

Parish and Town Council Newsletter



Issue No. 3

March 2010



MK Scoops £3 million Computer Prize

Milton Keynes residents are to benefit from millions of pounds worth of potentially life-changing computer training after the council scooped third prize in a national contest run by global computer giants Microsoft.

Milton Keynes Council, and its commercial broadband and IT arm, ConnectMK was one of the three final contenders for 1st, 2nd and 3rd prize in the National Britain Works Challenge - a campaign that challenged local authorities to devise effective programmes to address unemployment and availability of digital skills in the local community.

The competition encouraged local authorities to use their creativity and business skills to pitch for thousands of Microsoft Training Vouchers and to help the councils launch innovative programs for citizens in their areas.

Previously, in Milton Keynes, the Digital Challenge as it was known, was met head on with

the council and ConnectMK (see www.connectmk.com) working closely with partners to offer PCs for rental to low income families, at just £1.50 a week. More than 1,500 people seized the opportunity, with over 1,000 on the books at any one time. This has formed part of a broad based approach which has also seen the council stimulate the introduction of new broadband services into MK.

Now the council has scooped a staggering £3 million in training vouchers, from those aimed at equipping people with essential IT skills to more advanced technical specialist courses.

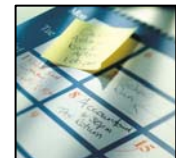
All training vouchers have to be used within 6 months of issue which will be deployed in conjunction with partners to make most effective use of the opportunity. This training is particularly targeted to help the unemployed to acquire improved technology skills and to aid their bid to get new jobs.

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Cllr Sam Crooks, Council Leader and Cabinet member for IT, said: "We had to really prove our case to Microsoft but we are pleased to say that they recognized the important and innovative work ConnectMK and the council are doing in the area of e-inclusion.

"We've been providing the home loan computers for some time now, and we've been aware for a while that we need to back that up with training, whether it's at a basic level such as understanding Word or Excel, up to technical levels, which could lead to new employment or a change of career."

Recycling News

Don't know what to do with dirty oil from your deep fat fryer? Ever thought of recycling it?

Thanks to an innovative new facility at Bleak Hall, New Bradwell and Newport Pagnell Community Recycling Centres (CRC's), residents in Milton Keynes can now add used cooking oil to their recycling routine.

The new collection tanks each hold up to 1,250 litres of used cooking oil. Once full, the oil from one collection tank can be used to generate sufficient electricity to power an average family home for a whole year. The oil is collected and processed into a bio-fuel called LF100 which is then used to produce electricity.

Andy Hudson, Chief Waste Management Engineer for Milton Keynes Council said: "This new facility provides an excellent way of re-using the waste to make energy. Cooking oil has historically been difficult to dispose of. Usually it ends up in landfill sites or being illegally poured down the sink where it blocks sewers and has a devastating impact on local wildlife."

He continued: "Another great aspect of the service is that it's being provided to Milton Keynes residents free of charge. Living Fuels, the company behind the

innovative scheme collect the oil from Community Recycling Centres at no cost and as often as required."

"The launch of the service is an opportunity to get over the message that used cooking oil causes major environmental damage when poured down the sink. It costs water companies literally millions to clear blockages caused in sewers by this build-up of oils. Added to this, the use of used cooking oil in electricity generation reduces carbon emissions meaning that everyone can play a part in building Britain's renewable energy capacity."

Community Recycling Centres are located at Bleak Hall, New Bradwell and Newport Pagnell. They are free to use, and open from 8am to 5pm - 1st October to 31st March, and with extended summer opening hours from 8am to 8pm - 1st April to 30th September.

For more information on local Community Recycling Centres, visit www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/recycling

Sport Relief

On Sunday 21st March, Milton Keynes will be hosting the Sainsbury's Sport Relief Mile in the heart of the city. The Milton Keynes Mile is one of hundreds of Sainsbury's Sport Relief Miles taking place across the country. With three distance options - 1, 3 or 6 miles, there is something for everyone to get involved in.

This year as part of Sport Relief in Milton Keynes, Milton Keynes Council will be hosting the *Invest Milton Keynes Big Corporate Games*.

The Games will begin week commencing 8th March, with three events taking place over the following weeks including: The Big Bounce, a space hopper race at Middleton Hall; The Big Bike, a tricycle race at the Hub MK; culminating in The Big Run, teams taking part in the Milton Keynes Mile. The events will be taking place on the 9th, 11th and 21st March respectively.

Cllr Vanessa McPake, the Cabinet Member responsible for Leisure and Sport, said: "This is a great way of combining getting fit, and carrying on with our New Year's resolutions, with giving to a very worthwhile cause which is literally helping save people's lives, both across the globe and closer to home."

For more information or to enter see:

www.sportrelief.com/

MKC Consultations

www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/mkcconsultation

Wellbeing through Libraries and Life Long Learning Strategy 2010 – 2015

Consultation Period:
01/02/2010 – 15/05/2010
Contact: Deborah Cooper
Phone: 01908 254074
Email:
deborah.cooper@milton-keynes.gov.uk

You will find the draft Strategy for Wellbeing through Libraries and Lifelong Learning, and a consultation response form at www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/adulteducation

The Library Service is very keen to make sure that it gathers as many views as possible and hopes you will send a response, either using the forms (either the word document or the online form) or simply by sending comments by email or letter to the address below:

Deborah Cooper
Milton Keynes Council
Central Library
555 Silbury Boulevard
Milton Keynes
MK9 3HL

deborah.cooper@milton-keynes.gov.uk

Milton Keynes Community Cohesion Plan 2009-12

Consultation Period:
16/02/2010- 30/03/2010
Contact: Janice Scott
Phone: 01908 254287
Email:
janice.scott@milton-keynes.gov.uk

Summary

Milton Keynes Council wishes to consult with partners and local businesses on the Cohesion Plan which considers the development and delivery of local services which promote cohesion in Milton Keynes. The Cohesion Plan is based on the Milton Keynes Community Cohesion Strategy which was written and launched in 2008.

Purpose of Consultation

The Cohesion Plan aims to enable people from different backgrounds to celebrate their differences, provide opportunities for people to learn about each others cultures, beliefs, religions and lifestyles and promote and encourage the involvement of all community groups in the planning of services for Milton Keynes.

Core Strategy: Pre Submission Document

Consultation Period:
17/02/2010- 31/03/2010
Contact: Development Plans Team
Phone: 01908 252599
Email:
corestrategy@milton-keynes.gov.uk

Summary

The Core Strategy is a document which deals with the growth and development of the whole of the Borough in the period up to 2026. The document is available at the Council's Civic Offices, at all libraries in the Borough, at Acorn House and on the Council's website at: www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/core-strategy-publication

Purpose of Consultation

More than 40,000 new homes are planned for Milton Keynes over this period. It sets out key planning policies and identifies the major areas where growth and change will take place. Following earlier rounds of consultation, this is the final opportunity for the public to have their say on this document.

To make sure you keep up to date with all MKC Consultations please see:
www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/mkcconsultation

Funding News

BBC Children in Need Small Grants Scheme (UK)

BBC Children in Need grants are available for not-for-profit organisations (including registered charities, voluntary organisations, schools, local authorities, churches, social enterprises, community interest groups, universities etc) working with disadvantaged children and young people 18 years and under, living in the UK, the Isle of Man or the Channel Islands. Grants of up to £10,000 per year for up to three years are available through their small grants scheme. For grants over £10,000, apply through their main grants programme. When applying for a grant, organisations must provide clear evidence that disadvantaged children and young people will be the primary beneficiaries of the project, and will experience positive changes in their lives from the activities or services you are providing. BBC Children in Need aims to fund projects where a small amount can make a real contribution to the success of the project. Grants can be used to cover both, capital and revenue costs

Application Form: On-line

Deadline: 15th April, 15th July and the 15th October 2010

Tel: 020 8576 7788

Email: pudsey@bbc.co.uk

Website:

www.bbc.co.uk/pudsey/grants/general_grants.shtml

Hilden Charitable Fund (UK)

The Hilden Charitable Fund awards grants to projects both in the UK and in developing countries. The aim of the fund is to address disadvantages, notably by supporting causes that are less likely to raise funds from public subscriptions. Both the UK and overseas fund policy is directed largely at supporting work at community level. Preference is given to supporting small community organisations with an income of less than £200,000 per year.

In particular, the Fund wants to support projects that address homelessness; asylum seekers and refugees; Community based initiatives for disadvantaged young people and Penal Affairs.

There is also a Summer Playscheme grant programme for the benefit of children from refugee and ethnic minority families, which opens in February, with grants of around £1,000 available. There is a separate application form for this.

Application Form: Yes, available from the website.

Deadline: Trustees meet quarterly. Check website for update on next deadline.

Contact: Sandy Derbyshire PA to the Secretary to the Trustees, The Hilden Charitable Fund, 34 North End Road, London, W14 0SH.

Tel: 0207 603 1525

Email:

hildencharity@hotmail.com

Website:

www.hildencharitablefund.org.uk

Milton Keynes Community Foundation – Sports Relief Grants

Don't miss out! MK Community Foundation is awarding £62,000 to Community Groups and charities in MK. Your group could benefit from up to £1,000 to support your work. Grants are available to groups with an annual income of £50k or less; grants are not necessarily for sports-related activity and can be made between the value of £500 and £1,000.

Application Form: Available via website or on request

Deadline: 5th March 2010

Contact: Milton Keynes Community Foundation, Acorn House, 381 Midsummer Boulevard, Central Milton Keynes, MK9 3HP

Tel: 01908 690276

Email:

info@mkcommunityfoundation.co.uk

Website:

www.mkcommunityfoundation.co.uk

Information Access Points

On Friday 19th February the completion of the Information Access Point project was marked by a launch of the facility at Wolverton Town Hall by Councillor Vanessa McPake, Cabinet Member for Communities.

There are five Information Access Points now installed in Milton Keynes, they are located in

- Wolverton - Town Hall
- Newport Pagnell - Library
- Netherfield - Woughton Community Council Offices
- Fishermead - Campbell Park Parish Council Offices
- Bradville - Stantonbury Parish Council Offices



The Information Access Points are free to use and will be especially useful for residents that may not have internet facilities at home and/or those that do not find it easy to travel to the Council's Civic Offices in Central MK.

Connected to the internet, the units allow access to the Milton Keynes Council website and a number of other websites such as JobCentre Plus, NHS Direct and DirectGov.

In addition, there is telephone access to Milton Keynes Council and to some outside services, including the Citizens Advice Bureau. Other facilities include printing web pages, scanning documents and sending emails with photos or scanned documents attached.



Cllr McPake said "The new Information Access Points are valuable facilities which will provide a new way for residents to find help and information from Milton Keynes Council and from other service providers. The Access Points have great potential; their versatility allows a range of purposes to be fulfilled, from looking at bus timetables to searching for a job or applying for a continuing education course."

The launch was well attended by a number of Wolverton and Greenleys Town Council Councillors and staff. Wolverton and Greenleys Ward Members Norman Miles and Janet Irons also supported the launch and tried out the new facility. Members of the public and some local business people also gave it a go.

Have Your Say in the Planning Process

Community involvement is one of the keys to good planning and at the last Parishes Assembly Cheryl Montgomery and Sara Botham, from Milton Keynes Partnership, suggested that parish councils would benefit from participation in a training workshop, being organised by Planning Aid. The objective is to give you a better understanding of the planning process and the opportunity to make a difference in your area.

In the first instance it would be helpful if you could indicate your preference for a Thursday evening or Saturday morning workshop, to take place in June and which will last for approximately three hours. Numbers will be limited to 20 and depending on take-up Planning Aid may organise additional sessions.

For more details and provisional workshop dates, please contact sara.botham@hca.gsx.gov.uk

Regeneration News

www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/regeneration

The Lakes Estate

Residents of The Lakes Estate are considering priorities for their Neighbourhood Action Plan (NAP).

The MKC Regeneration Team is supporting The Lakes NAP Steering Group who are working hard to produce a draft plan. The aim is to have a completed draft by 31st March that promotes emerging priorities from residents and agencies with approval via the steering group.

The parish regeneration fund is now agreed. For further information on the breakdown, please contact Jan Phillips, MKC Regeneration
jan.phillips@milton-keynes.gov.uk

Fishermead

MKC Regeneration Team is busy working with community arts charity Inter-Action MK, Campbell Park Parish Council and the Fishermead Communications Group to continue the good work done in planning the 'Glow in the Park' parade which many Fishermead residents contributed to and attended. Inter-Action MK wants to involve residents in a series of new events for this

neighbourhood during Spring/Summer 2010.

As a starting point, there will be creative workshops giving residents the opportunity to explore their feelings about living in the neighbourhood, celebrate diversity, and asking them to think about how to make better use of urban spaces. The aim is to find out what they see when looking at spaces around the neighbourhood such as the green trees, large open spaces, and what they imagine their neighbourhood could or should look like. Between March and June creative facilitators will work with residents on a series of small scale outdoor events displaying work created through the workshops.

In addition, a songwriter will work with a group of residents to create a song for Fishermead. This group will be open to adults living in Fishermead and the song will be recorded to disc and played at events, complimenting the 'Around the World in Fishermead' DVD, wherever possible. All workshops and events will be documented and some of the images will be used as new designs to replace the 'On the Verge' banners welcoming people as they come into Fishermead from the city centre.

Tinkers Bridge

Jonathan Shaw, MP is due to visit Tinkers Bridge Meeting Place.

The visit is due to begin with a briefing about the Connecting Communities activities in the neighbourhood and its link with the NAP developing work including the 'I am Tinkers Bridge' video (available on our website) that was developed as part of early engagement activity.

The Minister will also be asked if he would like to chair a discussion with younger and older people in the neighbourhood to discuss their views and aspirations for Tinkers Bridge and explore ways of building bridges and dispelling misconceptions.

The regeneration programme lead and Tinkers Bridge residents will then wrap up the visit by asking the minister on a mini tour around the nearest streets.

Clerks Forum

19/01/10 – Stantonbury Parish Offices

In January the Clerks of the Milton Keynes parishes came together for another clerk's forum discussing the big issues of the Community Liaison Team's restructure and the new plans for area working within MKC's Environmental Services.

Caroline Godfrey, Community Liaison Manager, attended to provide some further information on the separation of the Community Liaison Team, explaining that the services to parishes will continue but the delivery of these services will change. She explained that herself and Shelagh Muir have now moved into Democratic Services within the Strategy and Partnerships Directorate (previously known as the Chief Executives Directorate) whilst the remaining team; Laura Browne, Heather Baker, Saranjeet Chana and Faye Toms, will stay in Environmental Services with their line management transferring to Martin Small until the full restructure of Environmental Services has completed.

Within Democratic Services, Caroline explained that she and Shelagh will take on the role of working to improve the democratic process for all councillors (at both parish and ward level), improve governance between both tiers and they will take on the role of member development. The IDeA work demonstrated there is a misunderstanding in how the different layers work, in some areas it is very good while in some areas it is not

and can be damaging. Milton Keynes is quite unique in how strong and effective many of its parishes are, and this can mean that the role of the ward councillor is not fully understood by all. There is a need to co-ordinate efforts so that all levels have an effective role within their communities, working together for the best benefit of the people they serve and Caroline and Shelagh will be working towards making this happen. Caroline told the clerks that her new team within Democratic Services will cover all democratic support, they will support problem resolution, work very closely with Phil McCourt and have a more focussed attention to help stop problems which could be damaging.

The part of the Community Liaison Team which still sits within Environmental Services will still be responsible for the day to day work with the parishes including dealing with anything coming through the community liaison mailbox, updating contact lists, producing the monthly parish newsletter, grant funds etc.

Mike Brown, Assistant Director of Environmental Services, attended the forum to explain the principle of area working within environmental services. He told the clerks that through the restructure we need to ensure co-ordinated work so that people are working together for the added value and benefit of the community.

Neighbourhood Management will ensure that services deliver for the community rather than Environmental Services delivering what it thinks the community wants; we need to be more flexible with the ability to focus on different community priorities. Environmental Services needs to listen to the individual communities needs and apply resources as necessary but the communities also need to be aware that we can 'do anything but not everything' so it is down to the areas to look at what they want to prioritise and what is most important to us all collectively.

Mike also called for the parishes to make sure they let Milton Keynes Council officers know when they have got it right as too often people only hear the negative rather than when something has been done well. This positivity should then feedback into the empowerment process, helping and encouraging staff at the frontline make decisions. Environmental Services is currently at phase 2 of its restructure and the next stage is to get the Neighbourhood Managers in place and soon the parishes should be able to assist the recruitment and meet with the Neighbourhood Managers and feed into area priorities. At the moment it is proposed that there will be 6 Neighbourhood Areas in line with the Thames Valley Police boundaries.

Other issues discussed were charges for allotment plots...

...and finance issues.

The next meeting will take place on Monday 15th March 2010 12-2pm at Woughton Parish Council Offices. If you are intending to attend please let Linda Carter know: linda.carter@woughton-pc.gov.uk or MK 395681

Important Information

As from 1 April 2010 Thames Valley Police are withdrawing their support for Traffic management at events. This is being done nationally, not just locally. It will have severe impact on costs for event closures. Please contact Mark Bowater for Traffic Management and further details if needed. (01908 252834)

Safety Advice from TVP

Thames Valley Police is urging elderly residents to ensure their houses are secure following a series of burglaries in the Bletchley area targeting older people.

Mostly, the offenders force the rear window to gain entry and then steal cash and items of jewellery. The offenders have not used violence on any of the occasions where they have been disturbed, however the victims have been left upset and scared by the intrusion.

Advice being given to residents is:

- If possible make sure all your windows are fitted with key operated locks.
- If your windows do not have such locks and you cannot fit them yourself, you could ask a family member or trusted friend. Age Concern may also be able to assist with the supply and fitting of window locks thought their handyman

- service on 01908 557885
- A list of approved traders can be obtained from the Milton Keynes Trading Standards on 01908 252504
- Do not keep any large sums of money in the house
- Hide any expensive or sentimental value jewellery within the house so it cannot be easily found. Criminals tend to look in dressing tables, bedside cabinets and wardrobes as this is normally where jewellery is kept.
- If you are away from home overnight or even when returning home after dark consider using a light on a timer so that your house looks occupied.

For further advice about making your home secure, please contact the crime reduction department, at Thames Valley Police on 01908 686294. You can also contact Age Concern on 01908 550700.

Attachments for your notice boards:

- MK Energy Day Poster
- ACE Summer Programme Leaflet
- Dog Fouling Poster

The Parish and Town Council Newsletter is edited and designed by Faye Toms (01908 254154) and printed by the Milton Keynes Council Print room.

Copies are available in alternative formats on request.

If you would like to send an article to be included in this newsletter, please send it by email to : community.liaison@milton-keynes.gov.uk

The submission deadline for the next edition is 23/03/10

MKC Meetings:

9th March 2010

Council
Civic Offices

17th March 2010

Licensing Committee
Civic Offices

18th March 2010

Parishes Assembly
Civic Offices

23rd March 2010

Cabinet
Civic Offices

25th March 2010

Development Control Committee
Civic Offices

What's on March 2010

*For details of Parks Trust Events see: www.theparkstrust.com

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
1 st	2 nd	3 rd	4 th	5 th	6 th	7 th Various Parks Trusts Events on this date*
8 th	9 th Council Civic Offices	10 th	11 th	12 th	13 th Natty About Nature Parks Trust Event*	14 th Easy Riders Parks Trust Event*
15 th	16 th	17 th Licensing Committee Civic Offices	18 th Parishes Assembly Civic Offices	19 th	20 th	21 st History Walk Parks Trust Event*
22 nd	23 rd Cabinet Civic Offices	24 th	25 th Development Control Committee Civic Offices	26 th	27 th	28 th
29 th	30 th	31 st	1 st Women's Walking Network Parks Trust Event*	2 nd	3 rd	4 th Various Parks Trusts Events on this date*