

WOBURN SANDS  
TOWN COUNCIL

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AUTUMN NEWSLETTER 2020

[www.woburnsands.org.uk](http://www.woburnsands.org.uk)  
(see privacy policy)

Dear resident,

One thing is certain in these uncertain times and that is that two big events which normally take place in the next three months, ie Remembrance Sunday and the Christmas Fayre, will not happen, but keep an eye on our website to see what we may have put in place instead. At the time of writing, Milton Keynes numbers of Covid 19 cases are considerably lower than surrounding local authorities, but we cannot be complacent, so please let's keep our numbers low by following all the rules. Stay safe, everyone.

MEMORIAL HALL, 4 HIGH STREET, WOBURN SANDS, MILTON KEYNES, MK17 8RH  
CLERK: MRS L.J. STAPLETON  
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## INSIDE THIS ISSUE

PG 2	CLOSURE OF THE SCHOOL CROSSING
PG 3	RETIREMENT OF OUR TOWN CLERK PARKING RESTRICTIONS
PG 4/5	HAVE YOUR SAY -RECREATION GROUND
PG 6	EDGEWICK FARM / WORLD POLIO DAY
PG 7	OUR HERITAGE TRAIL / NEWS FROM ST. MICHAEL'S
PG 8	SNIPPETS / RECREATION GROUND SURVEY RETURN FORM



## CLOSURE OF THE SCHOOL CROSSING

*Please be assured we are on the case!* Unfortunately, Network Rail are being uncooperative to say the least. The Town Council is working with David Hopkins, our Borough Councillor, and with the MKC Councillor and the officer in charge of Highways and Transport at Milton Keynes Council who has been particularly supportive in trying to get Network Rail to reconsider their stance on this closure. NR's reason for the closure is 7 incidents in recent years which have caused train drivers to brake suddenly. A few years ago, they applied and were granted permission to build a large ramped bridge for pedestrians to replace the unmanned School crossing. This was subsequently replaced with a plan for a smaller pedestrian foot bridge, partly because it was cheaper and partly because the large ramped bridge would have been unsightly. However, the smaller bridge would not have been usable by disability chairs and pushchairs (unless collapsed and carried, of course). To provide for the

latter, a waiting area in Cranfield Road for pedestrians needing to use the road level crossing was proposed together with some other measures to make the road crossing safer on the east (school) side, but Network Rail, after an Inspector's hearing, decided they did not have to put in these improvements.....as they are highways improvements, the cost, if felt necessary, could be borne by Milton Keynes Council. We regard that as totally unreasonable, since the crossing was closed by Network Rail. We see no reason why a gate controlled crossing for pedestrians cannot be put in place either in the original school crossing place or at the side of the road crossing.

A number of virtual meetings with Network Rail have taken place and discussions are continuing. We will continue to update residents as further information becomes available...keep an eye on our website.



# RETIREMENT OF OUR TOWN CLERK



The end of 2020 will mark the end of an era for Woburn Sands Town Council when Lynne Stapleton, our clerk of the past 33 years, takes her well deserved retirement. Lynne has carried out her duties throughout this time in an exemplary manner with great tact and diligence. Councillors have all benefited from her advice and in some extremely challenging situations, Lynne has never been known to be anything other than politely and calmly determined to make the Town Council's case. As our Financial officer she has also kept us solvent....no mean task in the recent years of cutbacks.

Lynne herself has described her time as our clerk as "extremely rewarding" and she is justifiably proud of two initiatives in particular which she has overseen: the purchase of Edgewick Farm from MKC for £1, having saved it from residential development, and the redevelopment of what was Plysu's Sports and Social Club to become The Summerlin Centre giving the town a much larger community hall with car parking space. We could add many more, such as the whole development and expansion of the town with the change from the enormous Plysu factory into the large residential development of Parklands, the acquisition of the land for the shoppers car park, and some great community days, for example, when we celebrated 100 years as an independent parish.

We hope to have an opportunity to celebrate Lynne's years of service once life returns to normal, but in the meantime we will be welcoming Alison Jordan, local resident in Parklands, at the start of 2021 as our new Town Clerk. Lynne will remain in the office for the first two months of 2021 to guide Alison as she assumes her new role. We will also be saying goodbye at the end of the year to Pauline who has taken care most efficiently of Hall bookings and has assisted Lynne in the office for the past 15 years. We thank her most sincerely and we will miss her too. We wish Lynne and Pauline a long and happy retirement.

## **PARKING RESTRICTIONS ON STATION ROAD AND OTHER PARTS OF WOBURN SANDS**

The Town Council is concerned about some of the restrictions being proposed by Milton Keynes in TRO 302. The virtual prohibition of parking on Station Road between Russell Street and Weathercock Lane seems excessive and detrimental to our community. Whilst sight lines from access points onto Station Road may need to be improved, there is no need, in our view, for such a wholesale restriction. Please look at this under Milton Keynes Council's Consultations page. The documents, together with our response, should also be accessible through our website. We have asked for an extension to the deadline, so please respond to Milton Keynes Council with your comments.



# HAVE YOUR SAY: Help us to develop the Recreation Ground

Woburn Sands Town Council now has available approximately £250,000 to develop our local recreation ground into an exciting 'Play Park'. This money has come to us from Section 106 funds collected from a range of building developments in the town. We literally have money to play with!

## The Recreation Ground - A Great Location

'The Rec' is the green open space near the Woburn Sands Railway Station.

### But...

The lovely established hedgerows currently border a large Rec that has no strong identity. The football pitch looks tired and the single ended basketball hoop and goal do not encourage games. The skate park area supports a limited range of users and abilities.

### All this can change...

You can help us to decide on what is in the new Rec and Play Parks by sharing your views with us. It is not realistic to think that we will get everything that everyone wants but what we aim to achieve is a recreation area that has a better balance of activities and gives the best value to our community.

### Getting some good ideas...

Our discussions so far have included input from Swallowfield pupils and, in partnership with Milton Keynes Council, we have developed a growing list of possibilities. **Please complete the survey in this newsletter or via our website to inform our decisions.**

How to spend the money? The Possibilities are endless.... A small proportion of the money will be used to improve the existing

play area and its surface and the football pitch including new, more appropriately sized, goal posts.

The rest of the money will be used to provide new facilities for the Recreation Ground.

Here are some examples of what we could aim for. Please remember that the pictures below are just illustrations to give you a better idea of what is available. **Which of the following possible additions to the Recreation Ground would you like to see?**

## PLAY

*A zip wire, which would give an exciting ride across the grass.*



*A multi-play climbing frame, which could be in the form of, for example, a Castle or Pirate Ship.*



*An accessible roundabout and/or basket swing to increase the play opportunities for all abilities, where you could take it slow or fast depending on who is pushing.*

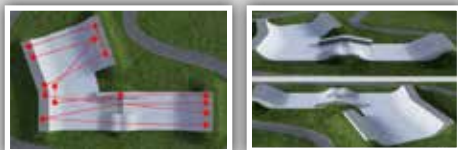


## SPORT

A multi-use games area (MUGA). A small hard-standing area of 12m x 20m with football goals and basketball hoops at each end supporting actual game playing opportunities. This area could be provided with lighting which would enable usage during darker months.



A small wheeled sports area approximately 20m long and 18m wide for skateboarding, scooters, or BMX, where you can enjoy the bumpy ride.



## ADULT

A new adult fitness area with gym style machines and table tennis table as fitness and wellbeing doesn't have an age limit.



We hope you will agree that the design of the new Recreation Ground should be suitable for all ages and abilities, whilst providing some progressive challenges.

We plan to make final decisions on the development of the new Rec in December **so please make your views known to us by the first week in November.** This development probably represents a “once

## WELLBEING & LIFESTYLE

A circular walk which could run around the perimeter and be used to walk/jog/run or to use a wheelchair or buggy (this would be approx. 400m / quarter of a mile long) - good for all ages and abilities.

An area set aside for meadow flowers, as part of recreation and wellbeing can be the simple enjoyment of nature and nurturing the next generation's interest in taking care of the natural environment.



More seating, trees, and landscaping



in a lifetime” chance to enhance the Recreation Ground so it is important that we hear from **everyone** interested in the future of our Rec.

We look forward to hearing from you. If you are completing this survey (on back the page) in print please post it into the Town Council mail box. If you are completing the survey online, via our website, please submit it by following the instructions. If you have any additional comments please send them by email to **[l.stapleton@wstc.org.uk](mailto:l.stapleton@wstc.org.uk)**





## EDGEWICK FARM

Despite the pandemic restrictions, Edgewick Farm volunteers accomplished several tasks this summer -safely distanced, of course- including extension of the boardwalk along the southern footpath, clearing gorse from the lower field, cutting hay from the picnic area and diverting a path to avoid a fallen tree in the copse/spinney opposite Mowbray Green. There's plenty of work still to be done, and new members (including students for whom this may be relevant community service) are very welcome to join us: we meet on the first Sunday of each month by the barn at 10am and enjoy good company, healthy exercise and delicious refreshments when Covid allows!



Apples are ripening in the orchard and we will put trays of windfalls on the tables by the barn....do help yourselves. You can even pick your own, in small numbers, by entering the orchard from the middle field gate which we will leave open.

## WORLD POLIO DAY

On Saturday 24th October, the above will be observed in Woburn Sands by the planting of purple crocuses along the roadside verge of Mowbray Green by the local Rotary Club. At 11am, Cllr Michael Geddes, Town Mayor, will unveil a plaque to commemorate the event. This was planned very much as a community event and we hope it can still go ahead with anyone who would like to wander down to that area being careful to practise social distancing.

The Global Polio Eradication Initiative was launched in 1988 when there were 350,00 cases of polio across 125 countries each year. Thanks to vaccinations, the number today of cases is reduced by 99.9% with only Afghanistan and Pakistan continuing to report cases of polio. This paralyzing disease could return to polio free countries if we cannot eradicate it completely. The Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation generously matches what Rotary raises by 2:1.

Please support Rotary's efforts and we will all enjoy the crocuses early next year....

Thank you,  
Woburn Sands @ District Rotary Club.





Edgewick Farm served as the starting point for guided walks around the new heritage trail on the history of Fullers Earth workings in the local area, organised by Cllr Peter Skelton, in Milton Keynes Heritage week in September. Participants were shown vestiges in the landscape of four historically successive means by which this rare clay, so valuable for “fulling” (cleaning) wool in past times and then more modern uses, was extracted by digging from the outcrop, excavating “bell pits”, mining and finally by open cast quarrying. Both the planned walk and a repeat a week later were fully booked and held in perfect weather. Unfortunately, because numbers were limited, there is still a waiting list. We will repeat the walk when current restraints have been lifted...so it's not too late to add your name via the Town Council office.

I'm pleased to say that St Michael's Church has been open for a short service each Sunday at 9.45 a.m. since 5 July. The new 'rule of six' from September does not apply to church services, so we should be able to continue this over the coming months. Face coverings must be worn in church, there is no singing, and we are observing strict social distancing. Hand sanitiser must be used on entering and leaving the building. Anyone is most welcome to attend.

We are also opening the church to the community each Saturday for quiet reflection and private prayer from 10.00 a.m. to 4.00 p.m. with stewards in attendance to ensure social distancing and to clean as necessary.

Our Youth Group Genesis is back in and around church on Tuesday evenings, having met by Zoom over the summer period. Other groups are meeting or keeping in touch online, by WhatsApp or by phone. If you would welcome a chat with the Vicar, do get in touch with me. We are continuing to produce an online service each week, available through the link on our website [www.stmichaelsws.org.uk](http://www.stmichaelsws.org.uk) or via St Michael's Facebook page. Alternatively, do contact me if you would like to be added to our email mailing list.

Every home in the church Parish of Woburn Sands (which does not have quite the same boundaries as the civil parish) will have received a letter from me this autumn. In this difficult year we are especially grateful for any financial support you can give to keep our lovely building in good order and at the heart of our community.

*From Revd Diana Young, Vicar,*  
[revdianay@gmail.com](mailto:revdianay@gmail.com); 07887296588; 01908 584598



# SNIPPETS

**Food banks.** With the likelihood of increasing numbers of unemployed in these difficult Covid days, please continue to give generously to the local food banks by donating items either in the baskets by the checkouts in the Co-op in the High Street or by leaving in the porch of St Michaels from where donations are taken weekly to the food bank.

**Remembrance Sunday** on 8th November will have to be in a different format this year due to Covid restrictions and because production of wreaths (and poppies?) has not been possible for the same reason. Watch our website nearer the time for details.

**The Christmas Fayre** at the end of November is yet another casualty of the Covid crisis. The organising committee is looking at ways to bring some semblance of the traditional Fayre to you, so again, please check our website for any updates.

**The south east urban extension** which appeared at the last minute in Plan:MK is the subject of much discussion for us and neighbouring parishes. We are working hard to prevent the coalescence of this urban extension of 3000 homes between Woburn Sands and Bow Brickhill with our two settlements and to create a substantial green buffer to our west as well as stopping traffic from the new homes coming through Woburn Sands. As soon as any definite proposals are on the table, we will let you know and a public consultation will be held. The local group who led the anti expressway project are also involved.

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## RECREATION GROUND SURVEY OPTIONS - See page 4 & 5 for details

A number of proposals have been put forward, it may not be possible to do all of these or they may not be felt to be appropriate, in order to gauge responses and opinions a short questionnaire is proposed.

Please number your choices in preference, with 1 (one) being your most preferred - leave blank any options you do not want.

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Fitness games area                               | <input type="checkbox"/> Tree planting     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Gym Machines                                     | <input type="checkbox"/> Zip wire          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Table tennis                                     | <input type="checkbox"/> Basket swing      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Play Equipment                                   | <input type="checkbox"/> Roundabout        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Wheeled sport area (for scooters, skate and bmx) | <input type="checkbox"/> Bespoke multiplay |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Linking Path to create circular route            |  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Wildlife area                                    |  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Multi - use games area (football / basketball)   |  |

If so, what theme would the multiplay have?

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Any other ideas or suggestions:

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*Please return to Town Council letter box in Memorial Hall door*