



WOBURN SANDS
TOWN COUNCIL

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WINTER NEWSLETTER 2018

www.woburnsands.org.uk

Dear Resident,

Here is the first of four newsletters you will receive from the Town Council this year. I am afraid some of it is not very good news, but there is also news of some very successful events which took place at the end of last year. We wish you all the very best for 2018.



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WORKS ON THE NEWPORT ROAD FOR NEXT 6 MONTHS

There will be considerable disruption to traffic using the Newport Road (A5130) between Woburn Sands and the Kingston roundabout over the next few months. This is to allow access roads to be constructed to the 3000 houses to be built either side of the Newport Road north of Wavendon – the SLA.

You will have seen work beginning on this with the removal of large swathes of hedgerow, most regrettably, at the end of last year. Two new junctions will be created on the Newport Road. One will be where the hedgerows have been removed and will become a four way signalised junction including a right hand turn lane for northbound traffic. Creation of this new junction involves a 12 week period of traffic control to a single lane beginning now and includes a period of complete closure for sewerage system to be laid to the new estates. We await confirmation of the exact dates

of this closure but provisionally this is set between 5th and 16th Feb. A shuttle bus will replace the normal 300 service between Woburn Sands and Kingston leaving Woburn Sands somewhat earlier than the scheduled time. Check notices on bus stops and on our website for latest information on closure and bus times.

Following this, the work will begin on the junction between Lower End Road and Newport Road and this will leave us with a three way signalised junction. The construction of this junction means again lights controlling traffic to a single carriageway from March until the end of June. We are very disappointed that these two new sets of traffic lights will be created on the Newport Road and did our best to prevent this happening, but were overruled by Milton Keynes Highways.



REPORTS ON A NUMBER OF SUCCESSFUL EVENTS AT THE END OF LAST YEAR:



NEW OAK TREE ON MOWBRAY GREEN

It was lovely to see such a good crowd gather on 22 Oct last year on Mowbray Green for the official

ceremony to mark the planting of the new oak tree on Mowbray Green. This tree, as the plaque now explains, is in memory of the great uncle of a local resident who died at Passchendael in World War 1 and has been grown from an acorn collected from the cemetery in which he lies buried. The short ceremony conducted by Nick Parsons included the unveiling of the plaque by Cllr Paul Farrant, our Mayor, and the playing of the last post by Karen Boote from The Woburn Sands Band.

REMEMBRANCE SUNDAY

Karen Boote was back on duty again playing the last post at our Remembrance Day service along with the rest of Woburn Sands Band who played at St Michaels, then accompanied the parade from the church to the Memorial Green and provided the music for the ceremony. We are so delighted that once again there were hundreds of you gathered around the War Memorial ...thank you for coming... and as always enormously grateful to the Woburn Sands Band.

CHRISTMAS FAYRE



At the end of November the Band were back again playing in the High Street, and the Sands Singers sang two sessions of carols in the Methodist Chapel, and, of course, all the



fun of the fayre and stalls were available at the Annual Christmas Fayre. It was excellent day weather wise for the time of year and record crowds attended. We really appreciate the hard work put in by a small group of local residents and some councillors to organise this event each year the profits from which go to sharing the costs of the Christmas lights in the town with the Town Council. In addition, money is raised for a specific good cause each year and this year went to providing hampers for a number of local deserving elderly people. New blood is always welcome by the organising committee and if you feel able to contribute to your local community in this way, please contact them



by email at woburnsandschristmasfayre@gmail.com

MORE PRE CHRISTMAS EVENTS

Many local groups and organisations celebrated Christmas in their own events but two musical events open to all were particularly enjoyable: first was the concert from the Sands Singers in the Memorial Hall and the second the festive music from our wonderful Band once again leading a record crowd in festive songs on Mowbray Green on Christmas Eve. We are deeply indebted to Len Jenkins and Karen Boote for their dedication to the Band and to all its members from beginners to accomplished “old” hands. Remember, you too can join

Sands Singers by popping along on a Friday evening to the Memorial Hall at 7pm to see what it’s like and you can learn to play a brass band instrument for free with Woburn Sands Band. Contacts



for both are on our website.

*The next Band Concert is at The Stables Theatre, and will be on **Saturday 21st April** at 7.30pm. Tickets £12 adults, and now just £5 for 16 and under, available from 07790 454149 or 07784 576076.*

The
**WOBURN
SANDS**
-Band-

YOUR COUNCIL TAX BILL

After a welcome respite from paying your monthly Council Tax in February and March, you will find that the monthly bill increases as from April. This is mainly due to a substantial increase in the money Milton Keynes Council requires because of cut backs in Government grants and the burden of meeting the statutory costs of social care. Both the police and MK Fire Service take money from your Council Tax payment and they will increase as well. A very small proportion of your total bill is what we as your Parish/

Town Council ask for to run the services for which we are responsible. We have asked for a 3% increase which is less than either MKC or the Police. We would like to have made it less, but thanks to the bizarre way in which Milton Keynes has estimated house numbers in Woburn Sands for the next year, we are estimated for a fall in house numbers which is clearly nonsense. We have tried to argue our case to no avail but will be securing a meeting with the Chief Executive to ensure the same mistakes are not repeated next year.



PLANNING MATTERS

These are, unfortunately, likely to dominate much of the Town Council's work over this year. Developers see the green fields which remain around us and our neighbouring villages as prime targets for development. CENTRAL BEDS PLAN AND PLAN:MK are both ready for submission for public examination by an Inspector and will happen in the course of the year. Both have ideas for developments in these green fields which will be strongly opposed by us and the neighbouring parish councils. As always a sizeable volume of letters from the public are most useful in strengthening our hand and we will endeavour to keep you abreast of applications where your help would be most welcome. The added complication in all this is the proposed OXFORD TO CAMBRIDGE EXPRESSWAY which the Ministry of transport will determine and the proposed route of which will be announced in 2019/20. One of the possibilities is that the route will come through the very green spaces which developers have their eyes on, thus conflicting with the developers' ideas.

We are perhaps fortunate in that Iain Stewart, our MP, has recently been appointed to promote the development of the OXFORD TO CAMBRIDGE SILICON VALLEY ambition of the Government. This will include Milton Keynes and Cranfield. We should be able to get his support for our views on all the developments and transport links threatening to engulf us.

The first of the speculative development plans to hit the books for determination in 2018 is the LEVANTE GATE APPLICATION FOR 500 NEW HOMES IN THE PARISH OF LITTLE BRICKHILL east of the A4146 and south of the A5 on the fields on the far side of the Hunters Farm Shop at the A5 roundabout beyond Bow Brickhill. Although the official deadline for this application has passed, we are told it will be some time before it is determined so you can still write to object as will the Town Council. Details are on MKC's website application number 17/03233/OUT. This development on the area at the foot of the Greensand Ridge, on the outskirts of Little Brickhill, is within an area of designated attractive landscape significant ecologically and for leisure pursuits, and is part of the arc extending from Stoke Hammond though to Bow Brickhill, Woburn Sands and Aspley Guise where speculative developers are hoping to make use of the perceived lack of a satisfactory 5 year housing land supply for Milton Keynes. The result of the Appeal into Wavendon Properties will be crucial in this respect. The land in question in this application is planned as open space in both the existing Core strategy of Milton Keynes and in the proposed Plan:MK to replace the Core Strategy. The pressure on our local roads is already becoming intolerable with all the developments which have already been granted permission in this area: more would be totally unacceptable. Do write to Nicola Thompson at MKC on this application if



you can and as soon as possible.

One good piece of news midst all this doom and gloom is that the APPEAL INTO DOMINOS PIZZA at 1 Station Road (the existing off licence at the Russell Street junction)) WAS DISMISSED. You have probably heard this from other sources before you read it here, but we would like to extend our sincere appreciation to a few local residents in properties opposite and next to the off licence whose dedication and hard work in getting evidence together to object to this application was vital in support of the Town Council's own efforts. The Inspector's grounds for refusal largely focussed on two issues: inadequate parking arrangements and noise and disturbance to neighbouring properties. Dominos failed to persuade the Inspector that the necessary parking for customers and deliveries could be found in the vicinity and that the added traffic it generated

could be dangerous to both pedestrians and other vehicles in the roads. She also disagreed with the applicant's description of the site as "within the town centre" instead agreeing with the view that it was more in a residential zone and that the noise and disturbance would therefore be unacceptable.

Remember, you should be able to find the Town Council's letters in response to major planning applications on our website.

The WSTC webpage is maintained by the Council Staff and is an ongoing project. If you have any comments, or you think that something should be included or a contact detail changed on the website, please contact the Council.

You could always use the Contact us & Enquiry Form link from the Home Page!

BOOKING OUR HALLS

The Town Council now operates four halls: **The Institute** whose primary use is to house the library, **The Memorial Hall** in the High Street, comfortable seating 80 people with a stage, kitchen facilities etc. **The Summerlin Centre** near the level crossing, a larger venue with parking spaces, bar and kitchen facilities, side rooms etc. **The Old Fire Station** opposite the Summerlin Centre, a small hall recently refurbished.

At some point in the future we will also have access to a Community Room within the Greens development and a small Sports

Hall adjacent to the Summerlin Centre to be provided by Taylor Wimpey when their final building phase at Parklands is complete.

All the halls are subsidised by the Town Council although a proportion of the cost of running them is provided by the users. The total running costs of all the halls is about £43,000 per annum whilst we receive about £26,000 from income, including donations from neighbouring parishes towards the running of the library reflecting their residents' usage of the library. The halls are usually well booked



by regular users during the week but we are keen to optimise weekend bookings for one off events.

We have decided not to increase charges for 2018-19 to hirers of the Memorial Hall and Summerlin Centre, so the cost

of hiring one of these halls for weekend functions is for example £120-£210 depending on the facilities required and the hall chosen. There are other rates

depending on the event so please contact Pauline in the Clerk's office 01908 585368 for more detailed information.

SNIPPETS & DATES

CALLING ALL YOUNG CARERS

Are you, or do you know of, a young person who carries out regular caring tasks for an elderly person in Milton Keynes? If so, help is available from Carers MK. The care can take several forms, maybe bathing, or dressing, or shopping or cooking or cleaning. Please complete the survey on www.healthwatchmiltonkeynes.co.uk/?q=young-carers-survey or via facebook or twitter.

AGE UK ADVICE SERVICE

For the past few years the Town Council has paid Age UK to run an advice service in the library. However, in the past year, use of this service has declined significantly and we feel it would be financially prudent to withdraw the service as a permanent feature although it may be possible to replace it with a "request an interview" booking system. It would be useful to hear your views on this and if so, please contact the Town Clerk.

UPDATE ON DOWNGRADE OF A5130 AND OTHER HIGHWAY MATTERS

At a recent meeting with MKC Highways, we were assured that the downgrade of the main road through Woburn Sands will be downgraded by the end of March. Following that, it will be possible to seek a 7.5T weight limit for though traffic. We are also hopeful that new speed indication devices can be installed in Station Road and in Bow Brickill Road as vehicles leave the town: the funding for these will be sought from Sec 106 pots held by Highways from the Parklands developments. Highways also confirmed that Taylor Wimpey must provide an additional pedestrian refuge in Station Road in the vicinity of Summerlin Drive junction. Once Highways have adopted the roads in Parklands, when



Taylor Wimpey have done necessary remedial works, yellow lines will be put in at the entrances to both Greensand View and Summerlin Drive.

EASTWEST RAIL CONSULTATION

There have been amendments to the latest plans for the upgrade of the railway between Oxford and Milton Keynes mainly affecting the Bicester area and a further consultation is taking place on these changes. Also included is the withdrawal of a footbridge to replace the level school crossing at the end of the Recreation Ground. This bridge would have involved a lengthy ramp or quite high stairway to make the crossing and it was felt by the developers that the detour to cross the road at the main road level crossing would be just as easy for residents. However, we are concerned that the safety of pedestrians crossing at the main road could be quite hazardous. If you feel strongly about this you should comment to East West Rail at ewrconsultation@networkrail.co.uk or write FREEPOST EAST WEST RAIL CONSULTATION (must be in capitals).

COMMUNITY COACH TRIPS

These trips run monthly from March and are a joint venture with Wavendon and Bow Brickhill parishes. The parishes subsidise these trips so the cost per individual is very reasonable and the trips are much enjoyed. The first one of the year will be to Market Harborough on 21st March & Springfields outlet centre and gardens 18th April. Contact the Town Clerk if you have any suggestions as to attractive venues which could be incorporated into our planning for the year.

FRIENDS OF WOBURN SANDS STATION

Work has just begun on installing tubs and troughs to improve the look of our station and here is the first tub planted up. The friends are very grateful for the help and 25% reduction on costs of the tubs and plants from Frosts Garden Centre.



Early notification that the Annual Town Meeting will be held in the Memorial Hall 16th April at 7.30pm

