStrollers>.

LUCAS, HUNTLEY & CO

Established 1978

Quality PVC-U windows, doors & conservatories

Window and door repair specialists

PVC-U fascias, soffits, guttering etc.

We are a Fensa registered, local, family run business.

Contact: Paul Lucas on: 01462 811581

Mobile: 07778 312504

51A High Street, Meppershall, Beds SG17 5LX

ROGERS BAKERY

High St. Meppershall

Shefford, Beds.

SG17 5LZ

01462 813398

RogersBakery@aol.com

39 years Quality and Service

1983 -2022

Fresh Bread Daily

Celebration Cakes our Speciality

Filled Rolls & Sandwiches



Financial Fitness: Building Retirement Resilience By Paul Savuto

Although there are many challenges on the household finance front at the moment, the new tax year always provides the perfect opportunity for a financial health check; and a key element of any finance MOT will inevitably be an honest appraisal of your financial fitness for life after work.

Retirement income targets

A good starting point for any retirement health check is to consider the lifestyle you want to enjoy when you retire and how much it will cost to fund that standard of living. Recent research provides an indication of how much retirees typically spend, with a two-person household requiring an annual income of around £28,000 to be 'comfortable' or £45,000 if they want to include luxuries such as long-haul trips.

Many not saving enough

Worryingly though, a report from The Pensions and Lifetime Savings Association (PLSA) suggests many people are still not saving enough for retirement. They estimate that around half of all savers risk missing targets set by the Pensions Commission in 2005 – many on average earnings. The report also suggests one in five households risk failing to achieve even a 'minimum' standard of living in retirement.

'Set and forget'

The introduction of auto enrolment ten years ago was a big advance in normalising workplace pension provision. However, it has not translated into true pension engagement. Many just 'set and forget' - still unsure how much they actually need to save; and relying solely on auto enrolment contributions will not guarantee a comfortable, let alone luxurious, retirement.

We're here for you

Whatever your age, retirement planning needs to be on your financial radar, as starting to save at the earliest opportunity provides the best chance of accumulating a pension pot capable of funding the retirement you deserve.

Family finances: It's good to talk

New research suggests young adults and their parents are becoming increasingly comfortable talking about money matters, which should ensure future generations are much better equipped to tackle their financial affairs.

Breaking the taboo

Historically, intergenerational discussions about finances have too often been viewed as a no-go area, but the research suggests UK families are beginning to open up, with young adults significantly more likely to have talked to their parents about the issue than previous generations. In total, three out of four 18 to 24-year-olds said they spoke with their parents about money matters when they were growing up; this compares to just four in ten over-65s and half of 55 to 64-year-olds.

Reaping the rewards

Experts have long advocated the benefits of families talking openly about financial affairs. Parents who do so are more likely to ensure their children are better prepared to deal with money matters when they reach adulthood, whether in relation to day-to-day spending issues or the need to develop longer-term savings habits.

Young wealth owners

The need for young adults to be financially savvy has perhaps never been greater, with a growing proportion of this generation now owning a considerable amount of wealth. Indeed, estimates suggest the number of UK Millennial and Generation Z millionaires has doubled over the past year and now stands at a record high of 2,000.

Keep talking

An increasing desire for families to discuss financial affairs is definitely a positive trend which should help the next generation realise the value of money and establish good financial habits at a young age. So, keep the conversations going to help secure your children's financial futures.

Take control now to beat the tax chill

Following his controversial 'stealth tax' Statement in November, the Chancellor made a raft of key personal taxation and pension announcements.

The government pledged its commitment to the pensions Triple Lock, which will increase the State Pension in line with September's Consumer Prices Index (CPI) rate of 10.1%. This means that the value of the basic State Pension will increase in April 2023 from £141.85 per week to £156.20 per week, while the full new State Pension will rise from £185.15 to £203.85 per week.

Then came some 'stealth' announcements set to pull people into paying higher rates of tax, more people paying IHT, a cut to tax-free earnings from dividends and a reduction in CGT allowances. In addition to the Dividend Allowance and CGT allowance reductions and IHT freeze, other key personal tax announcements included:

- The Income Tax additional rate threshold (ART) at which 45p becomes payable will be lowered from £150,000 to £125,140 from 6 April 2023. The ART for non-savings and non-dividend income will apply to taxpayers in England, Wales and Northern Ireland. The ART for savings and dividend income will apply UK-wide. This move is set to push 250,000 more people into this band
- The Income Tax Personal Allowance and higher rate threshold are to remain at current levels – £12,570 and £50,270 respectively – until April 2028 (rates and thresholds may differ for taxpayers in parts of the UK where Income Tax is devolved).

With an increasing number of people likely to be impacted by these changes, we can't stress enough the importance of tax year end planning. Although some of these changes don't come in with immediate effect, it is vital to ensure you are in the best place possible to take advantage of any allowances, exemptions and reliefs available this year and to prepare for the changes that come in over the next few years. With plenty to consider and factor into your financial plan, valuable financial advice remains central to achieving your goals and aspirations.

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 30 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.



FTF Worldwide Event Management and Fully Fused Fireworks



**Over 35 years experience
of organising memorable occasions
FTF will deliver you an event to remember
big or small**



01462 817640



FTFWorldwideEvents



@FTFWorldEvents



Please mention the Meppershall Messenger when responding to advertisements

Birthdays

Congratulations on some special birthdays in March:

Barbara H ... 89

Richard I ... 89

Tony E ... 84

Wishing you all a great year ahead, from the whole team at
The Meppershall Messenger.



Trugs and Trowels Gardening Club (Campton)

Here we are halfway through February and this pre-spring sunshine means we can get a head start on the winter clear up – especially if like me you will be cutting down all the dead leaves and shrubbery along with plants lost in the harsh frosty spells. There are lots of jobs to be getting on with in your gardens and green houses.

Preparing beds for spring: This is one of the most important jobs. Digging over will aerate, drain and warm the soil. Incorporate plenty of homemade compost or composted manure. Alternatively give the beds a dressing of organic matter then cover them in plastic for a few weeks to reduce weeds and warm the soil.

If planting yourself some rhubarb: Keep the buds of the crown level with the soil.

Five good seeds to sow in February (flowers and vegetables): These can help you extend the season by repeat sowing. All you need is a sunny window sill or a propagator. Our top five include: cosmos which always look great in borders; kale - a lovely leafy green vegetable; sweet peas - remembering to soak your seeds overnight; tomatoes which germinate within two weeks (a variety is good to include tumbling for your hanging baskets); salvia which bring structure and height.

Top tips for successful propagation: Always maintain good light and air levels; use fresh compost mixed with perlite; water the growing plants via trays below the pots; ensure good ventilation during the day.

Cutting back: Time to cut back late flowering clematis and any wisteria sideshoots to three buds; trim back ivy and Virginia creepers. Prune buddleia and elder to the base. Split herbaceous perennials; divide winter aconites; also split snowdrops when they have stopped flowering.

Feed: Sprinkle slow release fertilisers around the base of roses; feed fruit trees and bushes with a sprinkling of sulphate and potash.

Monthly Meetings

During our last gardening club on 6th February we held a most enjoyable evening listening to Janet Hyde telling of her childhood as a head gardener's daughter.

On 6th March we have an equally exciting speaker as Martin, the owner of cottage farm nurseries in Cardington, will be joining us to deliver a very knowledgeable insight to gardening along with a question session. One not to be missed.

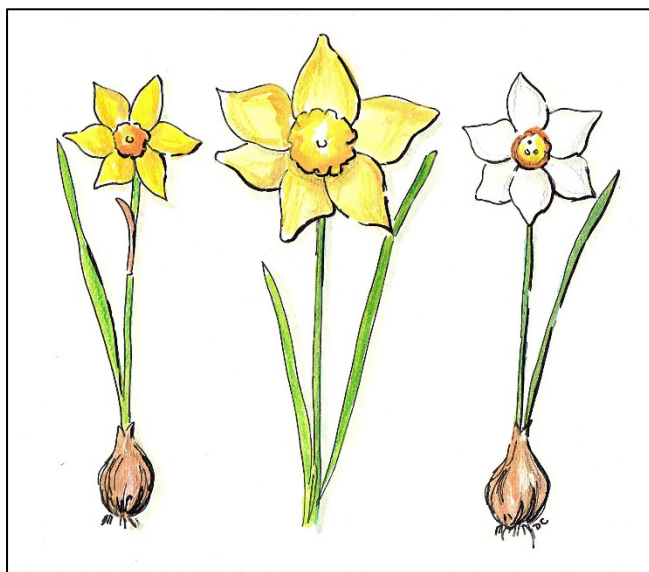
All welcome at our 6th March meeting: 7.30pm, £3.50 non-members. Refreshments, raffle and free 'swap table'.

There are places still available on our Ashridge Estate trip and Ashridge House garden on 15th April 2023.

Maryika. 01462 851729 🌸

March Madness By Donna Cameron

Donna's Garden Designs 07833670934



March is a busy time of year in the garden. Daffodils are out in abundance, spreading their springtime joy, and the worst of the weather is hopefully behind us.

I have been enjoying my lunchtimes out in the garden, planning what to grow this year, whilst the heady scent of *Sarcococca confusa* fills the air.

This plant is a must in the garden, also known as Christmas Box. It has evergreen leaves and the most heavenly scented delicate, tiny white

flowers running up the stems, followed by black berries. I first encountered it at RHS Wisley one winter where they had made a hedge with it. It is divine !

One of the most important jobs you can do is to prepare the soil by mulching it by adding compost or manure. This improves the soil structure, locks in moisture and suppresses the weeds. Top dress pots by removing any weeds or moss and adding some compost. Mulch Roses with manure around the base to give them a boost and ensure a great floral display in June.

The days are lengthening and the warm rays of the sun means that growth is accelerating quickly and the soil is warming up ready to plant. Some things can be planted directly, such as broad beans and some hardy annuals. Others can be planted in seed trays under glass. Dahlia tubers can be planted up in a multi-purpose compost to be planted out end of May.

It is a great time to reseed any bare patches on your lawn. Lightly rake, add some lawn compost and seed and water. You may have to cover from hungry pigeons! And don't allow to dry out.

Enjoy the garden inside too. Pick bunches of Daffodils, Grape Hyacinths and branches of blossom.

So enjoy your gardens and get planting!

Jobs in the Garden for March	
Prune bush and climbing Rose's	Top dress pots with compost
Plant shallots, onions and early potatoes	Cut back dogwood and Salix
Plant summer flowering bulbs	Hoe and mulch to keep on top of weeds
Lift and divide perennials	Protect new shoots from slugs
	Mow lawns if dry

JIM THE SWEEP

FOR ALL YOUR
CHIMNEY SWEEPING NEEDS

ALL TYPES OF FIREPLACE AND
CHIMNEY SWEPT

OPEN FIRES, LOG BURNERS,
STOVES AND INGLENOOKS

EVENING AND WEEKEND
APPOINTMENTS AVAILABLE

INSURANCE CERTIFICATE
PROVIDED

WEDDINGS ATTENDED



JIM TURNER

INSTITUTE OF CHIMNEY SWEEPS
REGISTERED SWEEP

MILL LANE, CAMPTON, BEDFORDSHIRE

TELEPHONE: 07891 306566

Musical Bumps

real music... real education... real fun!

Outstanding music classes
from birth to school

Classes in Meppershall
on Mondays

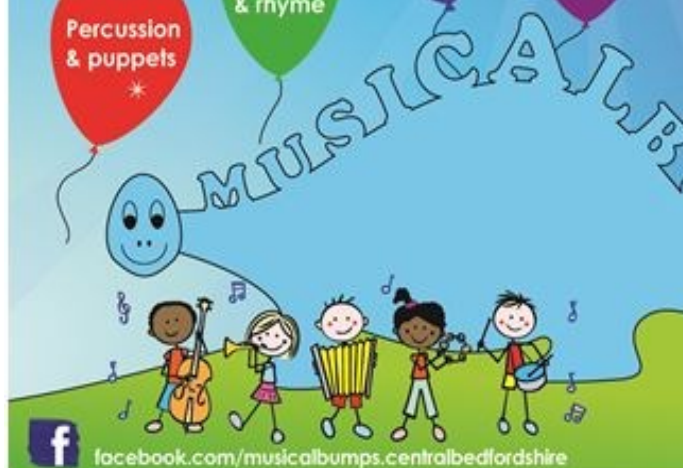
BOOK A
TRIAL
CLASS

Listening
& learning

*
Ready...
steady...
sing!

*
Rhythm
& rhyme

*
Percussion
& puppets



facebook.com/musicalbumps.centralbedfordshire

07397 776357 musicalbumps.com alex.martin@musicalbumps.com

B.E.S

ELECTRICAL ENGINEERS



Call for
a free
quotation

Part P approved
Electrician

Domestic and Light Commercial

- All types of electrical work undertaken from replacing light fittings to rewires/extensions
- Local family run company with over 25 years experience

No job is too small!

Tony Bass

Tel: 01462 235205

Mobile: 07778 318027

Email: bes.luton@sky.com

Based in Meppershall



**FULL
WORKSHOP
FACILITY**



HITCHIN MOTORCARE LTD

JAPANESE VEHICLE SPECIALISTS

Sales of Nissan cars

Repairs and services on all makes and models

1-3 WALLACE WAY, HITCHIN **01462 441122**

OPENING HOURS: Monday-Friday 8am-6pm,
Saturday 8am-1pm

www.hmccars.co.uk



MoT
Testing
Station



Please mention the Meppershall Messenger when responding to advertisements



The Meppershall Players @ STMA

March 2023



The Players are rehearsing songs, sketches, dances and lots more for our upcoming spring production "The One Night Only" Cabaret Show' on Saturday 22nd April at 7.30pm. Ticket prices are £10 / £5 Concessions. We have twenty acts to entertain you throughout the evening; this will be a table seating event (each table seats 8 persons) and we encourage you to bring your own supper (bar available at STMA). Tickets on sale from Monday 13th February at:

www.ticketsource.co.uk/themeppershallplayers.

On-line ticket sales will cease 24 hrs before the performance starts. For non-internet sales and enquires call 01462 816336.

We are hosting a Table Top Sale on Saturday 22nd April 12.30pm - 4.30pm. We have twenty tables available for you to sell all the preloved items you no longer need. Tables are £5 each (money is payable in advance) and can be purchased on a Monday evening at the Players' meeting between 7.30pm -9pm at the STMA hall, Shefford.

We're still undecided on this year's Pantomime, so if you have any ideas please let us know. We have booked the dates for Saturday 2nd and 9th December with afternoon (3pm) and evening (7.30pm) performances. We've also frozen our admission prices, which will be the same as 2022 - £10 and £5 Concessions (17yrs and under, 60yrs and over).

If you're over 18yrs and would like to be part of our Cabaret Show it's not too late. Just contact Karen on the number below or come to one of our meetings on Monday evenings at the STMA 10, Hitchin Road, Shefford, SG17 5JA.

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

The Players meet every Monday evening at 7.30pm at the STMA Hall, 10, Hitchin Road, Shefford SG17 5JA. Membership is free and we welcome people 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, make-up, song & dance, etc.

Interested? We look forward to meeting you.

Karen Mitchell (Players' Secretary) 01462 816336

The Players @ S.T.M.A. Presents



The One Night Only

CABARET SHOW

SATURDAY 21st FEBRUARY 2023

Doors open at 7pm - Show starts at 7.30pm

At S.T.M.A., Digswell Hall, 10 Hitchin Road, Shefford, SG17 5JA

Tickets are £10 & £5 (concessions) - Table Seating Event

Each Table Seats 8 Persons - Bring your own supper!

Bar available at S.T.M.A.

TICKETS ON SALE NOW at: www.ticketsource.co.uk/themeppershallplayers

(Online ticket sales will cease 24 hours before the performance starts)

For non-internet ticket sales and enquiries call 01462 816336



**meets every Wednesday
7.30pm – 10pm**

31

OPEN TO THE WHOLE
COMMUNITY, HATS HAS BEEN
DELIVERING AWARD WINNING
PLAYS AND PANTOMIMES FOR MANY YEARS AND
WARMLY WELCOMES NEW MEMBERS
OF ALL AGES AND BACKGROUNDS.

WE ARE A VERY FRIENDLY GROUP, PERFORMING
3 PRODUCTIONS PER YEAR, WITH VARIOUS
SOCIAL EVENTS IN BETWEEN.

WHETHER YOU WISH TO TREAD THE BOARDS OR
HELP OUT BACKSTAGE, OR FRONT OF HOUSE,
JUST GIVE US A CALL OR BETTER STILL,
MEET US ON A WEDNESDAY EVENING
AT MEPPERSHALL VILLAGE HALL.



Pictured: Cast and crew of *The New Adventures of Robinson Crusoe*
At the final curtain, Meppershall Village Hall, Saturday 4 February 2023



HATSDramaMeppershall

Tel. 07941 987757

Enquiries: lin.winfield5@gmail.com

JOHN R FORD - FRANCHISE STANDARDS AT INDEPENDENT PRICES.

DID YOU KNOW...

...the cost of a service at John R Ford is actually in-line with the prices you pay at a local independent garage? So it stands to reason that choosing a franchised dealer will mean that you'll get a great deal more when it comes to service and quality.

- ✓ Servicing: All Makes & Models
- ✓ MOT
- ✓ Tyres: budget to premium, most sizes in stock
- ✓ Free Collection & Delivery
- ✓ Courtesy Cars Available*
- ✓ Guaranteed Parts & Labour
- ✓ Manufacturers' Warranty Protected
- ✓ Manufacturer-Trained Technicians
- ✓ Appointments available 6 days a week: drop-ins welcome!
- ✓ Book online or by phone

So, why wouldn't you?

John R Ford & Sons Ltd

11 Ampthill Road, Shefford SG17 5BE 01462 628 628 www.johnrford.co.uk

* Subject to availability.

MEPPERSHALL - WANDERBUS

Bookings & Info : Tel :0300-123-3023 www.wanderbus.org.uk



New Timetable - Certain Days/ Routes/Times have changed

VALID FROM 5th March 2023

Please check to ensure we do not miss you!

As from 5th March 2023

"Stops at all Bus Stops on Request"

W2 BEDFORD	- 2nd & 3rd Wednesdays of Month	OUT	RETURN
Shefford Rd, all stops		09.00	RR
High St. / Rectory Rd - all stops		09.02	RR
Interchange Retail Park		09.40	12.15
St Pauls Square / Corn Exchange		09.55	12.00
W3S BIGGLESWADE	- Every Monday	OUT	RETURN
Rectory Rd / High Street, All Stops		09.37 / 09.38	RR
Shefford Road, All Stops		09.40	RR
Biggleswade – A1 Retail Park		10.05	12.10
Station/ Town Centre - pick up Church St. Bus Stop o/s Asda		10.10	12.05
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 / Station & Town Centre		10.25 / 10.30	
Church St bus stop o/s Asda / A1 Retail Park			12.10 / 12.15
W6A CAMBRIDGE	- 4TH Wednesday of Month	OUT	RETURN
Shefford Rd – all stops		08.48	RR
High St - all stops / Rectory Rd		08.50	RR
Cambridge, Downing St. – o/s John Lewis		10.10	14.10
W8A ST ALBANS	- 1st 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		10.15	14.00
W10 ST NEOTS	- 2nd 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	- 3rd Thursday of Month	OUT	RETURN
Rectory Rd. / High St., All stops		09.08	RR
Shefford Rd, all stops		09.10	RR
MK - Midsummer Blvd / M&S (Stop J3)		10.10	
/ John Lewis (Stop E3)			13.15
W12 HITCHIN	- Every Tuesday	OUT	RETURN
Shefford Rd, All stops		09.18	RR
High Street / Rectory Rd - All stops		09.19	RR
Bancroft Stop D		10.05	
Bancroft Stop G (Outside Paperchase)			12.10
W14 WELWYN GARDEN CITY	- 1st Thursday of Month	OUT	RETURN
Rectory Rd. / High Street, All stops		09.14	RR
Shefford Road, All stops		09.16	RR
WGC Central Bus Station		10.00	12.15

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

E: Thewanderbus@gmail.com

Buses available for PRIVATE HIRE – Call for Quote.



2023 EXCURSIONS – 4th THURSDAY OF MONTH!

Call **0300-123-3023** or e mail: thewanderbus@gmail.com for more info or to book your seat.

We do require a deposit of £10.00 p.p. for any excursion. If not cancelled with 7 days of excursion, the deposit may be withheld. A cheque to Wanderbus, 5 The Pastures, Upper Stondon, Beds SG16 6QB or a bank transfer to: CAF Bank Ltd, Sort Code 40-52-40, Acc No. 00013118 Name: Wanderbus Ltd (Use your name in Reference)

	DESTINATIONS	Venue Entry + Bus Fare Per Person
27th April	Coton Manor Botanical Gardens, Northants.	Entry £10.00 + Bus Fare £15.00 Pickup 10.00/10.30 D. 15.30
Bluebell Woods and Water Garden. The widely respected Good Gardens Guide says of Coton <i>'This is a beautifully maintained garden of exceptional charm with unexpected vistas at every turn - something for everyone here'.</i>		
25th May	Gotha Gardens, Ashwell, Nr Baldock	Entry £13.75 + £6.25 Bus Fare Pickup 13.15/13.30 D. 16.15
<i>Private tour of these lovely gardens including tea and cake. (Afternoon trip)</i>		
22nd June	The Raptor Foundation, Woodhurst, Huntingdon	Entry £6.00 + £11.50 Bus Fare. Pickup 10.30/11.00 D. 15.30
<i>The Raptor Foundation rescues, rehabilitates and returns injured birds of prey back to the wild. Your visit supports the very important work. If you love birds then there will be various owls, kites etc to view and also wonderful flying displays. Café on site.</i>		
27th July	Stowe House & Gardens, Stowe, Buckingham	Entry £24.00 + £11.00 Bus fare Pickup – 10.00/10.30 Arrive 11.30 Depart 15.30
<i>Included in the £24.00 entry fee - House Tour Cost incl. Tea/Coffee & Biscuits. After House Tour we will drive to the Gardens entrance where there is a café for refreshments. National Trust members get free entry to the Gardens (Saving £13.00 – mention when booking)</i>		
24th August	Barnsdale Gardens, Exton, Rutland 1.16hrs	£12.50 entry + £17.50 Bus Fare Pickup 10.00/10.30 D. 15.45
<i>Geoff Hamilton's gardens run by his son Nick. With 38 individual gardens in an eight-acre site, there's plenty to see and do. Café with good menu choices.</i>		
28th Sept	Audley End House & Gardens, nr Saffron Walden, Essex	£16.50 House & Gardens. Free to English Heritage £13.50 bus fare. Pickup 10.00/10.30 D. 15.00
<i>One of the largest and most opulent Jacobean houses. Set in idyllic gardens (Capability Brown design) with a beautiful parterre and walled kitchen garden</i>		
26th Oct	Bletchley Park, Bletchley, MK	£19.50 Entry + £8.50 Bus Fare Pickup 11.00/11.30 D.16.00
<i>Bletchley Park is an English county house and estate in Bletchley, Milton Keynes that became the principal centre of Allied code-breaking during the Second World War. Guided tour available free of charge.</i>		
23rd Nov	Bury St Edmunds Christmas Market	TBA

Useful Contact Details In Meppershall

DEFIBRILLATORS – outside School, Village Hall and Budgens

DOCTORS, DENTISTS, PHARMACIES

NHS Direct 111

Dr Baxter & Partners

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

Appointments 01462 810034

General queries, prescriptions etc. 01462 818620

Lower Stondon GP Practice

109 Station Rd Lower Stondon SG16 6JJ 01462 850305

Shefford Dental Practice, 34 High St Shefford 01462 814020

Shefford Dental Clinic, 99 Hitchin Rd Shefford 01462 648465

Lloyds Chemists, 7 High St Shefford 01462 813283

Shefford Pharmacy, Health Centre, Robert Lucas Drive 01462 818633

Police:

Emergency 999, non-emergency 101

Hospitals

Bedford Hospital 01234 355122

Lister Hospital, Stevenage 01438 314333

Luton and Dunstable Hospital 01582 491166

Utilities

Gas Emergency 0800 111999

Anglian Water 03457 145145

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

(Or 105 from a landline)

Central Beds Council

0300 300 8301

CBC Councillors:

Tony Brown anthony.brown@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk

Mark Liddiard mark.liddiard@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk

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 Monday & Sunday

Whitbread Wanderbus service

Stephanie Kirby

thewanderbus@gmail.com

Food and Supplies

Budgens Stores, Post Office, High Street

Rogers Bakery, High Street

01462 813398

The Sugar Loaf, 25 High St

01462 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 Academy, Clifton

01462 629900

Henlow Academy

01462 813733

Redborne Upper School, Ampthill

01525 404462

Organisations

Meppershall Players, Karen Mitchell

01462 816336

Meppershall Good Neighbours (GNOMES)

07760 793921

Meppershall Brownies, Suzanne Brightwell

07817 392325

Shefford Guides, Angie Griffiths

07957 462519

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

Kathy Georgiou

01462 629313

HATS Drama Group, Linda Winfield

lin.winfield5@gmail.com

Meppershall Village Hall Trustees

trustees@meppershallvillagehall.co.uk

Meppershall Village Hall Bookings

bookings@meppershallvillagehall.co.uk

Bookings Tel.

07485 102727

The Team And Collation Dates

CONTRIBUTIONS

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

DISCLAIMER

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

THE TEAM

Editor	James Read	Email: mepp.messenger@gmail.com
Co-Editor	Vacancy	
Assistant Editor	Vacancy	
Advertising & Distribution	Andrew Pain	andrewgpain@hotmail.com 07875 580069
Treasurer	John Thompson	meppershallmessenger@meppershall.org

PRODUCTION DATES AND DEADLINES

The table below shows the dates for collation of the magazine. The collation team generally meet at 2.30pm in the Village Hall on the collation date. Printing takes place 7 days prior to collation. The deadline for submissions is 14 days prior to collation. Please look out for updates and alterations to usual plans when occasionally necessary. Can you spare some time to help produce the magazine? We would love to have you on the team! Use the contacts above to find out more.

Issue date	Collation date	Issue date	Collation date
April 2023	27 th March	November 2023	30 th Oct
May 2023	2 nd May (Tues)	Dec-Jan 2023	27 th Nov
June 2023	30 th May (Tues)	February 2024	29 th Jan 2024
July 2023	26 th June	March 2024	26 th Feb 2024
Aug-Sept 2023	31 st July	April 2024	1 st April 2024
October 2023	25 th Sept	May 2024	TBC
Contact John Thompson to confirm arrangements (contact information above).			