

Parish and Town Council Newsletter



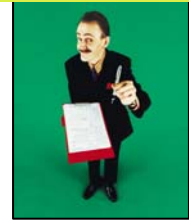
Issue No. 5

May 2010



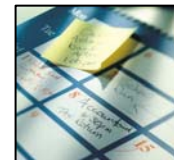
Left to Right: Cllr Andrew Geary (Hanslope Park Ward Councillor), Cllr Philip Ayles (Chair, Castlethorpe Parish Council) and Cllr Peter Haynes (Vice Chair, Castlethorpe Parish Council)

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Castlethorpe Village Hall Re-Launch Event

Castlethorpe Village Hall was re-launched in April with representatives of the parish and Milton Keynes Council all attending the event to celebrate the completion of this project.

The re-launch event was the culmination of a long term refurbishment project to bring the village hall up to date and provide a facility that all the residents in the area, from the pre school group to the WI, can use in comfort and safety.

Funding for the different elements of the project was received from WREN (Waste Recycling Environmental Limited) of £43,000, The Parish Council of £7,830, JJ Sawbridge & Sons Limited, the village shop and private donations from residents and local social groups/committees. All contractors involved on the project were either local to the village or from within the ward.

The scope of the work included new heating, restroom refurbishment, complete internal and external decoration, a new entrance way to allow for disabled access, improved fencing and gates.

The modernised hall is already back in use by the many village groups that use the facilities and there are several upcoming village events, including a Cricket Club Quiz Night, youth club activities and annual musical/drama production, a brand new Drama Group and bingo nights planned using the upgraded facilities.

The Village Hall will also welcome its first wedding later in the summer. Many of the groups have also been able to raise their own funds to update their equipment to match the improved "new" facility and look forward to many more years of community enjoyment.

Useful Documents

Joint Practitioners Advisory Group – Governance and Accountability for Local Councils

You can now download the 4th edition of this document (new for 2010) from www.slcc.co.uk/

Community Plan Guidance Note

As mentioned at the Parishes Assembly in January and following a motion passed by Cabinet on 13 October 2009, the Council has produced the Community Plan Guidance Note, which was adopted on 5th March 2010.

Cllr Vanessa McPake (Cabinet Member for Communities) and Cllr Mike Galloway (Cabinet Member for Environment, Planning and Growth) have said - We are happy to endorse the recommendations which aim to improve the involvement of parish councils and local residents in planning the priorities for their local communities.

The Government encourages local communities to produce 'Parish Community Plans'. It is recommended that a Parish Community Plan should set out how the parish seeks to address issues identified by their local community. Parish Community Plans should cover everything relevant to the residents in parish areas and should avoid focussing on single issues. A range of topics could include Housing, Transport, Local Services, Environment, Community Safety, Culture and Conservation.

Parish Community Plans, though non-statutory, can provide a valuable input to the statutory planning process. The Guide explains how a Parish Community Plan can feed into the Local Development Framework.

Some parishes have already written a Parish Community Plan and we understand quite a few are planning to in the near future.

You should receive a copy of the Guidance Note with this newsletter and it is also available on the Community Liaison website at <http://www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/parishes>.

It is packed with advice including potential benefits of parish plans, key stages of producing a parish community plan, funding advice, helpful websites & contact details and a glossary of key terms. It also includes a sample parish planning steering group constitution and terms of reference.

If you would like further advice, please contact Shelagh Muir on 01908 254271 shelagh.muir@milton-keynes.gov.uk.

Planning Aid Training

Planning For The Future

There has been a very positive response to the Planning Aid workshops, which are being organised by Milton Keynes Partnership. The aim of these interactive three-hour sessions is to give Parish Councils a better understanding of the planning process and to stimulate positive community engagement. There is still some availability so if you are interested and would like to know more, please contact sara.botham@hca.gsx.gov.uk

Dates:

Thursday 24th June, 6 pm – 9 pm
Thursday 1st July, 6 pm – 9 pm

Venue:

Guildhall of the Church of Christ the Cornerstone.

Regeneration News

What's happening in MKC Regeneration?

The draft Neighbourhood Action Plans (NAPs) will hopefully be signed off by the time you read this. Actions for consideration vary from engaging residents to facilities and services for children and young people.

Some regeneration actions already happening include; the garden project in Tinkers Bridge, the start of the Lakes Estate Renewal Project, and the planning of a second community event in Fishermead, with our partner Inter-Action MK.

Neighbourhood Action Plan Steering Groups, who represent residents, worked with the regeneration team to decide which actions needed including in the NAP.

Expected actions needing attention are listed in the NAPs and include recruiting community champions to provide active links between residents and service providers and improved facilities for young people such as homework clubs, access to IT and youth clubs.

Residents will receive a flyer detailing what will be done and when, with contact names and details for services.

Update from Brian Morrison, Project Director, Lakes Estate Renewal Project

The Lakes Estate Renewal project is a major project for Milton Keynes Council, working closely with the Bletchley and Fenny Stratford Town Council and the local community in order to regenerate the area and provide a better environment and facilities for residents.

There are currently over 2,200 households on the estate so as you can imagine, this is no small task! It is going to require long term involvement from the Council, commitment from residents and other partners to ensure that we work together to get this right.

The first stage of the project involves finding out what needs to be done and we will be talking to local residents and partners to get their views. Once this has been done, these findings will be presented back so we can reach an agreement about how to move forward.

Some parts of the project may need more urgent attention, for example, the creation of a new or improved local centre, the demolition of Bramley Grange and the options for Serpentine Court.

The renewal is so important that the Chief Executive of Milton Keynes Council, David Hill has personally agreed to sponsor the project and is keen to reassure local people that no decisions have yet been taken and will not be taken without the involvement of the local community.

A steering group for the Neighbourhood Action Plan has already been established and they have agreed to expand their role.

This marks the start of a new chapter for the Lakes Estate. There is a lot to do and to talk about but without doubt; we are looking forward to an exciting future.

Chief Executive visits our neighbourhoods!

During a recent 'Day in the Life' interview about Council Leader, David Hill, an MK News reporter joined him on a visit to Tinkers Bridge and Fishermead to look at the regeneration being done. During a meet and greet with staff working in the neighbourhoods, Will Lindley was introduced as the new regeneration programme lead for Tinkers Bridge. David also joined our team on a visit to The Lakes Estate where he discussed design and regeneration with well-known architect Sir Richard MacCormac.

Solar is an Earner With New Feed-In Tariff

When you get an approved renewable energy system installed you can now benefit from a Feed-in Tariff (FIT). Your electricity supplier will pay one tariff for the electricity you generate and one for any electricity you export to the grid. For a standard household Solar PV system they'll pay 41.3p per kWh generated and at least 3p per kWh exported.

FITs mean that a well sited Solar PV system can now pay for itself in as little as 12.5 years. To qualify for FITs, equipment and its installers must both be MCS approved. The Microgeneration Certification Scheme is the new guarantee of quality.

A 2.5kW peak system for a two person household could save/earn you £1000 a year and currently costs around £15,000 fitted. A new set up like this will reduce your annual CO₂ emissions by around a tonne. In terms of its positive environmental impact this is comparable to getting loft and cavity wall insulation fitted together.



A 2.5kW peak Solar PV system
Photo courtesy of cocoonyourhome.com

FITs replace government grants for electricity generating technologies like Solar PV and wind turbines. Grants for renewable heating systems remain but are due to be superseded in April 2011 by the Renewable Heat Incentive. To qualify for a grant your home must be insulated (270mm in the loft and cavity wall filled) with energy saving light bulbs throughout.

For the latest information on renewable energy systems and incentives, **contact the Energy Saving Trust on 0800 512 012.**

Garden of the Year Competition

Enter our garden competition and you could win a prize.

It doesn't matter if you are owner or tenant, a school, community group, allotment holder or small business nor how big or small your garden. You don't even need a garden if you have a hanging basket!

Milton Keynes Council in conjunction with its partners, Frosts Garden Centres and MK Citizen runs the annual 'Garden of the Year Competition'. This was originally run for council tenants but has expanded over the years, with the

participation and support of our partners, and is open to all residents of the Borough of Milton Keynes. New this year are Best Hanging Basket or Container and Most Floral Frontage categories.

The categories are: Best Large Front Garden (over 50m²), Best Small Front Garden (under 50m²), Best Large Back Garden (over 50m²), Best Small Back Garden (under 50m²), Best Housing Association Tennant, Best School Garden, Best Community Garden, Best Council Tenant, Best Allotment, Best Newcomer,

Best Hanging Basket or Container (Milton Keynes Council Tennant – Sponsored by MKC Housing), Most Floral Frontage.

Entry forms are available from the Civic Offices, Saxon Court, Frosts at Woburn Sands or in the Citizen Newspaper and online www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/parks%2Dand%2Dopen%2Dspace/DisplayArticle.asp?ID=17898

The closing date for entries is June 18th 2010.

Current Consultations

Milton Keynes Council & Parish and Town Council Charter 2010

Consultation Period

06/04/2010- 22/06/2010

Contact: Shelagh Muir

Telephone: 01908 254271

Email: shelagh.muir@milton-keynes.gov.uk

The Milton Keynes Council & Parish and Town Council Charter is currently being revised. The consultation stage for the new Charter is a culmination of the work carried out over the last 18 months that Parish Councillors, Ward Councillors and Clerks have contributed to. The consultation period is for 12 weeks and ends with the Special Cabinet on 29 June 2010 and we trust that you will wish to spend time reviewing the draft documents and feeding back your views.

The Working Together Project commenced in 2008 and an IDeA report on the relationship between MKC and the Parish/Town Councils was published in April 2009 and recommended that the Parish Charter should be revised, agreed and adopted.

Copies of the documents have been distributed to Parish Clerks but are also available from Community Liaison; please specify if you would these by email or a paper copy.

Your comments are important, please forward them as soon as possible but before **22 June 2010** to help with the process.

Newport Pagnell Conservation Area Review

Consultation Period

12/04/2010 – 24/05/2010

Contact: Conservation and Archaeology Team

Telephone: 01908 252599

Email: conservation@milton-keynes.gov.uk

Summary

The Newport Pagnell Conservation Area Review (Consultation Draft) has been published for a six week period between 12th April 2010 and 24th May 2010 and we would like to have your views on its contents.

Throughout the document there are questions to answer. Each question takes the form of a statement which you should answer by telling us whether you agree or disagree with what the statement says.

Code of Conduct

Due to the Code of conduct training session on the 27th of May 2010 being oversubscribed, the Monitoring Officer Phil McCourt will be providing an additional training session for councillors of all Parish Councils in Milton Keynes to advise on the following areas:-

- Responsibilities under the Code of Conduct
- Personal and prejudicial interests

This training session will take place on:

Thursday 17th June 2010 in the Civic Offices at 6pm

As there have been a number of parish councillors who could not attend the first session, we hope that they will be able to attend and would particularly encourage those who have not attended any previous Code of Conduct training.

Booking is essential, so we would be grateful if you could please confirm your place(s) by contacting Ken Braima ken.braima@milton-keynes.gov.uk
MK 254249

Funding News

Sportsmatch

Sport England's Sportsmatch programme makes awards to not-for-profit organisations (including local authorities) running projects at a community level which meet one or both of Sport England's objectives of Grow or Sustain. We do this through matching eligible sponsorship pound for pound, up to a maximum value of £100,000. Sportsmatch is open to applications for projects that will be delivered in the 2010/11 financial year.

Application Form: On-line applications process

Deadline: They expect to have allocated all Sportsmatch funds by Autumn 2010, so please ensure you leave enough time for the submission of your completed application. 12 weeks for a decision.

Contact: Sport England, 3rd Floor Victoria House, Bloomsbury Square, London, WC1B 4SE.

Email:
info@sportengland.org

Funding Helpline: 08458 508 508

Website:
<http://www.sportengland.org/funding/sportsmatch.aspx>

Archer Trust

The Archer Trust is a UK Christian charitable grant-making trust. They award grants of between £250 and £3,000 to small UK based charities where it will make a big difference.

Eligible charities must **provide aid or support to a defined group of needy or deserving people**, for instance those with physical or mental disabilities or the disadvantaged. Charities that make good use of volunteers are preferred and those working in areas of high unemployment and deprivation.

Application Form: No, apply in writing.

Deadline: No, but the trustees meet twice a year, normally in March and September.

Contact: The Secretary, The Archer Trust, Bourne House, Wadesmill, Ware, Herts, SG12 0TT.

Website: <http://www.archertrust.org.uk/>

Information from Housing

Demolition of Briar Hill and Bramley Grange

The demolition of Bramley Grange Sheltered Housing Scheme (Lakes Estate) and Briar Hill Sheltered housing Scheme and flats (Stacey Buses) is shortly going to take place. The buildings scheduled for demolition are within the security fences that we have erected.

The project will start at Briar Hill on the 24th May 2010 and a week later at Bramley Grange. Total Reclaims have been awarded the contract and are scheduled to complete works within 6 weeks.

Residents living near to either of the sites will receive a letter and question and answer sheet giving more information about the work.

If you have any questions or concerns about this project you can contact Susan Smith on 01908 254596 or your local housing office (numbers for all are on the back page of this newsletter).

We will also be including updates, as the project progresses, on the building services webpage which can be found at:

<http://www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/repairs-and-improvements/home.asp>

Clerks Forum 15/03/10

This month the Clerks forum was attended by MKC's Assistant Director of Planning, Nick Fenwick and some of the officers who work within the planning department; Ryno Van der Hoven, Andrew Horner and Robbie Caddock. They attended to discuss issues around the planning system, in particular Houses in Multiple Occupation (HiMOs). This drew quite a crowd of Parish Officers to Woughton Community Council's Offices with over 15 in attendance.

They introduced themselves to the clerks and explained their individual roles within the planning team and then they gave two presentations to the clerks. The first presentation aimed to provide a basic understanding of the planning system, what can be taken into account when making a decision, what cannot be taken into account when making a decision and how the Development Control Committee should conduct itself.

There was then a question and answer session on the first presentation:

Q: Will MKC be consulted on plans for the new development west of Bletchley which is in Aylesbury Vale?

A: Yes they will be. MKC will also be given the opportunity to make representations at the policy stage. It is critical for MKC to comment at the policy stage as often when it reaches the planning application stage it is too late to influence on a large scale.

Q: MKC Officers often make recommendations that an application is granted subject to certain conditions – could this be open to parish and town councils to make suggestions of conditions?

A: In principle, yes. However this is said with caution as not everything can be considered.

Q: Could the parish and town councils be involved at the pre-application advice stage (e.g. section 106)?

A: At present this is between the officers and the applicant but a scheme of community involvement is currently being looked at and encouraged. Section 106 money is not such a big resource as it was before the recession as things are getting tighter.

Q: Is the 21 day period to comment working or calendar days?

A: This is calendar days from the date it is put on the schedule.

The second presentation was on Houses in Multiple Occupation and included information on; the planning definition of a HiMO, why we need HiMOs, the role of the parish, commenting on applications and planning considerations.

This was again followed by a question and answer session:

Q: How many HiMOs are there in MK and how many have planning permission?

A: MKC is currently putting together the information on this from Private Sector Housing and Planning and

are now aware of 554 HiMOs in MK, however the total number is likely to be higher as this is not yet complete, only 141 HiMOs currently have planning permission. It is estimated that less than 1% of dwellings in MK being HiMOs (total dwellings approximately 100,000).

Q: When applying for retrospective planning permission or where HiMOs are found to be operating without planning permission are there any penalties?

A: No, there is no legislation to support penalties for this and there is also the fear that if there were penalties it would deter people from applying for retrospective permission which is what MKC are trying to encourage.

Q: When conditions are set within the planning permission of HiMOs – such as number of parking spaces – how are these enforced?

A: The HiMO Officers for MKC have to revisit the properties and check that these conditions are being met. If they are not the next steps are to speak to the landlord and if they are still not adhering to the conditions a notice can be served which is a legal document and then if they still continue not to adhere this is a criminal offence, they are breaking the law and this can be pursued.

Q: What happens if officers recommend planning permission is refused but councillors grant this permission against recommendations – is there any redress?

Clerks Forum Cont...

A: The committee is the decision making body so their decision is final although an appeal can be taken to the high court within 6 weeks, however an appeal can only be made against permission granted on a legal technicality e.g. the process was not correct, not just because someone disagrees with the decision.

There were also a few issues discussed with the Planning Officers including that many clerks find the new layout of the weekly applications list harder to use than previous; this issue has been raised with the planning team and it is planned to send out a questionnaire with a future list asking for comments on the new format. It was also raised that sometimes clerks have problems with contacting officers in the planning department, this was taken back and staff have now been reminded to set an out of office on both their answerphone and email when they are away from the office, giving an indicated return date and alternative contact. On a positive note all officers confirmed that they welcomed contact from Clerks and there appear to be quite a few positive relationships in place and developing. The planning team would also strongly advise the use of email communication wherever possible, even if only to ask a case officer to call the

relevant clerk back (giving an indication of times available where possible).

The possibility of extending consultation/comment periods on planning applications was also discussed and Nick Fenwick clarified that the period cannot be formally extended, however, if contact is made with the case officer we can often agree a short extension on a case by case basis so long as both sides have reasonable notice.

For further information on the planning process please see www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/environment-planning/DisplayArticle.asp?ID=36587 and if you would like a copy of the presentation please email faye.toms@milton-keynes.gov.uk or call MK 254154

ACE

Adult Continuing Education

An exhibition of work by Adult Continuing Education Creative Techniques learners and tutors is due to be held in April and May.

Free admission

Where?

AIM Gallery, thecentre:mk,
759 Midsummer Boulevard,
Central Milton Keynes MK9
3BG

Tel: 01908 674069

When?

April 29 – May 16

The gallery opening hours are Tuesday – Saturday 10 am – 4 pm. Opening hours may be extended during the Milton Keynes Arts Open Weekend, 14 – 16 May.

What?

The exhibition features work from a range of City and Guilds Creative Techniques courses and includes **Basketry, Calligraphy, Ceramics, Fine Art, Jewellery, Printmaking, Stained Glass and Textiles.**

For more information please contact:

Yvonne Elliott
Curriculum Development
Co-ordinator

01908 556710
07947 840 523

yvonne.elliott@milton-keynes.gov.uk

Conservation Area for Woburn Sands Given the Go-ahead

Changes to the conservation area for Woburn Sands were given the go-ahead following a public consultation.

On Tuesday 23rd March Milton Keynes Council's Cabinet approved the Woburn Sands Conservation Area Review document.

The review sets out in detail the special character of the town and will be used to guide planning decisions affecting the buildings, streets and places that lie within the revised conservation area boundary.

Woburn Sands was included in a conservation area

because of the way it developed from a farm hamlet into a centre for tourism and commerce after the opening of the railway in the 1840's. The Victorian shops, villas and terraced rows built at the time still reflect the distinctive, genteel character of the Victorian town

Publication follows a two week exhibition at the local library and the Town Council offices during May 2009 and a six week period of consultation with residents and other interested parties that ended in January this year.

The revised document can be

viewed at:

www.miltonkeynes.gov.uk/arc_haeology/DisplayArticle.asp?ID=20102

Reference copies of the document are available at the council's Civic Offices and the Central Library and the local Library in Woburn Sands.

Anyone experiencing difficulty obtaining a copy of the Woburn Sands Conservation Area Review document can contact the Conservation and Archaeology team on 01908 252599 or email conservation@miltonkeynes.gov.uk

Attachments for your notice boards:

- Vacancy for Responsible Financial Officer Poster

Housing Office Details:

MK South Local Housing Office – 01908 374312
(Covering Bramley Grange)

MK North Local Housing Office – 01908 691691
(Covering Brair Hill)

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@miltonkeynes.gov.uk

The submission deadline for the next edition is 23/05/10

MKC Meetings:

18th May 2010
Council
Civic Offices

For further details please see <http://cmis.miltonkeynes.gov.uk/CmisWebPublic/>

What's on May 2010

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

Saturday	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
1 st	2 nd	3 rd	4 th	5 th	6 th GENERAL AND LOCAL ELECTIONS	7 th
8 th	9 th Various Parks Trust Events*	10 th Push and Tone Parks Trust Event*	11 th	12 th	13 th	14 th
15 th	16 th	17 th	18 th Council Civic Offices	19 th	20 th Nutty About Nature Parks Trust Event*	21 st Dusk Chorus Parks Trust Event*
22 nd	23 rd	24 th	25 th	26 th Nordic Walking Parks Trust Event*	27 th Code of Conduct Training Council Chamber You must have booked to attend this training	28 th Pushchairs in the Park Parks Trust Event*
29 th	30 th	31 st	1 st	2 nd	3 rd	4 th