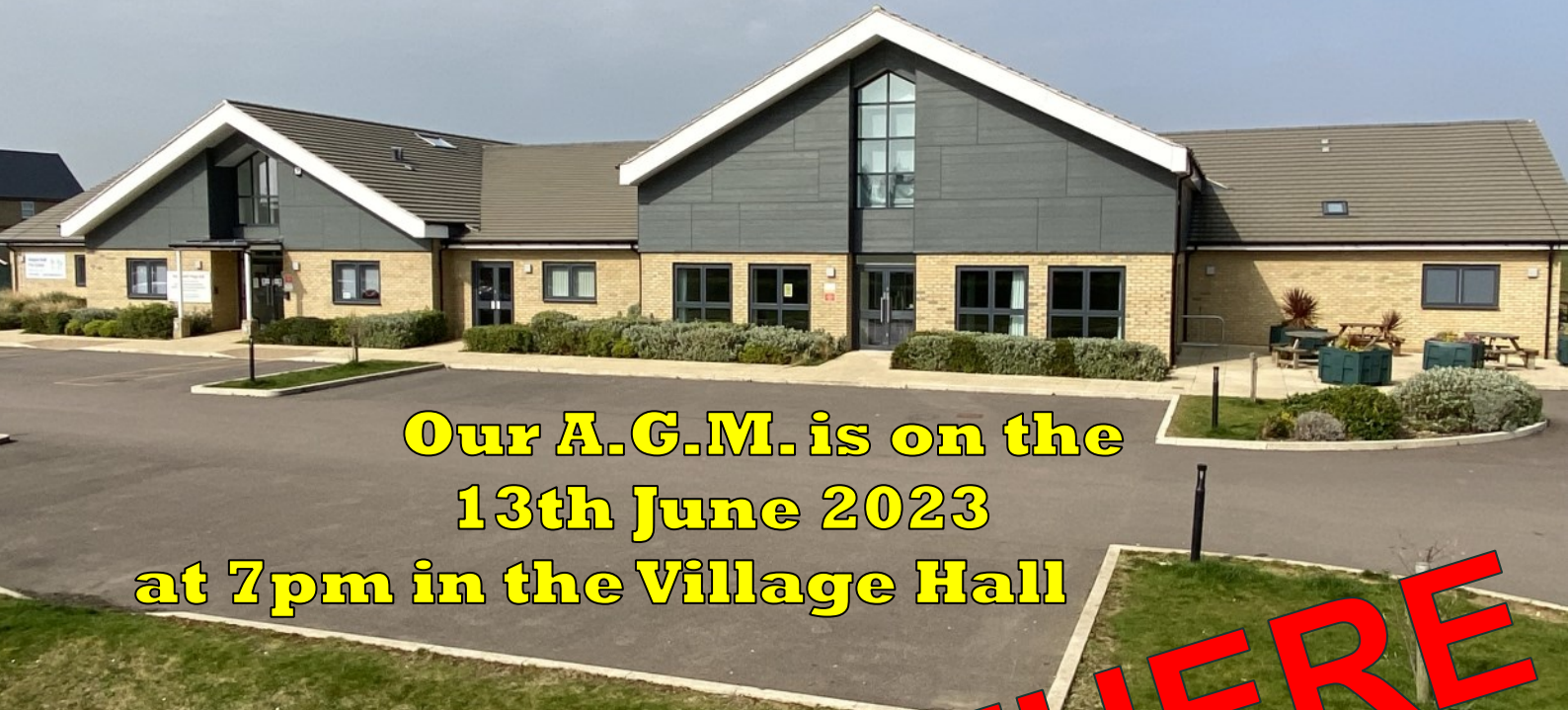


Meppershall Village Hall



**Our A.G.M. is on the
13th June 2023
at 7pm in the Village Hall**



**The
Meppershall
Messenger**

**Our A.G.M. is on the 24th June 2023
at 10am in the Village Hall**

Meppershall Village Website: www.meppershall-pc.gov.uk

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Editorial by James Read

Welcome to midsummer! There's an air of newness about the village. It's not just the new era of Charles III after a spectacular Coronation. And it's not just the hawthorn blossom; or the uncurling of the cow parsley bloom in the churchyard and all around the fields and footpaths; or a new generation of red kites soaring over Roger's Bakery in the blue summer skies.



A new Meppershall Summer Fair is back on **Saturday 1st July**. Use the information in this issue to make the most of a great day. So much is involved in organising the many stalls, caterers, attractions and events. Thank you to the Meppershall Events Committee – who have also just confirmed a return visit from the **RAF Battle of Britain Memorial Flight Spitfire aircraft, performing a flypast at 12.19pm on 1st July!**

It will be good to see new neighbours from Walnut Tree Way, Woodlands Rest, Emery Croft, Glovers Drive, Old Nurseries Close and more at the fair. If you want to make money (not just spend it!) take a stall and make the most of the passing trade! If you're a budding baker, enter the 2023 Meppershall Bake Off. Dog wanting the limelight? Enter our fun dog show, Scruffs (lots of silly award categories!) Or test your knowledge at the Meppershall Village Quiz - the culmination of a great Village Fair day.

Another new face in village life is that of Blake Stephenson our new Central Bedfordshire Council councillor. Read more at <https://www.blakestephenson.uk/>. In a post on the Meppershall Noticeboard (Facebook), Blake said: "I would like to thank everyone in Gravenhurst, Meppershall & Shillington who supported and voted for me in our recent Local Elections. It's a huge privilege to be able to serve on Central Bedfordshire Council for everyone in our community, whether you voted for me or not, and I look forward to getting stuck in." Whatever our individual politics, we wish Blake every success in representing Meppershall's interests at the CBC level.

As Blake arrives, we say goodbye and thank you to Councillors Mark Liddiard and Tony Brown; and to Peter Chapman whose long service to Meppershall Parish Council is hugely appreciated. We hope to tell Peter's story here in the village magazine in the future. They are all recognised in the Meppershall Parish Council minutes in this issue.

But the last word is for someone who would have looked on with great pride as the Meppershall Village Fair unfolds on the new Centenary Field and in the new Village Hall. Christine Foster, who sadly passed on 7th May after a courageous journey with cancer, was a tenacious, assiduous and above all generous contributor to the community in Meppershall. With Chris, her vision, diligence and commitment to a high quality outcome for the Walnut Tree Way development, Village Hall construction and creation of Centenary Field, were instrumental in ensuring Meppershall received the full benefit of the facilities we will enjoy on 1st July, and over many years to come. We will write more about Christine in a future issue – but for now, with love and prayers to the Foster family, Thank You Christine; and Godspeed on your journey.

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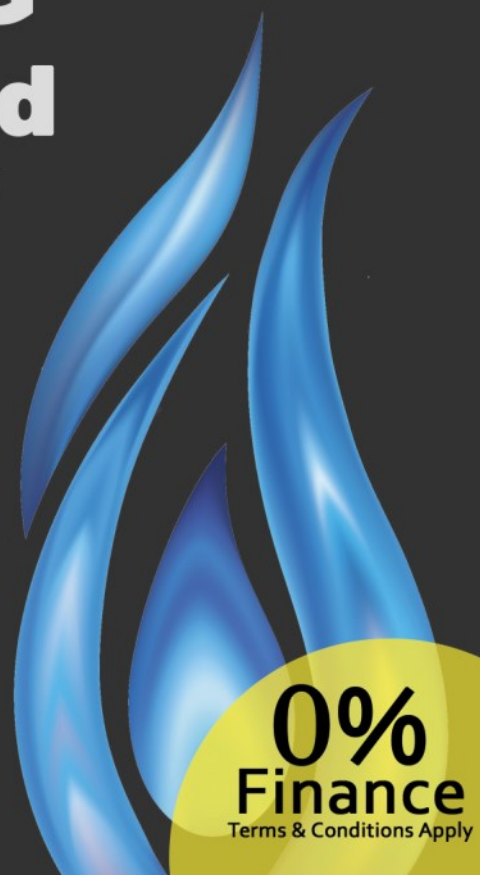
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Letters

Dear Editor - The Pub Is The Hub

Our Meppershall Book Group meets once a month at The Sugar Loaf on a Thursday morning. The group has its full quota of a dozen members, but some of the books we have each suggested to read and discuss, over the years, are now available on a "Read+Return" basis at the local pub. I have always supported David's Bookshop in Letchworth by ordering each month's book title as I prefer to be able to turn the pages, refer back and make notes in the book. Others use the library or Kindle etc.

Holly, who runs the pub, supported my idea to make my book collection available to others, so on Monday May 8th (The Big Helpout Day) my husband Stephen and I installed a new bookcase at the pub to house the books.

The Sugar Loaf has had a new lease of life since October 2022 with Holly's management. Our Book Group can relax in the pub, and discuss the book of the month, while enjoying a good cup of coffee and delicious freshly made scones with home-made jam. Some of us can also vouch for the excellent home-cooked Sunday lunches. The pub is also now dog-friendly inside (before dogs were only allowed out-doors) so some of our pets have been to Book Group meetings too!!

Well done Holly and the team at The Sugar Loaf for making our 'local' a welcome example of "The Pub Is The Hub".

Thelma McNairn-Doe

Meppershall Needs You – Make Your Voice Heard!

Our cover this month is a reminder of the 'engine' of our village – local organisations, fuelled by volunteer time. Please, make your voice heard and get involved. A wise person once said, "History is written by the people who turn up!"

The Meppershall Messenger Annual General Meeting is on Saturday 24th June, 10am, at Meppershall Village Hall. We want to chat about what is in the magazine, how it is produced, funded and delivered; how we use social media, and more. Tell us about your feedback, or the ideas and skills you can bring to the magazine.

The Meppershall Village Hall AGM is on Sunday 13th June, 7pm, at the village hall. The village hall attracts comments about its availability, pricing and facilities. Come and give the Trustees your views and feedback; and help shape the future of the hall.

Meppershall Parish Council (MPC) meets on the second Monday of each month at the village hall, starting at 7pm. Our Parish Councillors do some great work to support life in the village directly, and they represent Meppershall to Central Bedfordshire Council (important – since CBC controls building/planning, road repairs, plus key facilities like libraries and leisure centres). Public attendance at MPC meetings has been worryingly low lately – please help change that!

A final word about diversity: males often outnumber females in these committees and organisations – but I'm sure we'd all love that to be different! So let's give a special shout-out for the leadership, experience and insight of women in the village as part of the future of these important village organisations. See you there!



Meppershall Summer Fair

Saturday 1st July 12pm - 5 pm

Centenary Field
Walnut Tree Way
SG17 5AB

****FREE ENTRY****

Now with RAF Spitfire
flypast at 12.19pm!



Entertainer



Bubbles
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Animal Petting



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BAKE OFF

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Outside Stalls

Independent Traders
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Food & Drink



Lucky Programme
Win £50!



Live Music



Classic Cars



Scruffs

£2 each category,

Enter on day between 12 noon—2.30

Judging in the arena at 3.30—4.30



Grand Raffle

will be drawn 4:30-5pm

Meppershall Summer Fair – 1st July 2023, 12pm – 5pm

We are absolutely delighted that this year sees the return of the Meppershall Summer Fair on Centenary Field behind the Village Hall. Back after a 6-year break, it is going to be a fabulous day out for the entire village, young and old.

The event is *free* and there will be entertainment throughout the afternoon.

So what do we have in store for you?

The Family Entertainer – will be performing over the course of the afternoon. Music, magic, laughter and more; his brand of high energy fun is sure to put a massive smile on your face

Balloon Modelling - who doesn't love a balloon? Hats, swords, bendy animals and more

Bubbleology – and if you love balloons, then you are going to adore enormous bubbles!

Cuddle Corner – rabbits, guinea pigs and chickens all waiting for some gentle stroking and cuddling...

Clements & Hillier – playing sets over the course of the afternoon expect to hear blues, rock, R&B and rock'n'roll from the '50's to the 80's including songs from Dire Straits, Chuck Berry, Elvis, Lynyrd Skynyrd, The Beatles and many other popular bands

Bake Off – our longstanding and always popular village Bake Off is back! Get your apron on and show Meppershall what you can do! Come on – bake the world a butter place! More details in this edition of the Messenger

Lifestyle Marquee – a selection of hand-picked stalls selling high quality arts, crafts and other products you will find hard to resist

Stalls – a large and varied selection of stalls for you to browse and purchase from

Food – ice cream, pizza, burgers and more. Grab a bite to eat and relax on the field with a glass or jug of....

Pimms and more – grab yourself a glass (or jug!) of Pimms and enjoy the sunshine

Raffle – no Summer Fair would be complete without a chance to win something. We have some fantastic prizes lined up and we'd love to see you take them home

Classic Cars – we are so excited that we will be able to host a raft of classic cars from the village and beyond. A big thank you to Jean Holden for organising

Lucky Programme – Purchase a programme with a lucky number and a chance to win £50!

Scrufts – one of our most popular events of the day and a chance to show off your four-legged friend. We are delighted that this event will be run by Carly from Pets Pawtential who is a full member of the APDT. Carly loves to talk about dogs so pop by the Scrufts stand, between 2.30 & 3.30, for an informal chat about anything dog training and behaviour related. Please see entry form below for more details

We all can't wait to see you on 1st July, so come early to enjoy the food and soak up the atmosphere

The Meppershall Events Team



Scruffs Entry Form



Meppershall Summer Fair - Sat 1st July 2023

Behind Village Hall, Walnut Tree Way

Handlers Name _____

Dogs Name _____ Breed _____

Please tick the events you want to enter - £2

Waggiest tail ☐ 20 Spaces

Best/Cutest trick ☐ 20 Spaces

Best treat catcher (own treats required) ☐ 20 Spaces

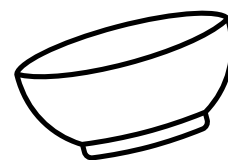
Dog judge would most like to take home ☐ 40 Spaces

Each event costs £2 per dog and spaces are on a first come first serve basis. Forms and payment (Cash only) should be delivered to the Scruffs stand between 12:00 - 14:30 where extra forms can be found.

Please let us know if your dog can't eat cocktail sausages.

Please keep all dogs on leads and under control

Carly Lucas - Pets Potential - info@petspawtential.com - 07944705789



Meppershall Summer Fair - Bake Off is Back!

With the relaunch of our wonderful Village Fair comes exciting news in as much as the very popular Meppershall Bake Off, is back!

This event has always been hugely popular and we're delighted to enlist the help, once again, of our friends at the Women's Institute who will be judging the entries. You simply couldn't get much better than that, given their wealth of experience and tremendous knowledge in all things baking.

What to Expect...

The whole idea of the Bake Off is to get people of all ages baking. A little bit of friendly competition is thrown in for good measure and it's always a pleasure to go and see the entries at the Bake Off Marquee when the Fair opens – regardless of whether you have entered or not

I have listed the categories and classes next – broken down across Cakes, Bread, Mini Baker etc. with a range of options within each class. A Bake Off wouldn't be a Bake Off if we didn't have a Show Stopper and this year we're going with the theme of 'Kings Coronation' which will need to comprise a minimum of a 3 layer sponge – decorated as extravagantly as you can - with points awarded equally between taste and presentation!

The 'Technical Bake' is something a bit different and here I'm trying to raise the profile of one of Bedfordshire's oldest baking traditions – the Bedfordshire Clanger! Look it up - this is an amazing cross between a pasty and a sweet pie...

Set recipes are just that – there will be a Bake Off booklet posted on the Meppershall FB pages with a few hard copies going in the Village shop too for anyone who doesn't have access to FB. In here will be set recipes for the Victoria Sponge and Lemon Drizzle – you cannot deviate away from the recipe provided and this allows your true baking prowess to come through when it comes to judging.

The Bake Off booklet will also have entry forms – you can enter as many categories as you like, sticking to any associated rules around age etc. Entries can be printed and submitted or completed and emailed to me prior to the event. (Full details in booklet).

Your entry will need to be brought to the Fair first thing in the morning of the Fair itself. Judging will take place behind closed doors prior to the Fair opening, and you can come and see how well you have done once the Fair opens - as well as looking at all of the other entries.

This has always been a really popular event and I hope you feel suitably inspired to enter...

Classes & Categories

Cakes	1. Victoria Sandwich - Set Recipe
	2. Bake a cake to include a vegetable
	3. Lemon Drizzle – Set Recipe

Classes & Categories (continued...)

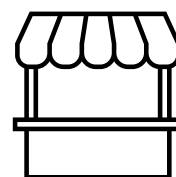
Bread	4. Sourdough Loaf
	5. Brown or multiseed
	6. White Loaf
Mini Baker	7. Decorate a biscuit of your favourite animal - up to and including 6 years old. 8. No bake, tray bake (of your choice); ages 7-10 9. Cupcake of your choices (4); ages 11-16
Show Stopper	Theme: 'Three layer sponge (min) along the theme of Kings Coronation' 50% of points awarded for presentation and 50% for cut/taste. The showstopper must be connected to the coronation of King Charles III and a sponge of at least 3 layers. Open to all.
Technical Bake	Bedfordshire Clanger! Let's keep this 200 year+ tradition alive. Recipes are available online, meat and fruit of your choice – vegetarian versions most welcome.
Preserves	(a) Jar of Jam or marmalade – own choice of fruit
	(b) Jar of Chutney – own choice of ingredients
	*Please refer to Preserves Guidelines regarding presentation. Preserves are best prepared at least a month in advance but you can also download quick chutney recipes etc.

Questions...thoughts...comments of a productive nature can be emailed to me at alli.roberts@hotmail.com ☺

Go on; give it a dough...

Alli Roberts

Want A Stall At Meppershall Summer Fair?



We have two options for stalls at the Fair on Saturday 1st July:

- **Outside stalls:** Our popular outside stalls are available for a wide range of products and activities.
- **Lifestyle Marquee (all-weather):** Here we offer a variety of stalls with crafts, skills, specialist foods, unique wares, quality accessories and gifts for all the family. Indeed some participants choose to include mini demonstrations or activities as part of their promotion.

If you would like to book a pitch, contact me on the number below stating what products or services you wish to sell/promote. Please include your email address.

Many thanks,

Kim Lee Tyler - Lifestyle Marquee & Stalls Co-Ordinator.

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Meppershall Parish Council: Summary of Minutes 17th April 2023

Ordinary Meeting of Meppershall Parish Council (MPC) on Monday 17th April 2023.

Chairman's announcements

- The crime statistic for Meppershall show 6 reported crimes for last month, one a burglary.
- Beds Police were patrolling in Meppershall yesterday.
- On behalf of the Parish Council, the Chairman noted that this is the last time that Ward Councillors Brown and Liddiard will be at the Parish Council meeting as our elected representatives. We will miss them and wish them well for the future, hopefully working within a new ward. The Chairman expressed sincere thanks for all their help and assistance over the past years and we are deeply grateful for all they have done for us. The Parish Council looks forward to meeting our new Ward Councillor in May who will have difficulty in filling their shoes.
- On behalf of Councillors, the Clerk and Mrs Thorne, the Chairman wished to thank councillors who have chosen to stand down from their seats in May, namely Councillors Crossley and Chapman. In particular, a huge thank you and our heartfelt best wishes go to Councillor Peter Chapman who leaves the Council after 32 years of service, many of which were as Chairman of the Parish Council. All present gave a round of applause.

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

- Shefford Road VAS – Despite assurances that the missing VAS would finally be installed on 14th April, it is still not in situ. Councillor Brown will chase CBC for installation details and will follow through on this matter until resolved even if not representing Meppershall after the May elections.
- CBC Highways - Two new Highways Officers have been employed. Adam Shortland is our Highways Technician / Inspector and Scott Terry is our new Principle Highways Officer who reports to Nick Carofalo. Scott Terry has visited Meppershall with our Ward Councillors to see first-hand highways issues.
- Potholes - CBC now has six teams repairing potholes. A team has been allocated to Meppershall, Shefford and Stotfold and they should be in the village at some point this week. Repairs are now permanent repairs.
- Voting – A reminder that photo ID is required when voting in person for the upcoming May elections. Voters who wish to vote but do not have photo ID will be turned away.
- Leisure Centres – A new leisure operator covering all CBC leisure centres and theatres started on 1st April. Councillor Liddiard has been in contact with two Meppershall residents with regards to the booking system for swimming at Flitwick Leisure Centre. Pool users must now reserve swimming slots in advance.
- Supplementary Planning Guidance – The consultation has now finished and CBC will be looking to adopt the new guidance shortly.

- Finally, Cllr Liddiard thanked the Parish Council. Working with a parish council that supports village infrastructure and aspirations, and also works in partnership with other councils has been both enjoyable and a pleasure.

Questions / comments from the public

- Where will the Meppershall polling station be located? It was assumed this would be the Village Hall.
- The horse gate has been installed at the Chapel Road end of the Hoo Road bridleway, is MPC organising signage to stop vehicular access at the High Street end? Yes, this is in progress.
- Family swimming at CBC leisure centres is restricted for school age children and capacity is limited. This is not conducive to learning. What can be done to reduce restrictions? ML is discussing this with CBC Leisure Officers. There is also discussion concerning a completely digitised system that excludes some members of society.

Procedures, Consultations and Legal

- Procedures** - Resolved to approve MPC Protocol for Marking the Death of a Senior National Figure or Local Holder of High Office v2.0.
- IT and Communications** - A report on website usage was circulated to councillors at the beginning of the month. Amendments will be made to the MPC website after the May 2023 elections.
- Stocken House Green Space** - Update from Clerk and Cllr Thompson on Agreement including formal request made to confirm with our solicitor that the agreement and transfer documents are acceptable.
- MPC Crackle Hill Track / Driveway** - To receive update on works carried out by Anglian Water to remove non-authorized utilities from MPC land and agree on any actions required.

Anglian Water were to visit site and carry out remedial works between 12th to 14th April. Permissive path closure signs were erected and notices posted on social media. Works have not been completed within timescales due to broken parts. Upon inspection on 17th April the Clerk found that utilities for water have not been moved – with only the positioning of meters changed. The Clerk has contacted Anglian Water and asked them to come back and move the water line, meters and stopcock as agreed.

Finance

a. Purchase orders

Cllr Thompson did not participate in agenda items 893.a.ii having previously declared an interest. Cllr Chapman took over as Chairman of the meeting for this agenda item.

- Resolved that Mrs Thorne undertake Level 1 Grounds Maintenance training at cost of £42+VAT.*
- Resolved to purchase and donate television to MVH at cost of £565.83 +VAT (Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 s.19).*
- Resolved to purchase coronation mugs for distribution to village school children and other residents at cost of £1097+VAT (Local Government Act 1972, s.137).*

- iv. *Resolved to purchase gym equipment spares and maintenance items, cordless palm sander, cordless drill and a set of tools.*
- b. Grant applications**
 - i. *Resolved to approve grant funding of £500 for CPRE Bedfordshire (Local Government Act 1972, s.137).*
 - ii. *Resolved to approve grant funding of £500 for Meppershall Social Club (Local Government Act 1972, s.137).*
- c. Document approval** - *Resolved to approve Bank Statements & Reconciliations Current Account 172, Bank Statements and Reconciliations Savings Account 041.*
- d. Orders for the payment of money** – *Resolved that the schedules of payments as presented be approved and authorised for payment by Councillor Thompson and or Councillor Parsons. Carried.*

Planning and Housing

- a. Planning applications**
 - i. CB/23/00906/FULL - 81A Shefford Road, SG17 5LL - Standalone outbuilding for ancillary use (Garden Room) (retrospective). *Resolved that the Council has no objection to planning application 23/00906.*
 - ii. CB/23/00806/FULL - 64 Emery Croft, SG17 5ST - Single storey rear extension. *Resolved that the Council has no objection to planning application 23/00806.*
 - iii. CB/23/00411/FULL - 114 Fildyke Road, SG17 5LU - Erection of three dwellings. *Resolved that the Council objects to planning application 23/00806.*
 - iv. CB/23/01044/FULL - 65 High Street, SG17 5LX - Erection of a single storey rear extension following removal of the conservatory. *Resolved that the Council has no objection to planning application 23/01044.*
- b. Appeals**
 - i. APP/P0240/W/23/3317603 - CB/22/01261/OUT - 100 High Street, Meppershall, Shefford, SG17 5LZ - Outline Application: Development of 23 dwellings and associated works following the demolition of 100 High Street with all matters reserved except access. *Resolved that the Council continues to object to application 22/01261 and that the Clerk submit a response to the appeal to the Planning Inspector.*

Neighbourhood Plan

- a. Report** - The Clerk is progressing with this.

Highways and Transport

- a. OPCC and RMF grant funding update** - The Clerk advised that no further work has been completed the gateway was installed in January. Installation of the VAS is still pending as reported by Councillor Brown. The clerk has received an invoice for works from CBC but is not putting this forward for payment as works are yet to be completed and details will need to be provided on the invoicing costs. The Clerk and Councillor Brown were asked to continue to chase Highways on the installation of the VAS again.
- b. Update on road safety improvements on new developments** - Councillor Seaman is awaiting an update from Davidsons.

Environment and Leisure

- a. Update on maintenance works** - The Clerk, Mrs Thorne, Councillor Thompson and Councillor Morgan inspected the outdoor gym equipment together this morning and have revised the weekly and monthly inspection schedule as a result of this. The Clerk has issued a purchase orders for the installation of fencing at the far end of the copse on Centenary Field and another for the installation of the replacement gate and bollard at Old Road Meadow, notice boards and reinstallation of the bollard on the Crackle Hill driveway. The litter pick organised for last month went well with more than twenty volunteers turning up on a wet and rainy day. Councillors wished to thank all those who took part.

John Thompson - Chairman - Meppershall Parish Council

Shefford Craft and Produce Show Saturday 9th September 2023



The Show Committee would like you to put the date of the next Show in your diary.

The 41st Annual Show will be held as usual in the Methodist Schoolroom, Amphill Road on Saturday 9th September. The schedules are now available and can be collected from Shefford Library, Shefford Post Office, Rosebuds Cafe, Shefford Newsagents and other locations. There is something for everyone in the various classes, whether you are a gardener, crafter or photographer.

In the morning we hope lots of competitors will bring their entries into the Hall for judging. In the afternoon, from 2pm, we hope that visitors will come to see how clever our local residents, both young and not so young, are at growing and making. Refreshments of tea and homemade cake will be served whilst you wait for the Prizegiving at 4pm.

The Annual Quiz sheets will also be available for £1 as this creates interest and helps to support the Show.

We hope to make this year's Show bigger and better. So please have a go!

The Committee of Shefford Craft and Produce Show



Our A.G.M.

This year will take place on

Saturday 24th June 2023

From 10am to 12noon

In the Walnut Room (Social Area)

At Meppershall Village Hall

All Welcome

We hold our Annual General Meeting each year which is open to anyone – to come and listen to what's going on and make comments, feedback or offer ideas. It's a chance to find out more and to meet the team. Free tea & coffee and biscuits and cake!

This year we are especially interested to hear from anyone who may be able to:

- 1) Lend a hand on the editorial side of things – writing articles, editing articles submitted by readers, identifying opportunities for new content, managing editorial correspondence, creating page layouts, editing the final version of the magazine. This would suit someone with good Microsoft Office skills, including Word and OneDrive.
- 2) Offer Help with our Printing, Folding, Home Pre-Collating, Final Collating and Stapling and Distribution of the magazine

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Meppershall Social Club

MSC hopes this finds you all well.

What a fabulous turn out we had for our celebration of the kings coronation, despite a rather wet and miserable day, weather wise. The children certainly enjoyed themselves, they were fascinated with the magician and as always the bouncy castle proved ever popular. We hope children and adults alike enjoyed it all; a massive thank you to all that helped make it a huge success. It was a lot of hard work, but worth it for the rewarding comments received. Photos on page 16. THANK YOU.

We have a bumper month of entertainment coming your way for June, see below:

Bingo every Friday, eyes down 7pm 18+ only.

9th June, **Fishing for Robots**, a 3 piece live band in the Walnut bar from 8.30pm bringing you great anthems from the 70s & 80s along with a feast of timeless New Romantic electro-rock. You will not be disappointed. FREE EVENT.

10th June, **Miss Tish Ewe**, a fabulous drag artiste will be here to entertain you from 8pm in the Oak Hall. Be prepared for lots of laughter, put-downs, innuendo, song & dance. Tickets selling fast - member £5 non member £8. STRICTLY ADULTS ONLY.

11th June, our regular monthly quiz night, £1 pp, max teams of 6, winners take 50% charity takes 50%. In the Walnut bar from 7pm.

16 June, Music night with GTC Entertainment, get those dancing shoes on for a night of fabulous disco music, from 8.30 in the Walnut bar. FREE EVENT.

30th June, the old favourite that is Karaoke with Stu & Scott from 8.30pm in the Walnut bar. FREE EVENT.

Please note, our free pool Mondays has now ended.

We strive to provide something for everyone, so if there's something you'd like to see, then please message with any suggestions via our FB page.

We hope the weather will be nicely warmed up this June for you to enjoy our delightful patio overlooking Centenary Field, where you can enjoy refreshments whilst keeping a watchful eye on your children. We have two new drinks on tap, Red Stripe Lager and Thatchers Haze Cider for you to enjoy. We also have ice lollies, cornettos and magnum-type ices for you to purchase, along with a vast range of bar snacks, sweets, soft drinks, tea/coffee and of course alcohol!

Finally a few reminders:

Please keep your children under adult supervision, do not allow them to run around the building, especially in the hallway and corridors.

Please use the numerous ashtrays provided to discard your cigarettes, it is unsightly and unnecessary to use the floor!

If you wish to order a takeaway, please ensure you discard of all the rubbish; plenty of bins are provided, so no excuses.

Foul and abusive language will not be tolerated and you will be asked to leave.

We wish to thank you for your continued custom and support. We strive to give you a pleasant and welcoming experience, we look forward to seeing you soon.

MSC

Meppershall Pre-School

June is an exciting month for Meppershall pre-school children as they are learning about the outside world, growth and recycling. Children have been encouraged to spend time in the outside area, focusing on the plants and wildlife they may find.

Being able to enjoy the outside area is fundamental to the children in their development of themselves and learning about their surroundings. We are currently raising money to be able to create a space which will be usable all year round providing shade in the summer and shelter in the colder months. Any support/assistance procuring an awning to would be greatly received. To make a contribution and for more information go to our go-fund-me page:

https://www.justgiving.com/crowdfunding/Meppershallpreschool?utm_term=mnAp3EJZA

Children are practising for the leavers event (4th July) which sends them off to new ventures awaiting them in September. We want to say a big thank you to staff and parents for all the support to make Meppershall pre-school the wonderful place it is.

Meppershall Village Hall Annual General Meeting

Notice of Annual General Meeting | Charity Number 300052

Sunday 13 June 2023 at 7pm in the Village Hall, Meppershall, SG17 5AB

AGENDA

1. Receive & Approve the minutes and summary of the previous Annual General Meeting held on 12 June 2022
2. Receive and approve the Trustees & Treasurers reports with accounts for the years to 31st March 2023
3. Election of trustees
4. Any other business:
 - Notified before the meeting
 - Arising at the meeting

Notes:

Item 1:

The report of the previous meeting is available by request or on the website

<https://www.meppershallvillagehall.co.uk>

Item 2:

The accounts will be available prior to the meeting on request by post or email

trustees@meppershallvillagehall.co.uk or via the website

<https://www.meppershallvillagehall.co.uk>

Item 3:

Details of the current trustees are:

TRUSTEES

Specific responsibilities

David Birch

(Property construction & treasurer)

Gordon Cordes

(Website, Entertainment & Bars)

Graham Jones

(Property construction & legal matters, Chairman)

Graham Walker (Premises Maintenance, Bars & Licensee)
 John Thompson (Secretary and Meppershall Parish Council nomination)

Nominations for the role of trustee and if available details of specific skill sets that can help in the running of the Village Hall are welcome, to be received in advance no later than 5pm on Sunday 11th June 2023. Nominations can be sent by email to trustees@meppershallvillagehall.co.uk or by post to one of the addresses below.

Item 4:

Items for other business should be sent in advance no later than 5pm on Sunday 11th June 2023 by email to trustees@meppershallvillagehall.co.uk or by post to one of the addresses below, so that appropriate research or obtaining information to respond fully can be collated before the meeting.

Postal details:

David Birch
 The Brook
 18b Shefford Road
 Meppershall, Beds
 SG17 5LJ

Graham Jones
 10 Taylors Close
 Meppershall, Beds
 SG17 5NH

Email contact details: trustees@meppershallvillagehall.co.uk

Website details: <https://www.meppershallvillagehall.co.uk>

Telephone: **07485 102727**

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 WITH MEPPERSHALL EVENTS COMMITTEE AND
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Meppershall Celebrates The Coronation



The weather was not ideal (!) but Saturday 6th May 2023 was still celebrated in style.

Congratulations to everyone at Meppershall Social Club who staged a weekend of events and celebrations. What a fantastic effort and what a great display they put on. As you can see, the large screen TV was put to good use, and the village hall was decked out in style!
God Save The King!





Our A.G.M.

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in the Walnut Room (Social Area)

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- 2) Offer help with our Printing, Folding, Home Pre-Collating, Final Collating and Stapling and Distribution of the magazine.

One thing's for sure... with YOUR input and support, The Meppershall Messenger could be EVEN BETTER!

A Visit To South Sudan by Andrew Goodman

Revd. Andrew Goodman, husband of Roni Goodman, Rector of St Mary's Church Meppershall, recently made a trip to South Sudan and we are grateful for his story here. Thank you Andrew for this hopeful and inspiring account of wonderful people and faith in a country with so many challenges at the present time.

In January I visited South Sudan, the youngest, most underdeveloped country in the world, to help lead a conference in the far north, by the Ethiopian border in Maiwut. Our team was invited by Bishop Peter Gatbel.

Coordinator John Jamuth explains: *"Gaining independence in 2011 brought more freedom of worship, fellowship and discipleship to entire Christian populations in South Sudan. Maiwut diocese was born as the result of freedom of religious expression and worship. It's one of the youngest Dioceses in the Province of the Episcopal Church of South Sudan. Because of its location the Diocese has very limited connection with international partners to support the ministry and development of the diocese."*



This is an understatement. In fact, Maiwut has no transport infrastructure and is so remote that the old American Red Cross base where I stayed has a dirt airstrip alongside for their weekly supply aircraft landing. The strip is swept and cleared of wandering cattle by the schoolchildren. There are no church or charity partners except for the one we stayed with at the base. The war ended last year, but the government destroyed the schools and churches to prevent rebels sheltering in them, so the people are at ground zero.

Our team were only the second outside visitors since 2014 when the diocese (district under the pastoral care of a Bishop) started. We arrived in pitch darkness after two days of travel, to be greeted by the people singing and dancing. They sat us down and carefully washed our feet with soap and water and dried them. I was overwhelmed with emotion at their love and

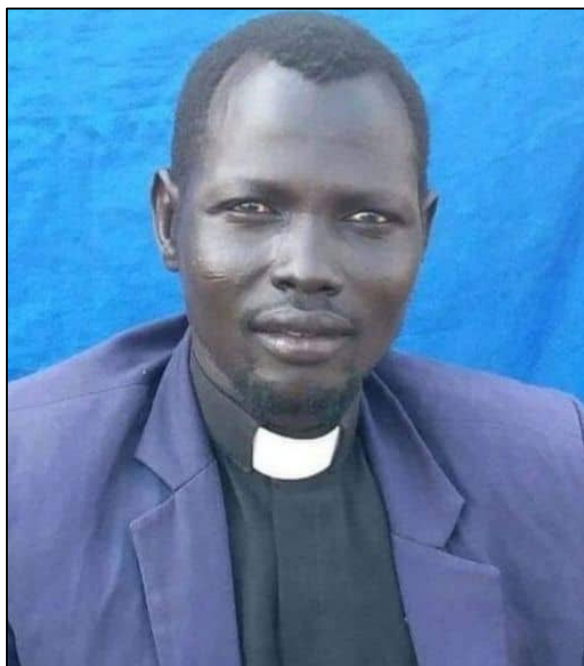
welcome, I couldn't help tears running down my face. I was reminded of Jesus washing his followers feet at his last supper.

The purpose of the Conference was to establish a Christian Discipleship team (learning how to follow Jesus). The team was led by Tim Wambunya, former bishop of the Diocese of Butere in Kenya. Bishop Tim now leads the multi-cultural church of St Paul's,

Slough. The conference was opened by the Hon. James Zan Chol, Deputy Maiwut County Commissioner.

One hundred and five people attended the conference, including about ten from other denominations. They were clergy, evangelists, mothers' union members with their babies, and youth. All one hundred and five received certificates and books. We also had about two thousand people attend the Sunday service. This included the government Deputy Commissioner and some denominational leaders.

One month later John Jamuth (pictured here) was able to report that he had been



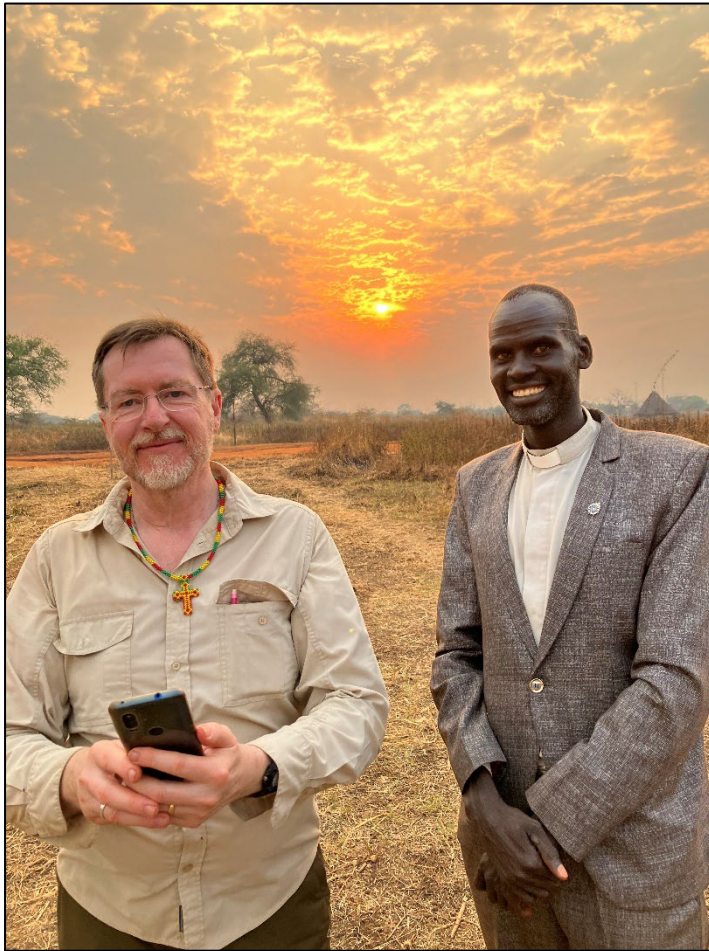
visiting group leaders in their own villages. He writes: *"It was a blessing for me as they accepted Rooted in Jesus discipleship training in Maiwut centre, bomas (enclosures) and villages."* John has now told us that seventy-five groups have completed the first book and are moving on to the second book.

With technical help from David Bartlett I was able to take five micro Water Filters, enough to provide clean water purified from bacteria for ten to fifteen families for up to ten years. I am also very grateful for support towards my costs by a grant from a St Albans diocesan charity, the Verulam House Fund Trust.

It would be lovely to continue to support the work in Maiwut. *"We have achieved very little,"* John explained, *"because we have no resources, and war and floods have greatly affected the community. The bishop and clergy have no salary or other means of support. We request the Rooted in Jesus team to return to Maiwut, we felt your wisdom, love and discipleship will change our community."*

That is my prayer too - I feel forever changed by the witness of their faith, their courage and total trust in God in the face of hardship and poverty. I sat by a church Treasurer while he was eating lunch one day. He was eating just a bowl of white rice. I noticed he was pouring hot water into the bottom of the bowl, and mixing it with a bit of the rice to enjoy each spoonful with what became a little 'rice flavoured' water. The Conference ran out of money for food after three days, so the team took turns to give \$45 a day so people could eat and not have to return home. They used this to make a nourishing dried Nile Fish stew to go with rice and vegetables.

I couldn't help but notice a priest - she had chopped off the side of her finger. She had covered her injured finger in plastic. The wound was weeping and she was pestered by flies. This could have developed into serious illness. Thankfully I was able to clean the wound and dress it with a plaster and we gave her antibiotics (something we would take for granted here). The next morning, she arrived radiant and smiling after a night free of pain. I have since learned she is doing well.



I made friends with Archdeacon Jacob (photo left) and his wife Nyjany. Jacob is a WASH (Water, Sanitation and Hygiene) Officer, and Nyajany is a Nurse - both working across the border in neighbouring Ethiopia, with no-one to employ them in their South Sudan home village. We were able to leave the Water Filters for Jacob to distribute and all our First Aid and Medicines with Nyajany. I've since been able to pass on £380 given by people to Nyajany for her to buy more First Aid and Medicines to give simple treatments to children and families in the villages. The Mothers Union made a request to us for Tools for farming which we have not yet provided. Nyajany is pictured below at the front of the group, teaching.

I'm left in awe at the people's resilience and faith and I'd love to support them as they carry the life-changing message of Jesus to their communities and care for the elderly, children and families.

Help now

If you would like to help provide ongoing support to the Diocese of Maiwut, please get in touch with me. We hope to return to Madiwut in January 2024.

Thank you for reading and God bless you.
Andrew



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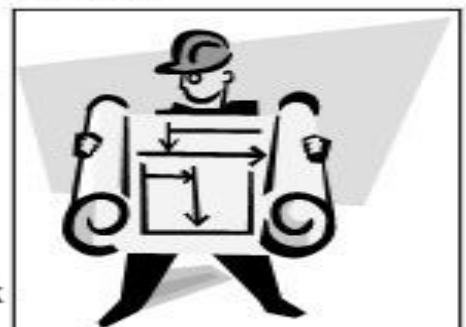
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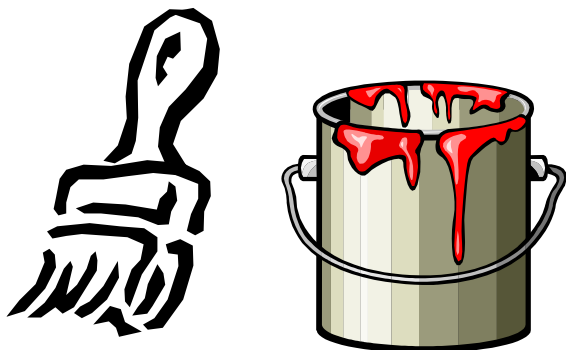
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www.stmarysmeppershall.org.uk † facebook.com/stmarysmeppershall



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...

June is with us - and we hope it is the beginning of long sunny summer days!

In church, we had our annual meeting last month (APCM), and as Rector it is a time for me to say a huge thank you to all who have contributed to the life of St Mary's over the past year: our Reader Keith Callard, Ruth Callard (our pastoral visitor who also runs Rectory Teas), the Church Wardens - Chris Valentine and Pete Clark, our PCC, our Sacristans, our Lay Leaders of Worship, our caterers, churchyard working party-ers, our organists, sides persons, readers and pray-ers and rota-makers, CD Play-ers, cleaners, launderers, flower arrangers, bell ringers, maintenance team, and of course James and Miriam Read and our 2nd Sunday Strollers!... And I apologise if I have missed any one! Thank you to all who contribute their gifts generously, quietly, tirelessly.

They sound a crowd don't they? But actually we all know that they number only few people...

I think I should add that, as there are many people who kindly wear "several hats" and undertake two or three (or more!) jobs in and around the Church, and others who have served faithfully for many many years, there is often actually a shortage of helpers. We are always grateful when new people offer to contribute their gifts - please do get in touch with me if you feel this could be you!

I am pleased also, to thank the Friend's of St Mary's for their generosity in raising funds for the Church - and for the fun and fellowship their events generate in the Church and the Village (the Village Quiz is coming up on 1st July!) Also, we thank the Parish Council for their generous help with grass cutting in the Churchyard.

I am so thankful that so many people come and pray in our Church, sit quietly in it, look after it, watch over it, and support it in so many different ways.

Those of you who do visit the Church and churchyard - or walk up in this end of the village - will have seen that the scaffolding has gone up, and that the repair work on the Church is about to begin. Thank you to all those who for 20 years or so, have been raising money towards the repair of the tower and transepts. I think some thought we wouldn't ever get there - but thanks to everyone's hard work and generosity work has begun and should be completed by mid-November.

I think June is a time when it is good for us to remember and hold in our prayers our young people for whom this is exam season and may be a time of great stress. GCSEs and A-Levels began in mid May and continue through most of June... and it's a time for support, a listening ear and lots of TLC!

In church, the first Sunday of June is Trinity Sunday.... I am told that in the guidebook to the ruins of Fountains Abbey in Yorkshire accompanying a picture of the Chapter House is the note: "Here in the Chapter House the monks gathered every Sunday to hear a sermon from the Abbot except on Trinity Sunday, owing to the difficulty of the subject." Well, we'll have a go!

In June this year, the church linens are turned to green and we enter what the church calls Ordinary Time or Numbered Weeks. For most of the year now, until Advent - we will be studying week by week, the ministry of Jesus as recorded in the Gospel of Matthew. Perhaps our prayer through this time might be the prayer I think many of us do pray, based on the prayer of Richard, Bishop of Chichester (1197-1253):

*"O most merciful redeemer, friend and brother, may we see you more clearly,
love you more dearly and follow you more nearly, day by day."*

With best wishes, Rector Roni

Church News and Events In June

Usual Pattern of Services

Sundays	11.00am	Morning Worship every Sunday Holy Communion: 2 nd and 4 th Sundays
Every Wednesday	10.00am	Holy Communion in 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

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This Summer, 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. You'll find a friendly bunch of people, plenty of tea and coffee (and often cake and biscuits) and lots of village chatter. 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

Our walk this month is on Sunday 11th June and we're heading to Hexton over the big fields south of Shillington. Leaving the church gate in Meppershall at 2pm, we'll walk to All Saints Church, Shillington, via Shillington Bury, Lordship Farm and Shillington playing field; then we continue south, crossing Hanscombe End Road at Model Farm and heading across the area known as Hexton Common (large arable fields) with views to Pegsdon and Barton Hills, arriving at The Raven in Hexton soon after 4pm. As always dogs are very welcome and they need to be under control since the crops are well grown now and people and animals need to stick carefully to the marked/cleared footpaths to avoid damaging them.

We will be parking cars at the end of the walk near The Raven in advance – if you want to do that please come to church at 1.10pm to drop a car and have a lift back. For more info or to drop a car in advance at the end of the walk (or to confirm a lift back with someone else - there are always spare seats!) please get in touch. 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>.

Toddington Poetry Society

The theme of 'Insects' might seem an unusual one for poetry, but in fact we had an excellent and very interesting evening on 9 May, with poems ranging from John Donne to John Kinsella and many others in between. Our next meeting will be on Tuesday 13 June, 8-10pm at Luton Irish Forum, Hitchin Road Luton, LU2 0ES. On this occasion we will have a visiting speaker - **Stephen Claughton** from Ver Poets. Stephen has published two pamphlets of his poetry and also widely in magazines. In the second half of the evening there will be an opportunity for members of the audience to read their own choice poems, whether by themselves or by other people.

Admission £6 (but our policy is, entry is free for first-time visitors) .

Our new website: <https://tps-in-luton.wixsite.com/toddpoetry>

If you are interested in poetry or write yourself, you will be very welcome to join us. We are a very friendly group.



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How (Not) To Become A Famous Author by Patrick O'Connor

One day many years ago, I was sitting out on the patio, writing a letter. The sky was blue and gentle cumulus clouds were scudding by. I began to imagine that I was actually sailing over a sparkling ocean. I kept writing along this imagined course, and gradually a story developed.

My solo sailor was on a small yacht in mid Atlantic, having survived a hurricane. Walter was there because, after a bizarre failed suicide attempt, he had been admitted to a mental institution. There it was decided that the only therapy that could heal his condition was to be made to sail solo around the world. So here he was, relieved, but alone. From astern, a sweet voice was calling "Luff up! Wait for me."

Our hero swung his craft about, a lovely young lady swam alongside and he helped her aboard. She was feminine perfection, but Walter discovers that she is also weirdly unnatural. In a series of wild adventures they cross oceans, make exotic landfalls and survive terrifying dangers. They encounter more people, good, evil and mad. Throughout their odyssey Walter faces tantalising prospects of submission and erotic rapture. He wrestles with the emotional conflicts that arise. Walter's therapy sails to a surprising finale, a counterpoint of tragedy and joyful triumph.

I eventually completed this masterpiece, and the next obvious step was to have it published. I anticipated immediate enthusiastic responses, sales of millions and a blockbuster film. How could such an amazing story fail to succeed like this?

However, as I was about to discover, creating a masterpiece is the easy part. You cannot approach a book publisher directly. You have to do this through a literary agency. There are many of these, and they all receive hundreds of hopeful submissions every year. Modern publishers are only interested in a high probability of business success for any titles they publish. So the literary agencies comply with this business approach. This means that new and unknown authors stand very little chance of having a manuscript accepted by an agency. Authors who have become famous, including Patrick O'Brian, J. K. Rowling and others suffered many rejections on their way to fame. So I was rejected over and over until I had offered my masterpiece to every agency in London. Fame and fortune no longer beckoned. Then I discovered the new way to be published: Internet publishing. All one needs to do is to prepare a manuscript and upload it to an Internet publisher. They will print and ship individual copies to order. So there is no need for the author to buy copies and try to sell them, and the author retains the copyright. The whole process is quite simple for anyone with reasonable computer skills. And best of all, the cost is zero. You set the price, and the publisher takes a percentage of each sale. The publisher I use is Amazon.com.

The only downside is that there is no marketing of your book. So "Walter Minion's Therapy" is published, but the world knows nothing of it. It's sales make no impact on my financial situation, and you will not have heard of me. But maybe one day...?

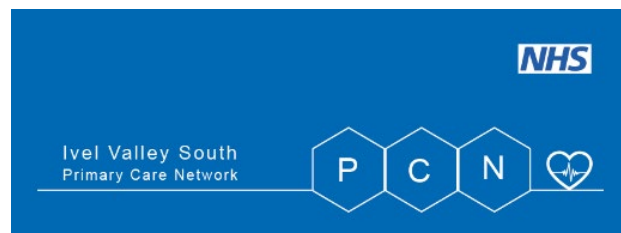
So, if you would like to become a famous author, I advise that you do not write a masterpiece. Instead, write something like *Shades of Grey*. Then it helps if you have a celebrity friend to recommend it, because people want to do what celebrities do. There is no sex in "Walter Minion's Therapy", and I have no celebrity friends, so I remain unknown, but content.

NHS Afternoon Of Health Awareness

Ivel Valley South Primary Care Network invites you to an **Afternoon of Health Awareness** on Wednesday 21st June from 2.30-4.00pm at Shefford Health Centre Please arrive at 2.30pm for a prompt 2.40pm start.

Guest speakers delivering talks on:

Be breast aware (this includes men too)!
Prostate and PSA testing
Bowel and FIT testing
Cervical screening



Information stalls including:

The Personalised Care Team
Mid Beds Macmillan Cancer Support Group
Breast Screening, Bowel Screening, Cervical Screening and HPV
Prostate Cancer UK

Covering screening queries such as:

When and how will I be invited? How do I decide if I want screening?
How do I book an appointment? What happens at my appointment?
Can I bring someone with me? How will I get my results?
Is blood pressure monitoring important, what does it tell me about my health?
When and where can I get my blood pressure tested, can I do it myself at home?

There will be an opportunity to ask your own questions to our specialists, and to gather lots of information to help you make informed decisions.

Remember, screening can prevent serious illness. Be aware by understanding your health and wellbeing; by spotting the signs, treatment is more likely to be successful when diagnosis is made early.

To book: Places are limited and booking is recommended, please book online at: <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/health-awareness-afternoon-tickets-634591318717>

All patients from Shefford Health Centre, Lower Stondon, Arlesey and Larksfield Surgeries are welcome.

For booking and other queries about this event, email bedccg.carecoordinator.ivs@nhs.net

Event address: Shefford Health Centre, Robert Lucas Dr, Shefford, SG17 5FS

We hope you can join us.

Shefford Osteopathic Clinic: Posture

What Shape Does Your Posture Create?

Your posture is the position in which you stand or sit.

People often ask: *“What is the best posture?”*

When considering posture, it’s important to ask:

What do we tense up to create that posture?

What do we have to move?

Are we even aware of what our body is doing?

There is a different way to think about this. Think about what shape you are creating with your body and how does this affect or impact you?

As an example, what shape are you when working on your laptop or tablet?

Commonly you will be hunched over, shoulders rounding and rolling forward. Your chest and rib cage will have dropped down. This shape constricts our breathing and digestion, reducing the oxygen and nutrients available to the cells in our body.

Finding the right posture for you is about how you move as well as the shape your body creates when you're still.

How we shape our bodies also affects our moods. For example - raising your shoulders up to your ears brings about fear, whilst rounded shoulders bring about resignation. Imagine now how this affects your ability to work, your quality, attention and attitude.

Assessing and adjusting your posture can have a big impact on how you feel, which in turn affects your everyday life. Our friendly team will look at the shapes your body creates and offer you guidance and advice, including practical lifestyle tips. Reach us on 01462 811006.

When Should I Use NHS 111 Online?

Depending on your situation, NHS 111 Online will...

- Provide general health information and advice
- Tell you how to get help with the medicines you need or symptoms you are experiencing
- Link you to local services where required
- Connect you to a nurse, emergency dentist, pharmacist or GP
- If needed, help with a face-to-face appointment
- Advise on arrival time at A&E

NHS 111 online can help you if you have a medical problem and you're not sure what to do.

Visit **111.nhs.uk** first rather than going straight to A&E. We'll help you right away, and if needed, a healthcare professional will call you.

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Finance by Paul Savuto

Equity release on the rise again

An increasing number of older homeowners are choosing to release equity, latest figures reveal, with cost-of-living pressures still the main reason for tapping into the value of their home.

On the rise

Equity release allows over-55s to access some of the value of their home as tax-free cash. In total, homeowners used equity release to borrow £6.2bn in 2022, a 29% yearly rise. Since 2017, the market has more than doubled. It's not only higher amounts being borrowed; there are now more individual equity release plans too. In 2022, 93,421 people chose to release wealth from their property, up 23% from a year earlier. The number of new equity release plans taken out also rose by a fifth.

Everyday spending

Cost-of-living pressures continue to be the main prompt for people choosing to release equity. With household budgets stretched, equity release is a convenient choice for many older homeowners trying to meet rising bills. Last year, more than half of new customers opted for lump sum plans, up from 43% in 2021. The average lump sum received was £128,382 in the final quarter.

Greater flexibility

The popularity of equity release reflects recent improvements for consumers. For example, in March 2022, new regulation was introduced to guarantee that all new plans with Equity Release Council approval give customers the right to make voluntary, penalty-free partial repayments to reduce interest costs.

The best for you

When considering equity release, it is important to weigh up your options and make sure it is suitable for your unique needs.

Rising prices add almost 20% to retirement costs

It can be difficult to understand what funds you'll need to finance the retirement you dream about and how this compares to your projected pensions income. It's even harder to keep track when the cost of living is spiralling.

Setting standards

The Pensions and Lifetime Savings Association (PLSA) developed its Retirement Living Standards¹ to help us to picture what kind of lifestyle we could have in retirement at different levels and what a range of common goods and services would cost for each level. The cost of a Minimum lifestyle for a single person has increased from £10,900 in 2021 to £12,800 in 2022, a rise of 18%. For a couple, an income of £16,700 required in 2021 rose to £19,900 (19% increase). Costs factored into this lifestyle include – £96 for a couple's weekly food shop, eating out about once a month, a week's annual holiday in the UK and some affordable leisure activities about twice a week. But there is no budget to run a car.

Want more than the minimum?

At the Comfortable Retirement Living Standard, retirees can expect more luxuries like regular beauty treatments, three weeks' holiday in Europe each year and theatre trips. The weekly food shop for a couple in this lifestyle amounts to £238 per week. At this level, the cost of living increased 11% to £37,300 for one person and 10% to £54,500 for a two-person household.

How much do I need to save?

For a comfortable retirement PLSA estimate that a couple who are both in receipt of the full new State Pension would need to accumulate a retirement pot of £328,000 each, based on an annuity rate of £6,200 per £100,000.

Your lifestyle, your choice

If you're concerned about your retirement planning, we can help you prepare for the lifestyle you want to enjoy. Retirement planning involves visualising your key goals for your retirement years and setting up a plan to help you achieve those goals through financial planning.

GET IN TOUCH

DGS IFA Ltd are Independent and Chartered Financial Advisers. 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.

Birthdays

Congratulations on some special birthdays in June:

Joyce D who will be 89

Peter D who will be 81



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

In Memoriam

Christine Foster. May 2023, aged 69.

Please see the further announcement below.

Brenda Hicks. April 2023, aged 88.

Our condolences and sympathies to Susan, Janet, Diane and families.

Please also see below a further tribute to Margaret and Roger Bryant whose sad passing we commemorated in the April issue of The Meppershall Messenger.

Christine Foster

12th August 1953 – 7th May 2023

It is with deep sadness that I have to announce that my beloved wife, Christine, finally lost her battle with cancer on 7th May. She was diagnosed with terminal brain tumours a year ago and bravely bore the treatments that it was hoped would slow their development. The treatment and subsequent medication 'bought' us a period of stability either side of Christmas but her decline since then was steady and obvious. After a 5 week spell in St. John's Hospice Moggerhanger, to stabilise seizures that she was experiencing, she was able to return home with live-in care for the final 9 weeks of her life. Her death, at home, was timely, but her spirit lives on. We thank God for the life and memories of a wonderful woman, wife, mother, grandmother, friend... and much more.

We will hold a Thanksgiving Service and Celebration for her life at St. Mary's, Meppershall, 12 noon on Saturday 1st July. (I know this is the day of the Village Fair, but we were unable to co-ordinate all the competing diary demands on other dates).

Chris Foster

The whole team at The Meppershall Messenger extends its sympathies to Chris, as well as Tim, Andrew and families on the passing on Christine, as we all remember her big contributions to life in the village and in farming in so many ways. A full tribute will follow in a future edition of the village magazine.

Margaret and Roger Bryant

It was with great sadness last month that we informed you of the sudden passing of both Margaret Bryant on the 4th April and her husband Roger Bryant on the 26th April. Their joint funeral was held on the 17th May at North Herts Crematorium which was attended by family and friends.

When Margaret passed at the age of 77, she had lived her whole life in the village of Meppershall, like many of her family members before her. She had a great love for her garden, baking, and playing her piano. She was always active and could be often seen walking around the village, which included delivering the Meppershall Messenger for many years. In her younger years, she rang bells at Meppershall church, and it was whilst ringing bells back in 1967 she met Roger. They married in 1970 and raised their family in the village.

Roger moved to Meppershall in 1970 after marrying Margaret. He enjoyed sport, playing cricket for many years for Ickleford. His other passion was gardening, growing his own vegetables on his allotment in the village for many years. Roger took early retirement in 1994 and to keep busy, he started to play an active role in the local community, serving on Meppershall Parish Council continuously from 1991 to 2015. He also spent time on the board of governors of Meppershall Lower school, as well as spending time on the committees at both Meppershall Village Hall and the Social Club, which he also represented over the years playing Dominoes, Crib, and occasionally snooker.

They leave behind their two children Shelley & Richard and five grandchildren.

Roses



Wake up and Smell the Roses! by Donna Cameron

Donna's Garden Designs 07833670934

Wow! You can almost see the garden growing... Every time I pop out into my garden something seems to have suddenly emerged or has burst open - none more so than the Roses. June is the height of the English Rose season.

I have over 20 different roses in my garden; another one of my plant addictions! I buy them because of their interesting names. Obviously I have 'The Generous Gardener' and 'Gertrude Jekyll' (one of my heroes - a garden designer) and 'Queen Elizabeth.' All these happen to be pink which is also my favourite colour.

A fantastic climbing rose I saw on holiday in Norfolk, aptly called 'Mermaid', is a large, open, bright yellow rose that flowers throughout summer. I have two of these climbing the willow fences. I have been putting it in my latest designs as it's just so jolly.

I also have 'Pride and Prejudice' and 'Hot Chocolate' and 'Joie de Vivre'.

An interesting old-fashioned one that my teacher always said everyone should have in their garden is Rosa Mundi, dating to 1580. It is fascinating. The petals are two-tone, light pink and cerise. They last well in a vase with some sprigs of Alchemilla Mollis.

Roses go back much further. Fossil evidence has shown they date back 35 million years. They were much sought after by the Egyptians and Romans for their rose petals and perfumes and have featured throughout history with their connection to love.

Of course the Tudor Rose has been an emblem of England for hundreds of years and still features on the back of 20p and the Royal coat of Arms.

There is a rose for every situation. Be it climbing, rambling, patio or shrub.

They have dipped in and out of fashion over the years. Back in the 1950s they were considered old fashioned in their sterile rose beds. But they don't have to be grown that way. Put them in a mixed herbaceous border. Good companion plants are Lavender, Nepeta and Alliums. Gorgeous! ...and you can't beat the scent.

They are very low maintenance and robust. Just prune them in Feb, feed them twice a year once in April and once after first flush of flowers in summer with rose food and a mulch of well-rotted manure. Keep dead-heading and you will be well rewarded for years to come. Enjoy!

Donna x

Jobs in the Garden for June	
Put Hanging baskets and containers out	Prune spring flowering shrubs
Mow lawns once a week, leaving some areas for wildlife	Make sure greenhouse not too hot
Stake plants	Pinch outside shoots of tomatoes
Plant out bedding	Harvest lettuce, radishes early potatoes

Trugs and Trowels Gardening Club (Campton)

April and May have been unseasonably wet and cool difficult to get the best start out in the garden but I am sure you have all been making plans and garden centre visits.

A wonderful welcome by Michael Parrish and Rupert who gave us a back history and up to present date of the trials and tribulations of farming and management of crops here in Bedfordshire, along with rules, regulations and yields as a consequence. We were also introduced to our new arrivals here on the farm and an update to the high tec equipment.

June Gardening Club is to be held in Campton Village Hall. Our speaker Richard Knox will be talking on Sheep farming for the Wildlife Trust on Pegsdon Hills. Please note the date change of 26th June 2023.

A huge thank you to Janet and Nigel for hosting our red, white and blue social for the Coronation. There was much positive feedback by all our members.

Maryika - 01462 851729

Calendar 2023

Date	Event	Location
26th June	Richard Knock - Wildlife Trust and Sheep farming	Campton Village Hall
30th July	Meppershall Manor visit - historic castle mound	Meppershall Manor
14th August	Competition Judging	Campton Village Hall
4th September	Becky Almond - How to care for your garden	Campton Village Hall
2nd October	Richard Knock - Bedfordshire wild orchids	Campton Village Hall

Henlow Amateur Theatrical Society – HATS

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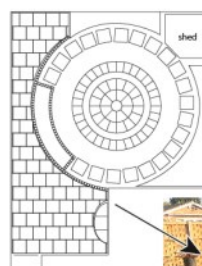
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The Meppershall Players @ STMA June 2023



The Players will be attending the STMA (Shefford Town Memorial Association) Summer Fete on Sunday 4th June. We have decided on the format for our stall which will be a Tombola, £1-a-ticket, every ticket wins a prize. The fete starts at 1pm. Come and see us early as we only have a certain number of prizes and I don't think they'll be there for long!

The Players' AGM is on Monday 5th June at 7.45pm at the STMA Hall, 10, Hitchin road, Shefford SG17 5JA. Non-members are most welcome - this is a great time to meet The Players and find out what we're about (mainly having fun).

We're still reading scripts for this year's Pantomime (thought I'd give writing one a miss this year). Dick Whittington looks promising. We've ruled out Little Red Riding Hood and Dick Turpin (some scripts are very dated and in this day and age not politically correct). Puss in Boots could still be a contender if we can find a good script. We have booked the dates of 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 & under & 60yrs & over)

If you're over 18 years old and would like to be part of our Pantomime, please phone Karen on the number below or come to one of our meetings on Monday evenings at the STMA 10, Hitchin Road, Shefford. We're a friendly bunch who enjoy entertaining our audiences

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

The Players meet every Monday evening at 7.30pm at the STMA, 10, Hitchin Road, Shefford SG17 5JA. Membership is 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

Cineaste's Corner by Dave Peters: Ed Wood

I recently rewatched the excellent Tim Burton directed "Ed Wood" (1994) which has long been my favourite Burton film. Edward D. Wood Jr. has the distinction of being regularly voted the worst film director of all time. However, as he was totally unaware of his singular lack of talent, he went on to write, direct and produce several wonderfully bad films all of which were made on shoestring budgets. His most famous production, the truly awful "Plan 9 From Outer Space" (1957) is often cited as the worst film ever made and is therefore an absolute must watch cult classic.

Although primarily a biopic about Ed Wood this film is also Burton's homage to 1950's exploitation B-movies, and is beautifully shot in black and white to create a 1950's vibe. The film stars Johnny Depp who portrays Wood as a hopelessly optimistic, endlessly enthusiastic weirdo with a bottomless self-belief in his own genius. He is supported by an outstanding cast including Burton regulars Sarah Jessica Parker and Bill Murray.

Wood's unique approach to movie making is brought brilliantly and comically to life, for instance his extensive use of stock studio footage that often bore no relevance to the film at hand; his terrible dialogue; his insistence that the first take was always the best and reshoots were unnecessary, and his willingness to cast virtually anyone he met who was willing to appear in front of his camera whether or not they had ever acted before.

The other standout performance is Martin Landau's portrayal of Bela Lugosi, for which he deservedly won the Best Supporting Actor Oscar in 1995. Lugosi was a 74-year-old impoverished morphine addict when he met Wood, he was resentful of his lost fame as a horror movie icon, and particularly disparaging of the still popular Boris Karloff who he saw as his greatest rival. Wood, already a huge fan of Lugosi, unexpectedly bumps into him in an undertaker's where Lugosi is testing out coffins because he's "tired of life". Wood immediately casts Lugosi in his next production, the totally wacky "Glen or Glenda" (1953) a film about transvestism in which Wood - who was himself an enthusiastic transvestite - is directing himself in the Glen/Glenda role.

Burton focuses the rest of the film on the making of "Bride of the Monster" (1955), Lugosi's last full movie for Wood, and of course the infamous "Plan 9 From Outer Space". Burton recreates the scene where Lugosi filmed a test for Plan 9 which was shot with him just standing outside of his own front door, shortly after which he inconveniently died. Unperturbed by the loss of his star, Wood still uses this test footage for the film (so he can put legitimately put Lugosi's name on the promotional posters) and hires his girlfriend's chiropractor, a man who looks nothing like Lugosi, to understudy him in the rest of the production. This necessitates the understudy shooting each scene with a cape covering his face to hide the fact that he isn't actually Bela Lugosi.

I also have to give an honourable mention to Vincent D'Onofrio who brilliantly portrays Orson Wells in a fictionalised scene set in a bar. When approached by a star-struck Wood (who is attired in an angora jumper, tight skirt, stockings, heels, and a beret), he offers him some sage directing advice.

It would have been very easy for Burton to make a film that only set out to mock Ed Wood's towering lack of talent, but thankfully he also celebrates Wood's optimism, enthusiasm, sheer love of film-making, and never-ending self-belief. The other frankly bizarre characters who appear did in fact inhabit Ed Wood's real world and also appeared in his films, and many of the events portrayed are firmly based in fact. However, I am also sure that there is much here that is a product of Burton's rich imagination. I really love this film and can't recommend it highly enough, and if you're interested in watching it yourself then it's available to stream on Disney+.

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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

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	DESTINATIONS	Venue Entry + Bus Fare Per Person
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

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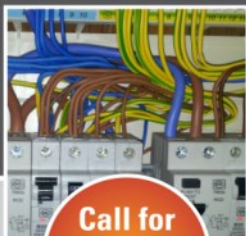


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The Team And Collation Dates

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.

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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
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
November 2023	30 th Oct	June 2024	TBC
Dec-Jan 2023	27 th Nov	July 2024	TBC
February 2024	29 th Jan 2024	Aug-Sept 2024	TBC
Contact John Thompson to confirm arrangements (contact information above).			