



WOBURN SANDS
TOWN COUNCIL

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SUMMER NEWSLETTER 2023

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

Yet another jolly day was had by all!

The whole community of Woburn Sands celebrated King Charles III Coronation by joining in The Big Lunch on Sunday 7th May 2023 in the High Street as well as other street parties.



PHOTO BY JASON SMITH

STOP PRESS!
East West Rail information event.
Friday 30th June. 2pm – 8pm
at the Summerlin Centre

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

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ALL CHANGE ON THE TOWN COUNCIL MAY 2023

It is with regret that we say goodbye to five councillors this year: the retiring Chair Cllr Dr Peter Skelton who served on the council for 4 years, the Vice-Chair Cllr Clive Cowmeadow who served for an amazing 33 years, Cllr Michael Geddes who served for a creditworthy 14 years, Cllr Dr Jan Rae who served for 4 years and Cllr Richard Lanyon-Hogg who also served for 4 years. They all gave unstintingly to the community and to the Council and will be much missed. Cllr David Hopkins stood down from WSTC but thankfully remains our Danesborough and Walton Ward Councillor.

The Annual Town Council meeting was held on Monday 15th May 2023 when

Cllr Jo Green was elected Chair of the Council and Mayor of the town, and Cllr Gill Brooke the Vice-Chair. The other four councillors are Cllr Trudie Sutton, who has been on the Council for over 20 months, and then we welcome Cllr Gwyn Jones, Cllr Alex Poppleton and Cllr Mark Wathen as new members of the Council. The remaining three spaces will be filled shortly by co-option. Photos and biographies of all the councillors will be on the WS web page shortly. If you are interested in becoming a Councillor contact the Town Clerk at a.jordan@wstc.org.uk 01908 585368.



READY, SET, READ!



Yes of course – that is what we’re all about at the Woburn Sands Library, but (spoiler alert) it’s also the title of this year’s ‘Summer Reading Challenge’ that the Reading Agency run every year to inspire youngsters across the UK to get into their local library and borrow those books! Additional to participating, if you are between the ages of 13 and 25 you will be able to volunteer to become a Summer Reading Challenge Champion. This is just the kind of volunteering experience employers and universities will like to see and there is no greater place to volunteer than in your local community.

Volunteer in your local community

– as modelled by the ‘Big Help’ on the May bank holiday, but don’t wait for the next Coronation initiative: if you have time to spare regularly and you are committed to the idea of ensuring we retain the current opening hours here at the library then come in make yourself

known. You need to be friendly and reliable and that is really all we ask Workshops

Generous support from the Town Council has always underpinned our work here at the library. This is true for the basic level of provision of premises and the volunteer running outside of staffed hours but also for the ability to put on these little luxuries that make library a fun place to come to even outside of the provision of books. In the lead up to the Coronation we had 2 wonderful tutors doing themed activities: Chris did some brass rubbing style wax resist work and Julie instructed youngsters in the making of their crowns. Don’t worry if you missed out this time as we will, as usual, be putting on more of these craft-based workshops during the school summer holidays. Always check the Milton Keynes libraries website to see what we have going on.



EDGEWICK FARM - TWENTY YEARS ON



Maybe you're already among the many local residents who visit Edgewick Farm on the SW corner of the town to walk or exercise dogs there, appreciate the wildlife, watch the lambs gambolling in the spring, or eat apples from the orchard in the autumn. It's small wonder that the Town Council's local amenity green space is so popular! This year sees the 20th anniversary of its ceremonial handover on Mowbray Green to the then Town Mayor, Cllr. Meg Bates, by the Mayor of Milton Keynes, on Sunday 15th June, 2003, with the Woburn Sands Band playing and tea served by the recently formed Edgewick Farm Committee.



Its final acquisition came only after lengthy negotiations with Milton Keynes Council, triggered by a planning application submitted in 1999 to convert a 'redundant agricultural building to residential', which was promptly withdrawn in January of the next year following strong objection from a crowded Town Meeting. Subsequent discussions – even including a short-lived suggestion of it becoming a green burial site – finally led to a proposal in March 2002 for it to be gifted to WSTC for community use. So in September of that year the MKC Cabinet duly recommended its sale to the Town Council for £1. The Edgewick Farm Committee then secured £20,000 to cover the costs of restoration from its dilapidated condition, half from public fund-raising and the other half from a WREN matching grant. The formal transfer the following year stipulated that the fields were to be kept as public open space in perpetuity for recreational use and were to be maintained by grazing. Moreover, 'the landscape, wildlife and historical aspects of the Property' were to be safeguarded and 'the veteran trees on the Property' conserved. It was thus recorded as 'amenity open space' on the Open Spaces Assessment conducted in 2017 for Plan:MK.

With help from the Greensand Trust, the site has been maintained ever since





Over the years, numerous events have been held there, including autumn apple-fest days, treasure hunts, orienteering and various guided natural history-themed walks; and in the tenth anniversary year, 2013, craft displays, a 'Scruffs Dog Show' and folk festival were hosted there. Colourfully illustrated calendars have also been produced from time to time.



We're inviting anyone who wants to celebrate our 20th anniversary this year to join us at Edgewick Farm on Saturday 15th July for a Bring-your-own-Picnic Party, from 1.00 to 4.00pm (but no disposable BBQ trays, please, because of the fire risk). We're also planning to lay on a variety of stalls and activities, including a children's treasure hunt and natural history quiz trail, as well as other surprises. Watch out for further information to be advertised nearer the time on posters and the TC website.

by the Edgewick Farm Volunteers, who gather there on the first Sunday morning of each month, joined occasionally by other visiting helpers. Seasonally varying tasks include repairing fencing, installing gates and benches, laying boardwalk on soggy stretches of footpath, painting the barn, laying hedges and planting trees and wildflowers, pruning apple trees in the orchard and gathering their crops, cutting and raking hay and dredging invading grass from the pond, and cutting back marauding brambles, gorse, blackthorn suckers and thistles in the fields (... besides the unwelcome Sisyphian chore of litter- and dog-poo-bag picking!).



The Big Lunch was organised by Zoe McCarthy and her volunteers who dressed the town with flags and bunting, and also arranged a Lancaster Bomber flypast. Blessed by everyone enjoyed the dulcet tones of Lily Lovejoy and the Woburn Sands Band. Lily and her volunteers also contributed to the decorations as well as arranging several tables (beautifully made by Men in Sheds) at various points around the town, which were enjoyed by all ages. These raised over £600 for designated charities



Photos By Justin Artingstall & Nicky Slater



the town High Street
by wonderful weather,
Lorraine Hearne
at crazy golf holes,
are much enjoyed by



SOUTH EAST MILTON KEYNES (SEMK) DEVELOPMENT

The Town Council represents the residents of Woburn Sands on the SEMK Stakeholders' group which meets regularly with MKCC and other affected parishes. The group discusses the whole project with one of its aims to encourage a coherently unified approach by the various developers, as well as adherence to the original Supplementary Planning Document (SPD).

Although slightly more than half the land designated for SEMK lies within the parish of Woburn Sands, the various parcels of land are owned by several landowners, and different developers are submitting plans for their sections rather than there being one unified application.

Outline plans for the section of SEMK furthest west have been submitted to Milton Keynes by L&Q Estates, and Fox Land and Property Ltd. Approximately 25% of the outline plan area lies within the parish of Woburn Sands, the remaining 75% within Bow Brickhill. These plans are an update on those submitted last year and show some changes requested by MKCC, partly as a result of comments made by Woburn Sands Town Council and the Parish Councils of Bow Brickhill and Wavendon. Most of the community uses such as schools, provision for some form of medical facility and shops are in this area to the west in Bow Brickhill, as well as a substantial housing provision in both parishes.

Woburn Sands Town Council has now submitted a response to these latest plans, and you will find it on the Council web site: www.woburnsands.org.uk

The area of SEMK in Woburn Sands south of the railway line is primarily designated for housing and open space/recreation. Outline plans for the majority of this have already been submitted by O&H Properties, which is not part of the recent plans outlined above.

East West Rail

At the time of going to print, no-one is any the wiser about the future of the section of East West Rail from Bletchley to Bedford. Although given the support of Central Government, the company has still to prove the business case for this section. Nearer to home, they have not dealt satisfactorily with the issue of a viable crossing in Woburn Sands which allows free flow of traffic along Newport Road and Station Road. Residents are vehemently opposed to the possibility of a bypass which would direct traffic round the main town but into The Leys, Theydon Avenue, Mowbray Green and Hardwick Road, which could not cope with the volume of traffic.

If a meeting between residents and East West Rail is called (again not known at the time of going to press), it will be advertised widely and the Town Council will be galvanising action to make sure



the town's residents and businesses are protected. Given the number of letters and responses sent to EWR from residents of Woburn Sands at the outset of the scheme, the company cannot disregard their views.

FUTURE PANEL

The Futures Panel is an advisory group open to residents and community groups of both Woburn Sands and surrounding parishes. Although it has no official standing, it acts to gather information about the needs and aspirations of the community in the light of the future growth of Woburn Sands and surrounding area, and to present its findings and offer advice to both the Town Council and other official bodies. Its Chair was agreed by the Town Council at the outset in March and the panel has at least one member of the present Town Council on it who reports back to the TC. It is neither led by nor is it an official body of the Town Council.

The Futures Panel has now met twice and members have familiarised themselves with the general proposals for SEMK. The panel has agreed that the provision of medical facilities is one of the highest priorities. Although the nature of such facilities is a matter for the NHS, it is essential that the views of residents are considered. The Panel has had a relatively detailed discussion on possible options for the facility which, it is envisaged, would be a Health Hub containing more than



just GP consulting rooms. The panel hopes that other services can be accommodated and that the new facility would enable minor changes in the current Asplands Medical Centre. The panel will shortly issue a brief questionnaire to residents listing the possible services which could be provided and inviting comments. None of the above can be guaranteed as the Panel can only act in an advisory role but without feedback cannot proceed to formulate ideas.

In due course, once EWR announce their proposals for the WS Railway Crossing and Station (expected end May), the panel will consider the consequences for local traffic. The panel will also be discussing the detailed arrangements for the proposed Country Park once they are published by O&H Properties. The panel intends to undertake the widest possible consultation process and wants to hear the views of the younger generation on the Country Park facilities. If you would like to be involved in the panel's work, please contact the Clerk of Council, Alison Jordan, a.jordan@wstc.org.uk who will pass on your details to the Chair.



ST. MICHAEL'S CHURCH



In St Michael's Church we are looking forward to our **Summer Fete** which will take place on **Saturday 1 July** on the Memorial Green in Woburn Sands from 10.00 a.m. to 1.00 p.m. There will be Cake and Refreshments, a Plant Stall, White Elephant Stall, Book Stall, Games and Activities, Music, Fresh Produce, Street Food and a Grand Raffle. Come early for the best bargains and stay around to enjoy the fun.

Our **Sports Club** continues in the new Woburn Sands Sports Hall on the **second Tuesday of each month**. The club is for children aged 8 – 12 with special educational needs and is organized by the youth and adults of St. Michael's Church. All safeguarding rules are adhered to. New members welcome. *If you are interested*, please contact **valeriesymon779@btinternet.com** or phone **01908 583779**.

For younger children and their parents and carers we hold a **toddler group** on **Thursday mornings** from 9.30 – 11.00 a.m. in St Michael's Church. We put out the playmats and toys in church, and it works surprisingly well. Big brothers

and sisters also welcome during school holidays. There is no charge, although we appreciate a small donation to cover our costs.

From Monday 24 – Friday 28 July we'll be working with other churches in Woburn Sands to put on the very popular Christian Holiday Club Week. A week of craft activities, games and fun. This year's title is 'Two by Two', and we'll be focussed on the animals in the ark. Contact Valerie Symon (as above) for more details about this.

Donations for Milton Keynes **Food Bank** can be left in the church at any time during the day when the church is open (usually around 9.00 a.m. to 5.00 p.m. every day). Details of our services and other activities can be found on our website **www.stmichaelsws.org.uk** or our Facebook Page – St Michael's Church Woburn Sands. Do come and join us if you can.



With my prayers for us all and for our community.



Revd Diana Young





WOBURN SANDS MUSIC FESTIVAL

Saturday 26th – Sunday 27th August 2023



The Music Festival this year is even bigger and better than last year (if possible). The twin aims of this free festival are to raise funds for local charities and to have fun. This year the charities being supported are Friends of St Michael's, Fulbrook School PTFA and Men in Sheds. Last year over £2000 was raised for Al's Pals, Love Woburn Sands and KKOTS.



The main music events are taking place over the weekend of the summer bank holiday from 13.00 Saturday 26th to 22.00 Sunday

27th August at six venues: starting at the 'top' of the town at The Royal Oak, The Fir Tree, Nonnas and The Swan, then two venues at the 'bottom' of the town at The Weathercock and the Rec where the main stage, stalls, food outlets, bars and other attractions will be sited. There will be a special auction and raffle with top prizes over the weekend. The music will kick off at The Weathercock and The Fir Tree on the Friday evening and continue at The Weathercock on Monday Bank Holiday. Over the four days 110 individuals, duos, trios, quartets, and bands of varying sizes will perform free to audiences of different magnitudes.

Watch out for posters and the new Festival Brochure for timings, running orders and then updates on the Festival Web site **www.woburnsandsfestival.org** Pick up a brochure in the weeks preceding the event at any one of the venues.

In the middle of all this will be a special two-day market on Memorial Green and then, around the town, a giant Scarecrow trail. These unlikely participants will be 'supervising' the event from the 25th August at various venues and addresses. There will be posters and a simple map showing the location of all these 'Crows' around the town beforehand.

The whole event would not be possible without the joint efforts of the festival working committee and the performers who all give their services for free, plus the support from local businesses, the Town Council and the Gravel Pit Close Charity (GPCC), which owns the Rec.

If you want to help in any way either at the various venues, on the field or generally joining the action, then contact **Keith Temple** on **kj_temple@hotmail.com** or **07799 061081** where you can be sure of a warm welcome.



SNIPPETS



It is time for the **Woburn Sands Annual Garden competition again!** To continue the environmental stance adopted over the preceding two years, the theme for this year's competition will be 'Gardening for the Birds and Bees'. There will be four categories: Front Garden; Back Garden; Containers and Baskets; Community and Business.



Judging will take place towards the end of July.



Look out for posters and announcements on social media and the WSTC web site for full details of dates and how to submit an entry. If you have a neighbour with a beautiful garden who is too shy to enter, do encourage them to do so as the greater variety the better.

Greetings from Iain Stewart MP.

I hope this newsletter finds you well. I was delighted to have watched the Coronation of King Charles III and Queen Camilla on Saturday 6 May. I hope you enjoyed watching the events as much as I did and had the opportunity to celebrate. God Save The King!

Please be advised that the **SaferMK Community Safety Survey 23/24** is now live and can be accessed on the following link: <https://forms.office.com/e/VAbikysFb5>

The survey allows residents, employees and visitors to provide feedback on anti-social behaviour and crime concerns across all of Milton Keynes to the SaferMK Partnership.

The survey will close on 30th June 2023.

