



WOBURN SANDS
TOWN COUNCIL

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WINTER NEWSLETTER 2022

www.woburnsands.org.uk
(see privacy policy)

Dear resident,

Continuing Covid infections via Omicron along with the uncertainties about restrictions is not the start to 2022 we would have liked. Equally uncertain are the many crucial issues affecting Woburn Sands and our local community and you will find a summary of these here. Please take time to read about this as some misinformation has been circulating about them which we want to correct. Rest assured your Town Council is working hard behind the scenes to maintain all that people like about our town.

MEMORIAL HALL, 4 HIGH STREET, WOBURN SANDS, MILTON KEYNES, MK17 8RH
CLERK: MRS L.J. STAPLETON
TELEPHONE 01908 585368 (24HRS) E.MAIL a.jordan@wstc.org.uk

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Cover photo supplied by Madeleine Jordan



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NEW COUNCILLOR



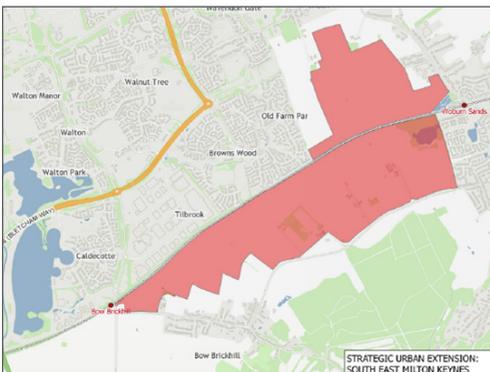
WSTC are delighted to welcome Trudie Sutton as a new Councillor. Trudie has lived in Milton Keynes and the area for 30 years, she has close family ties to Woburn Sands and wants to 'give something back' to the town.

We look forward to working with her.

THE THREE BIG ISSUES: SEMK, EWR/NR, ANGLIAN WATER

South East Milton Keynes (SEMK)

This development of up to 3000 new homes and associated infrastructure lies between Bow Brickhill, Woburn Sands and Wavendon with just over half of it in the parish of Woburn Sands.



Following many consultations in which we and many of you took part, a final version of the Development Framework or Supplementary Planning Document was published by Milton Keynes Council towards the end of last year. There were still elements of concern for our community in this final draft so before it was due to be endorsed by Milton Keynes Cabinet, Cllr David Hopkins, our ward councillor and member of both Woburn Sands and Wavendon Parish Councils, sought meetings with Cllr Pete Marland, leader of MKC to put our concerns to him. As a result, some further amendments were added to the final draft, notably:



1. The grid road crossing of the railway will be at the V10 junction (by Bow Brickhill station) and the V11 will not be extended to Bow Brickhill Road.

2. There will be two local traffic roads from the new development, one onto the Bow Brickhill Road and one on to the Newport Road, to be constructed at the same time and to be traffic light controlled with a 30mph limit and weight restrictions.

3. The development will be phased from west to east, therefore not likely to reach the edge of Woburn Sands until early 2030s.

4. There will be no further developments east of the Newport Road until the 2040's at least.

5. Although there is an alternative location in the document for the location of Woburn Sands station, this will not necessarily be agreed by MKC.

This final amended version was approved by MKC Cabinet on 11 January 2022 and is available on MKC website. There is also a fuller explanation of all this on our own website.

East West Rail (EWR) and Network Rail (NR).

As you must by now know, EWR published plans with one option being the closure of the road over the level crossing with all traffic entering Woburn Sands from the Bow Brickhill Road via a new bridge over

the railway within SEMK. Our and your huge number of responses left EWR in no doubt as to the unacceptability of this proposal. We met with EWR towards the end of last year and emphasised that we want to see due consideration given to a road bridge or preferably an underpass of the road at the level crossing. The short term impact of either of these will be very difficult but it is a long term solution. We also stressed that the idea of dropping the railway between Bow Brickhill station and Aspley Guise station to pass under the road should be considered, but EWR felt the necessary earth removal for this would make it untenable. However, EWR will now put forward further proposals for public consultations this year on this stretch of the Oxford-Cambridge line, then later, their proposal for the whole line. The next stage in the process will be approval by the Department of Transport and then the Treasury, followed by a Planning Inquiry. This is unlikely to be completed for a number of years but EWR's goal is to open the line by 2030. Any decision on the railway will take precedence over the SEMK development.

Again, a fuller version of this is on our website and we will continue to keep you informed as this matter progresses.

Please note that we have tried hard to engage with Network Rail who were responsible for the closure of the school crossing and we are supported in this by MKC, but to date our efforts have been in vain. NR have planning permission from MKC to build a



footbridge to replace the closed crossing but are not now considering doing so.

Anglian Water

In order to put in a new main drain to solve some sewerage problems in the Cranfield Road area and for supplying new developments, Anglian Water have put in a request to MKC to close the road between 93 Newport Road and the level crossing and to close Cranfield Road for 12 weeks starting in early February. We immediately expressed our horror at this request to MKC as it would have had a dreadful impact on school children, businesses both sides of the railway and created havoc on The Leys and Hardwick Road with all traffic using the Bow Brickhill Road to enter or leave the town.

We have achieved some success in modifying this proposal in that Anglian Water have now agreed to leave the Newport Road/level crossing closure until the school summer holidays and to create a one way, traffic controlled access to Cranfield Road during the closure 1 Feb to 25 March, for access only. However, we are continuing to meet with the MKC Highways officer who will be finally agreeing this work to get further changes to the proposals particularly with the closure of the road at the level crossing. This latter is at the insistence of Network Rail.....not our best friends at the moment and ironic in view of the cancellation of the majority of trains during the pandemic!

RETIREMENT OF OUR CARETAKER...

Mike Smith has been our caretaker for halls for ten years and has done a magnificent job, but has decided it is time to retire.

His job has been much more than simply a caretaker role and we will be advertising for his replacement(s) shortly in Hogsty End Handbook and on our website. As well as opening up and closing halls for one off bookings and doing simple repairs to equipment, Mike has carried out regular checks on all equipment in the halls, looked after our SID (speed indicator device), moving it and downloading data, liaised with local workmen as required and much more. In addition Mike has project managed a number of initiatives including the solar panels on the Summerlin Centre, the ramp at the rear of the Library, extension and refurbishment of the Old Fire Station, and most recently he has been liaising with the builders on many aspects of the Sports Hall which needed correction before it can be opened.

If any of the above is something you may be interested in taking on,

please contact Alison our Town Clerk
a.jordan@wstc.org.uk
or call **01908 585368**
with any questions.



NEWS FROM ST. MICHAELS

Those of you who live within earshot won't need me to tell you that St Michael's church clock has now been repaired. The bell is chiming out again over Woburn Sands. Thank you very much to those who supported our fundraising appeal.

We are continuing to hold all of our usual weekly services with precautions in place to keep us all safe. In particular, please note that masks are now mandatory in church. We also ask visitors to sanitise their hands on entering and leaving the building. The church is open every day during daylight hours for visitors, for prayer or just as a quiet space. Everyone is welcome.

Our **Sunday school** and **Youth Group** Genesis are now running as usual. Sunday school meets at 9.45 a.m. every Sunday except on the first Sunday of the month. Genesis meets at 7.30 p.m. on Tuesday evenings, usually at church.

We know there are lots of children's activities on Sunday mornings, and we have therefore decided to move our monthly **Family Service** to Sunday afternoon on the first Sunday of the month. Our first afternoon Family Service will be on Sunday 6 February at 3.00 p.m.

We are now able to accept donations for the **MK Food Bank** again. Items most needed by the Food Bank are –

Biscuits, cereals, spreads (jams, peanut butter etc), long life fruit juice, long life milk, pasta sauce, tinned fruit, tinned vegetables, dried rice (500g or 1 kg bags

only). Over stocked items are - dried pasta, tinned soups, baked beans, rice pudding, custard, tinned pasta. Donations may be left in the boxes on the left just inside the main door of the church, or at the Co-op.

To check on the most up to date details of what is on at St Michaels, please see our website –

www.stmichaelsws.org.uk
or our Facebook page
St Michaels Woburn Sands.



Revd Diana Young, Vicar,
St Michael's Church

revdianay@gmail.com
07887 296 588
01908 584598



**THANK
YOU**

A huge thank you to the team of volunteers who organised the putting up and taking down of the Christmas Trees in the High Street and who ran the Christmas Fayre. At least we were blessed with a fine day for the Fayre, and it provided a boost of cheer in our otherwise restricted year.

Your help next year would be most welcome!



TREES IN WOBURN SANDS



‘Love your trees!’

Ask residents of Woburn Sands what most appeals to them about living here and it’s likely that many will mention its green, leafy aspect, especially the many trees in and around the Conservation Area. As noted in the Neighbourhood Plan, ‘the effect created is one of a town in a woodland setting’.

In the last couple of years, however, there’s been a worrying increase in applications to remove trees, including a number covered by Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs) and/or situated in the Conservation Area. Although each case may seem not to make much difference to the overall street scene, the Town Council is concerned about the cumulative effect of such losses. Where applications for felling receive approval (granted by Milton Keynes Council, incidentally, not the Town Council), there is usually a requirement that any covered by a TPO, or in the Conservation Area, should be replaced by a new sapling. But trees do not grow overnight and it often takes decades for replacements to begin to ‘fill the shoes’ of their predecessors. Nor is the deficit in the interim likely to be compensated for by additional planting elsewhere, as suitable space continues to be lost to infilling by new houses, or extensions of existing ones, or simply by hard-surfacing for car-parking, for example. The cumulative depletion of trees over the longer term can all too easily go unremarked as the years slip by and memories fade. So we face the

threat of a slow creep towards eventual degradation of the very trait that attracted many to live here in the first place. This dilemma requires long-term community thinking: the interests of individuals need to be weighed against those of the whole community.

Sometimes the balance of interests is obvious. The iconic horse chestnut in front of Sandy Court, on Station Road, for example – fondly remembered by generations of local kids who collected its conkers – finally had to be taken down last month. Gradually succumbing to disease over many years, it was posing a threat to passers-by from falling dead branches, so it had to go. Happily, though, its place is to be filled by a new young tree (of another species to avoid infection from the seat-earth of its predecessor).



More contentious, however, are applications to remove trees in plans for



infill developments or house extensions, for example, or even on the advice of house insurers, as a cheaper solution for subsidence claims than more expensive, but possibly longer-lasting remedies such as underpinning (especially in view of seasonal ground heave probably increasing with climate change in any case). Against such essentially 'selfish' interests should be weighed the many benefits that the surrounding community stands to lose. Besides being widely appreciated for their aesthetic qualities, trees, especially in urban settings, can improve air quality, protect against heat and wind, baffle noise pollution and provide diverse habitats for wildlife, meanwhile offering numerous psychological and health benefits as well as helping more generally to reduce net

greenhouse gas emissions.

Yet there doesn't always need to be such a stark choice between 'Planet and Profit'. Compromise is possible with judicious planning to minimise the removal of whole trees and, where possible, adopt less drastic measures such as crown raising and/or reduction. It's always worth seeking the advice of an arboricultural consultant, qualified tree surgeon, or perhaps the Milton Keynes Council Tree Officers at the earliest stages of making any plans, in order to work out what may be possible.

*So stop and think
before you chop!*



SNIPPETS

Woburn Sands Town Council applied for and has been awarded a **Central Government Grant**, administered by MKC, as part of the post-Covid High Street Regeneration initiative to promote businesses before and after Christmas 2021. You should have received a trifold orange leaflet through your letterbox before Christmas detailing all the businesses in the High Street here as the first part of this promotion. The second part will be unique tote bags designed by a young artist who grew up in Woburn Sands and these will be handed out to customers when they support High Street businesses! A new notice board will also be installed in the town car park welcoming visitors to the High Street.

A date for your diaries:

Annual Town Meeting will be held on **Tuesday 3 May** in the Memorial Hall at 7pm. We were unable to hold a public meeting because of Covid restrictions last year, but hopefully this will go ahead as planned and everyone is welcome to attend. We will give our public report on the past year and plans for the future, with opportunities for you to ask questions/ make comments.

A new bus service for Woburn Sands.

We are hopeful that a private company will be able to start a new service for us in March. Details are still being worked on, but watch our website for further information.



More details of the plans for celebrating the **Queens Platinum Jubilee** locally will be in our next newsletter, but in brief we are hoping for an event around a bonfire/beacon on Thursday 2 June at Edgewick Farm, several events on Saturday 4 June based in both St Mary's car park area and in and around Mowbray Green where there will be music from Woburn Sands Band, a vintage car rally, and a treasure Hunt for children and much more, including stalls for local organisations and charities (contact Alison if interested in having a stall). On Sunday 5 June there will be a Civic Family Service at St Michaels at 10.30am and then you are encouraged to hold street parties in roads where suitable, or for groups of neighbours in back gardens.

Town Council Budget.

We have been working on our budgets for the year beginning in April 2022 with the aim of keeping the precept (amount we ask MKC to collect for us to run the Town Council) to less than a 3% increase. We are pleased to say we have managed to keep the raise to just 2.6%, well under inflation, and this without increasing the fees for hire of all our halls.

WSTC Young Environmentalist Awards 2022

Plans for the Young Environmentalist Awards 2022 have been warmly welcomed across the community. We will be accepting entries up to the end of April 2022 and awards will be made in June 2022. Please spread the word about the Awards if you have the opportunity as we would like to encourage as wide a range of entrants as possible to take part.

Further information about the Awards, including how to enter, can be found on our website woburnsands.org.uk but please don't hesitate to contact us directly at YEA@wstc.org.uk if further information is needed.



**Join the Quest to be a
Woburn Sands Young
Environmentalist**

**Are you aged 5-18 and from Woburn Sands or the
surrounding area? Are you concerned about the
Environment?**

WOBURN SANDS TOWN COUNCIL

**YOUNG ENVIRONMENTALIST
AWARDS 2022**

For ideas and information about starting your quest
Look on our website:
www.woburnsands.org.uk

Entry Forms available to download from January 2022. All competition
entries receive a certificate. Prizes for the winners.

