Issue No. **36** **Summer** 2014

North by NorthEast

News from your Parish Council **www.great-linford.gov.uk**

Your pull-out Summer of Fun guide inside!

BLAKELANDS | BOLBECK PARK | CONNIBURROW | DOWNHEAD PARK
DOWNS BARN | GIFFARD PARK | GREAT LINFORD | NEATH HILL
PENNYLAND | REDHOUSE PARK | TONGWELL | WILLEN PARK

contacts

Below is a list of GLPC parish councillors, the wards they represent and their contact details.

Conniburrow

Claudius Munangati 07581 445089
claudius.munangati@great-linford.gov.uk

Matthew Iria 01908 384107
matthew.iria@great-linford.gov.uk

Downhead Park & Willen Park

Simon Teesdale 07904 017255
simon.teesdale@great-linford.gov.uk

Vacancy

Downs Barn

Kathy Windle
kathy.windle@great-linford.gov.uk

Janet Maclean
janet.maclean@great-linford.gov.uk

Giffard Park & Blakelands

Allan Calverley 07720 467334
allan.calverley@great-linford.gov.uk

Keith Panes 07921 240447
keith.panes@great-linford.gov.uk

Peter Widdowson 01908 617078
peter.widdowson@great-linford.gov.uk

Great Linford

Sam Crooks 07803 036656
sam.crooks@great-linford.gov.uk

Ian Foskett 01908 606613
ian.foskett@great-linford.gov.uk

Neath Hill

David Stabler 01908 672599
david.stabler@great-linford.gov.uk

Pennyland & Bolbeck Park

Ray Yeates 07525 759815
ray.yeates@great-linford.gov.uk

Redhouse Park

Vacancy

Great Locality
Proud Community

summer2014

councillor comment

Breathing space

The idea of building on paddocks in Great Linford generated an enormous reaction from residents after the Parks Trust included them in a list of 25 parcels of land they were willing to consider for development.

Part of the rationale was to boost Parks Trust finances, as their investment fund had lost 30% of its value in the recession. The good news is that following consultations, and with their finances in a better position, the Parks Trust has decided to reduce the number of possible development sites to six, and has removed the Willen Lane and Wolverton Road paddocks from the list. See page 10 for the report.

But just when many residents were heaving a sigh of relief, up pops a fresh plan to build houses at Linford Lakes, north of Wolverton Road; a sensitive wildlife area and popular with anglers.

Barratt Homes, who have described it as a 'joint venture' with the Parks Trust, propose to build over 11 hectares of land on the site, up to the edge of Blackhorse Lake. The plan is for up to 250 dwellings, 4 'chalets', and a visitor centre with parking for up to 200 vehicles. The remaining 59 hectares would be a Country Park; when not flooded!

Politicians are constantly telling us that the UK needs to build more homes, and as a parish that welcomes new opportunities we approach each development proposal with an open mind. However, GLPC has a duty to take the long view, and in this case we are conscious of the need to get the balance right between conservation and growth. This development proposal is likely to be a hot topic for some months to come. For more on the subject please see page 9.

Due to boundary changes residents of this parish now have 18 Ward Councillors elected to MK Council. For a full list of local Councillors and election results please visit GLPC's website.

David Stabler
GLPC Lead Councillor – Planning

www.great-linford.gov.uk

Parish Manager
Eirwen Tagg parish.manager@great-linford.gov.uk

Parish Council Office
10 Tower Crescent, Neath Hill Local Centre,
Neath Hill MK14 6JY Tel: 01908 606613

North by NorthEast
Editor: Linda Inoki

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Graphic by Robert Rusin

THE ECONOMIC POWERHOUSE on your doorstep

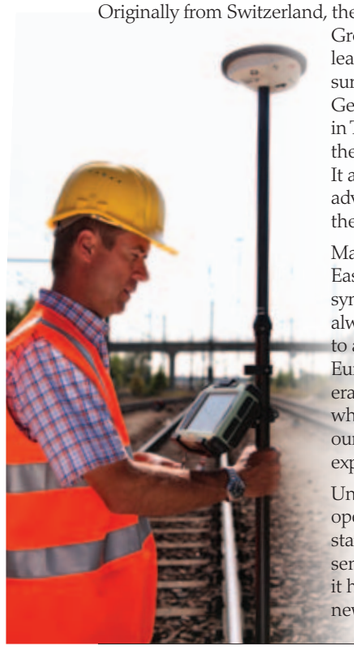
Northeast Milton Keynes is a pretty attractive place to live, and it has proved a good place to do business too. Just ask those pioneering companies who moved into Blakelands and Tongwell forty years ago, as the new city took shape, and those who are still moving in or expanding today. Having an economic powerhouse on our doorstep brings new job opportunities, drives the local economy and enriches community life too.

GLPC welcomes strong links between local industry and the community, through employment and learning opportunities, fund-raising events and even 'hands-on' volunteer work.

Here are just two of the many companies, large and small, who are making a major contribution to the neighbourhood.

Leica Geosystems Ltd, Tongwell

Whether it is in the air, beneath the waves, across city streets or rugged terrain, Leica Geosystems has the products to measure and record the world around us. Originally from Switzerland, the company is now part of the Swedish Hexagon Group, and its British arm is the UK market leader in supplying hardware and software to the surveying industry. As part of its strategic plan, Leica Geosystems moved into purpose-designed premises in Tongwell last November. As you might expect, the new building is meticulously designed and built. It accommodates a larger work force and the most advanced technical service and training facilities in the industry.



Mark Concannon, President (Europe, Middle East and Africa) says "As an easily accessible city, synonymous with product innovation, Milton Keynes always remained our preferred choice. The move to a new flagship headquarters for UK Sales and European Management represents an exciting new era for us and, most importantly, our customers, who can expect the same top quality service from our talented team as we continue our plans for expansion."

Unusually, the interior is designed to make all operations visible to customers. Facilities include a state of the art auditorium, which is used for training seminars, product launches and conferences."When it has to be right"is the company's slogan; and their new premises certainly live up to that claim.

Volkswagen Financial Services (UK), Blakelands

From its cheerful receptionists to senior managers in rugby shirts (well, it is dress down Friday!) Volkswagen Financial Services gives an instant impression of confidence and warmth. That has to be a great asset, as the business provides finance and car insurance to customers of the entire VW group, including Porsche, Audi and Skoda.

VWFS is growing fast; by 2018 they will employ over 1,000 people, and Paul Baylis, Corporate Communications Manager, says "we're keen to fill as many roles as possible locally."

Next year, the company will move into impressive new headquarters nearby. "Our executives aren't going to be on the top floor, but on the second floor, in the heart of the business," says Paul, over models and drawings of this massive £36m investment.

The architecture looks stunning: an asymmetrical 'u' shaped building, around a spacious courtyard, where people can talk business or socialise.

Collaboration has been key to the project, with staff involved at every step. From choosing its name (One Delaware Drive), to being consulted on the workspaces, cafes and funky artwork, the employees must have had fun. This philosophy is probably why VWFS is one of the best places to work in Britain – and that's official, according to the independent survey, 'Great Places to Work'.

Paul, whose career has taken him round the world, is new to Milton Keynes but impressed. "The infrastructure is perfect around here, and a big advantage is being able to expand right next door to our friends at the VW group."

Driving back past famous logos sparkling in the sky, along with signs of many small enterprises too, the future certainly looks bright for North East MK – and beyond.

TOP & ABOVE: VWFS is growing fast.
ABOVE LEFT: Leica Geosystems' new headquarters.
FAR LEFT: "When it has to be right", Leica Geosystems in use.

Where's Woolly?

If you go down to Downhead Park you might spot some curious sheep peeping out from the trees. Look a little closer and they tell a tale of centuries gone by.

Before Milton Keynes was built, the field hereabouts was known as Down Head Furlong so the new city planners named the area Downhead Park, after the place of the same name in the Cotswolds. Tadmarton, Fairford (Crescent) and Colesbourne (Drive) are also Cotswolds names.

When a small park in Fairford Crescent needed renovation, project manager Phil Snell of MK Council asked residents at the nearby sheltered housing scheme for ideas. They suggested the theme of Cotswolds' sheep, and the resulting sculptures are now part of an attractive new garden which includes ornamental grasses, seats and an area for playing boules.

Sudgrove House resident Carol Barac says "It's let in a lot more light and made a huge difference. I can see the sheep from my window and I'm very fond of them!"

Phil, who also made the sculptures, explained the story behind the sheep. In the 15th century many landowners pushed peasants off the arable land and brought in huge flocks of sheep for the lucrative wool trade. 'The sheep will eat anything,' said the aggrieved peasants, 'including our livelihoods!'

"Taking a little poetic licence," says Phil, "the arrival of Milton Keynes in the 20th century was another 'invasion'. But this time we humans displaced the sheep!" So he made the sheep from an alien material (stainless steel) and made some go 'missing' by stamping them out of the metal and dotting them around Downhead Park.

Why not keep your eyes open for the sheep and send us a photo or even a poem? Here's an extract from a poem by author Neil Beardmore inspired by the sheep:

Counting sheep will make us all go to sleep,
Number one is for the wool to clothe us,
Dyed bright and woven in coats and pullovers,
Sheep in English green countryside, with castle and keep.
The last one's in Milton Keynes where the cry is loud and deep:
We've got concrete cows, but why not concrete sheep?
For counting sheep will make us all go to . . .
zzzzzz . . . zzzzzleeep.

TOP: Looking sheepish?
LEFT: Sudgrove House residents admire the flock. *Photos by Tony Bedford.*

NEW FUNDS for Dragon Park

GLPC is hoping to win around £100,000 in grants to pay for much-needed improvements to Dragon Park in Great Linford. If approved, the revamped park will include something for everyone, from teenagers to toddlers and their parents. Plans include a new trampoline, hurricane swing, talking flowers and picnic tables as well as special areas for parkour and skateboards.

Nine play area companies tendered for the revamp and after carefully sifting through each one, we chose the company that best covered residents' requests. GLPC has to make a strong case for winning the first grant from WREN, a not-for-profit business that funds community, conservation and heritage projects for people who live near landfill sites. Our weighty application included material from the 'Take back our park' campaign, photographic evidence of long-term vandalism and neglect, and detailed improvement proposals and costs. If the WREN bid for £48,000 succeeds, MK Council has agreed to match-fund the project and, all being well, the work would start at the end of summer.

organised by Great Linford Parish Council

Summer 2014 of Fun

Something to do Every Day!

Great Locality
Proud Community

Great Linford Parish Council
see our blog... glpcsummer.wordpress.com

summer of fun events

MK SPRINGERS WADDLER TO TODDLER

£1 for 45mins | NEW EVENT | Friday

Age range: Crawlers to 3 years. All children MUST be accompanied by Parent/Carer. Max 15 per session.

Springers is a fun gymnastic session where children and adults play together while rolling, jumping and climbing on soft equipment. The 'FUNdamental Movement Ideas for Early Years' scheme was developed by British Gymnastics to help young people enjoy exercise.

This programme offers 16 different themed charts. Your child can work towards these badges over the summer.

Dress Code: clothes you can move in. Shoes & socks will need to be removed.

Location: Giffard Park Community Centre, Broadway Avenue, Giffard Park MK14 5PY.

DANCE plus DRAMA

£1 per hour | Weds

Split sessions of 1 hour each. Dance followed by optional Drama.

Age range: 6 - 10 years. Max 20 per session

Dance. Jazzy dance classes – lots of fun for all abilities!

Drama. Creative classes with professional drama teacher.

Improvisation, drama games and mime.

Dress code: loose clothing – trainers or soft-soled shoes.

Location: Cross & Stable Community Centre, Downs Barn Boulevard MK14 7RP.

THE SMALL PRINT

Parents will need to provide contact details and sign a disclaimer for each child taking part in any paid activity.

For some events small children must be accompanied by a parent, grandparent or guardian.

All instructors and staff at events are fully insured and CRB checked.

First Aid trained staff are on-hand at every event.

CHILDREN'S MASTER ART CLASS

£2 for 2hrs | NEW EVENT | Tues

Age range: 8 - 12 years. Max 12 per session.

Master Artist Chris Christoforou will teach you how to create and draw your own 'cartoon' character or greeting card.

Dress Code: clothes you don't mind getting paint on.

Location: High Street Cricket Pavilion, Great Linford MK14 5AX

Parking: off High Street, opposite Memorial Hall.

MILTON KEYNES PLAY ASSOCIATION

FREE! | Tues & Thurs

Age range: 6 - 14 years old. Please bring your parents or grandparents.

Crafts, bouncy castle and other activities. Join in the fun and games with a team of qualified play-workers.

- Sports - cricket, rounders and football.
- Games -treasure hunts, rope bridge building and team games.
- Bouncy castle or slide.
- Lots of practical crafts.
- Fun for everyone.

Dress code: outdoor activity clothing to suit the weather – trainers or shoes.

NOTE - All sessions are open-access and children remain the responsibility of parents at all times.

Locations: *Tuesday afternoons:* Sports Ground, Pannier Place,Downs Barn MK14 7QP

Thursday afternoons: Sports Ground, Marsh Drive, Great Linford MK14 5HH.

NO BOOKING REQUIRED

CLIMBING WALL

£2 for 15mins | NEW EVENT | Tues & Thurs

Age range: 4 years and over. Max 20 per session.

Josh Maye Mountaineering will bring you 24 feet of climbing fun! Climb like a monkey on the high wall, with four varied and exciting lines. Try something new, race your friends or just get a great view over Milton Keynes.

Dress code: loose clothing, trainers.

Locations: *Tuesday afternoons:* Sports Ground, Pannier Place, Downs Barn MK14 7QP.

Thursday afternoons: Sports Ground, Marsh Drive, Great Linford MK14 5HH.

SPECIAL CONDITIONS:

Tickets will be issued for a specific timed slot. Do not be late or you may miss your turn!

Rain stops play! For safety reasons this activity might have to be cancelled on the day due to weather. Unfortunately GLPC cannot give refunds.

ZUMBA FITNESS plus PILATES

£1 per hour | NEW EVENT | Thurs

Split sessions of 1 hour each. Zumba Fitness followed by optional Pilates.

Age ranges: 18 years and over. Max 25 per session

Zumba Fitness – an easy to follow, fun workout to music in a party atmosphere.

Pilates – a form of exercise which develops the body's core strength and flexibility to support efficient, graceful movement.

Dress code: relaxed, comfortable clothing.

Location: Giffard Park Community Centre, Broadway Avenue, Giffard Park MK14 5PY.

PARAMOUNT PARKOUR

£2 for 2hrs | Mon & Fri

Age range: 10 - 16 years. Max 30 per session.

Paramount Parkour Academy 'free-running' classes. Learn the art behind this extreme sport in a safe environment. Expect lots of vaulting, rolling, stealth, balance drills and games. Please bring a drink.

Dress code: loose clothing – clean trainers or soft-soled shoes.

Location: Paramount Parkour Academy, Kingston Gymnastics Centre, 15 Winchester Circle, Kingston, MK10 0BA.

Car sharing - if you can offer a lift please advise GLPC office staff when you book.

JUGGLING & CIRCUS SKILLS

£2 for 2hrs | Mon & Tues

Age range: 5 years and over. Max 30 per session.

The Great Gappo will bring you laughter and fun as you learn circus skills; from plate spinning, juggling, diabolos and much, much more.

Dress code: loose clothing – trainers or soft-soled shoes

Location: Cross & Stable Community Centre, Downs Barn Boulevard MK14 7RP.

ZUMBA FOR JUNIORS AND KIDS

Jnrs £1 45mins | Kids £1 1hr | Weds

Age range: Kids 4 - 6, Junior 7 – 11. Max 20 per session.

Zumba for children – an easy to follow version of zumba which really gets the children moving! Please bring a drink.

Dress code: clothes suitable for sport.

Location: Giffard Park Community Centre, Broadway Avenue, Giffard Park MK14 5PY.

www.great-linford.gov.uk

ORIENTEERING

£2 for 2hrs | £3 per family | Weds

Age range: Adults and children, children under 12 must be accompanied. Max 25 per session.

Orienteering is the sport of competitive map reading and suitable for all ages and fitness levels. Add some interest to those family walks in the park! The opening session introduces the orienteering map, how to use of the compass and look at simple navigation techniques. Then you will set off, with specially prepared maps, on your chosen route, to plot your way between a series of checkpoints.

Dress code: suitable for a walk or run on a sports field.

Location: High Street Cricket Pavilion, Great Linford MK14 5AX.

Parking: Car park off High Street opposite Memorial Hall.

TENNIS

Kids £1 90mins | Jnrs £2 90mins | Mon

Age range: Kids 5 - 9 years. Max 32 per session. Juniors 10 - 16 years. Max 12 per session.

Tennis sessions tailored to your ability. Equipment provided. Please bring a drink and snacks.

Dress code: clothes suitable for sport.

Location: Sports Ground, Pannier Place,Downs Barn MK14 7QP

SOFTBALL

£2 for 2hrs | NEW EVENT | Thurs

Age range: 12 - 16 years. Max 30 per session.

MK Baseball & Softball Association qualified teachers will show you how to play this increasingly popular sport. Bring your friends for a fast, friendly game. Please bring a drink.

Dress Code: clothes suitable for outdoor sports.

Location: Sports Ground, Pannier Place,Downs Barn MK14 7QP.

KARUNA YOGA

£1 for 90mins | Friday

Age range: 18 years and over. Max 15 per session.

Karuna Yoga classes soothe the mind and help promote strength, flexibility and healthy breathing. You will need to complete a medical form.

Dress code: relaxed, comfortable clothes you can move in plus extra top (for wind-down).

Location: High Street Cricket Pavilion, Great Linford MK14 5AX.

Parking: Car park off High Street opposite Memorial Hall.

ART CLASSES

£3 for 3hrs | NEW EVENT | Friday

Age range: 16 years and over. Max 12 per session.

Master Artist Chris Christoforou will teach drawing and sketching for beginners using graphite and colour pencils, plus some basic painting. For the more advanced artist; painting in watercolour and acrylics. If you have a subject you would like to paint or draw, bring it along (if practicable).

Materials required: all art materials and equipment you intend to use including reference materials. Graphite pencils, colour pencils and some acrylic paints will be provided.

Dress Code: comfy clothes you don't mind getting paint on.

Location: High Street Cricket Pavilion, Great Linford MK14 5AX.

Parking: off High Street, opposite Memorial Hall.

SMART RASPBERRY COOKERY

£2 for 1hr | NEW EVENT | Mon

Age range: 5 to 9 years old. Max 12 per session.

Smart Raspberry Cookery is a chance for children to improve cooking skills by preparing a recipe from scratch. Recipes are simple, healthy and fun to cook, with a different dish each week.

Ingredients, a recipe card and containers to take the dishes home to complete are included in the price.

Dress code: aprons provided!

Location: High Street Cricket Pavilion, Great Linford MK14 5AX

Parking: Car park off High Street opposite Memorial Hall.

MK SPRINGERS GYMFIT (BOOT CAMP)

£1 for 1hr | NEW EVENT | Friday

Age range: 11 years and over. Max 30 per session.

GymFit improves general fitness, through fun and challenging workouts with fitness instructors.

Beginners, intermediate and advanced work-levels work the upper body, lower body, core and cardio-vascular system. Flexible programme, suitable for a wide range of abilities.

Dress Code: clothes suitable for exercise.

Location: Giffard Park Community Centre, Broadway Avenue, Giffard Park MK14 5PY.

SPECIAL OPS MK SURVIVAL SKILLS & LASER TAG

£5 for 5hrs | Tues & Weds

Age range: 8 - 14 years. Max 25 per session.

Tuesdays - Survival Skills Ex-army Sgt. Mack offers kids a special programme based on professional survival skills, problem-solving and team building. Learn how to build an all-weather shelter, start a fire safely and find wild food.

Discover the importance of a positive outlook, self-confidence and responsibility. Cook your own lunch (food provided). If you are a bit choosey you can bring a packed lunch. Please bring a drink.

Wednesdays - Laser Tag is the new alternative to Paint Ball, without the mess and sting. It's totally harmless, with no shortage of Ammo either!

Play at being soldiers and enjoy games such as 'Capture the Flag' and 'Hostage Rescue'. Cook your own lunch - food provided. If you are a bit choosey you can bring a packed lunch. Please bring a drink.

Dress code: outdoor activity clothes (they may get dirty) to suit the weather – trainers or sturdy shoes.

Location: Sports Ground, Marsh Drive, Great Linford MK14 5HH.

£5 for 5 hours per event - including lunch.

ADVANCE BOOKING REQUIRED FOR ALL ACTIVITIES EXCEPT MKPA

Advance booking required for ALL activities*

**except MKPA*

Some events have limited places, so to guarantee a place buy your tickets in advance from: The Parish Office, 10 Tower Crescent, Neath Hill MK14 6JY

You can pay on the door but to avoid disappointment please check availability, tel: **01908 606613**

Great Locality Proud Community

see our blog: glpcsummer.wordpress.com

	date	activity	time	place
JULY				
WEEK 1	MON 28th	Paramount Parkour Kids	9.30 – 11.30	Kingston
		Tennis Junior	9.30 – 11.00	Downs Barn
		Tennis	11.30 – 1.00	Downs Barn
		Cooking	11.00 – 12.00	Cricket Pavilion
		Juggling & Circus	2.00 – 4.00	Cross & Stable
	TUE 29th	Survival	10.00 – 3.00	Marsh Drive
		MKPA	2.00 – 4.00	Downs Barn
		Climbing wall	2.00 – 4.00	Downs Barn
		Children's Art	2.00 – 4.00	Cricket Pavilion
	WEDS 30th	Zumba Junior	10.00 – 10.45	Giffard Park
		Zumba Kids	11.00 – 12.00	Giffard Park
		Special Ops Laser Tag	10.00 – 3.00	Marsh Drive
		Dance	2.00 – 3.00	Cross & Stable
		Drama	3.15 – 4.15	Cross & Stable
	THUR 31st	MKPA	2.00 – 4.00	Marsh Drive
		Climbing wall Adults	2.00 – 4.00	Marsh Drive
		Zumba Adults	2.00 – 3.00	Giffard Park
		Pilates	3.15 – 4.15	Giffard Park
		Softball	6.30 – 8.00	Downs Barn
AUGUST				
	FRI 1st	Paramount Parkour	9.30 – 11.30	Kingston
		Yoga	10.00 – 11.30	Cricket Pavilion
		MK Springers	1.00 – 1.45	Giffard Park
		Boot Camp	2.00 – 3.00	Giffard Park
WEEK 2	MON 4th	Paramount Parkour	9.30 – 11.30	Kingston
		Tennis	9.30 – 11.00	Downs Barn
		Tennis	11.30 – 1.00	Downs Barn
		Cooking	11.00 – 12.00	Cricket Pavilion
		Juggling & Circus	2.00 – 4.00	Cross & Stable
	TUES 5th	Survival	10.00 – 3.00	Marsh Drive
		MKPA	2.00 – 4.00	Downs Barn
		Climbing wall	2.00 – 4.00	Downs Barn
		Children's Art	2.00 – 4.00	Cricket Pavilion
	WEDS 6th	Zumba Junior	10.00 – 10.45	Giffard Park
		Zumba Kids	11.00 – 12.00	Giffard Park
		Special Ops Laser Tag	10.00 – 3.00	Marsh Drive
		Dance	2.00 – 3.00	Cross & Stable
		Drama	3.15 – 4.15	Cross & Stable
	THUR 7th	MKPA	2.00 – 4.00	Marsh Drive
		Climbing wall	2.00 – 4.00	Marsh Drive
		Zumba Adults	2.00 – 3.00	Giffard Park
		Pilates Adults	3.15 – 4.15	Giffard Park
		Softball	6.30 – 8.00	Downs Barn
	FRI 8th	Paramount Parkour Kids	9.30 – 11.30	Kingston
		Yoga	10.00 – 11.30	Cricket Pavilion
		MK Springers	1.00 – 1.45	Giffard Park
		Boot Camp	2.00 – 3.00	Giffard Park
		Adult Art	2.00 – 5.00	Cricket Pavilion
WEEK 3	MON 11th	Paramount Parkour	9.30 – 11.30	Kingston
		Tennis Junior	9.30 – 11.00	Downs Barn
		Tennis	11.30 – 1.00	Downs Barn
		Cooking	11.00 – 12.00	Cricket Pavilion
		Juggling & Circus	2.00 – 4.00	Cross & Stable
	TUE 12th	Survival	10.00 – 3.00	Marsh Drive
		MKPA	2.00 – 4.00	Downs Barn
		Climbing wall	2.00 – 4.00	Marsh Drive
		Children's Art	2.00 – 4.00	Cricket Pavilion
	WEDS 13th	Zumba Junior	10.00 – 10.45	Giffard Park
		Zumba Kids	11.00 – 12.00	Giffard Park
		Special Ops Laser Tag	10.00 – 3.00	Marsh Drive
		Dance	2.00 – 3.00	Cross & Stable
		Drama	3.15 – 4.15	Cross & Stable
		Orienteering	7.00 – 8.30	Cricket Pavilion
	THUR 14th	MKPA	2.00 – 4.00	Marsh Drive
		Climbing wall	2.00 – 4.00	Marsh Drive
		Zumba Adults	2.00 – 3.00	Giffard Park
		Pilates Adults	3.15 – 4.15	Giffard Park
		Softball	6.30 – 8.00	Downs Barn
	FRI 15th	Paramount Parkour	9.30 – 11.30	Kingston
		Yoga	10.00 – 11.30	Cricket Pavilion
		MK Springers	1.00 – 1.45	Giffard Park
		Boot Camp	2.00 – 3.00	Giffard Park
		Adult Art	2.00 – 5.00	Cricket Pavilion
WEEK 4	MON 18th	Paramount Parkour Kids	9.30 – 11.30	Kingston
		Tennis Junior	9.30 – 11.00	Downs Barn
		Tennis	11.30 – 1.00	Downs Barn
		Cooking	11.00 – 12.00	Cricket Pavilion
		Juggling & Circus	2.00 – 4.00	Cross & Stable
	TUE 19th	Survival	10.00 – 3.00	Marsh Drive
		MKPA	2.00 – 4.00	Downs Barn
		Climbing wall	2.00 – 4.00	Marsh Drive
	WEDS 20th	Special Ops Laser Tag	10.00 – 3.00	Marsh Drive
		Dance	2.00 – 3.00	Cross & Stable
		Drama	3.15 – 4.15	Cross & Stable
		Orienteering	7.00 – 8.30	Cricket Pavilion
	THUR 21st	MKPA	2.00 – 4.00	Marsh Drive
		Climbing wall	2.00 – 4.00	Marsh Drive
		Zumba Adults	2.00 – 3.00	Giffard Park
		Pilates Adults	3.15 – 4.15	Giffard Park
		Softball	6.30 – 8.00	Downs Barn
	FRI 22nd	Paramount Parkour	9.30 – 11.30	Kingston
		MK Springers	1.00 – 1.45	Giffard Park
		Boot Camp	2.00 – 3.00	Giffard Park
WEEK 5	MON 25th	**Bank Holiday**		
		Paramount Parkour	9.30 – 11.30	Kingston
	TUE 26th	Survival	10.00 – 3.00	Marsh Drive
		Cooking	11.00 – 12.00	Cricket Pavilion
		Juggling & Circus	2.00 – 4.00	Cross & Stable
		MKPA	2.00 – 4.00	Downs Barn
		Climbing wall	2.00 – 4.00	Marsh Drive
	WEDS 27th	Special Ops Laser Tag Kids	10.00 – 3.00	Marsh Drive
		Tennis Junior	9.30 – 11.00	Downs Barn
		Tennis	11.30 – 1.00	Downs Barn
		Dance	2.00 – 3.00	Cross & Stable
		Drama	3.15 – 4.15	Cross & Stable
	THUR 28th	MKPA	2.00 – 4.00	Marsh Drive
		Climbing wall	2.00 – 4.00	Marsh Drive
		Zumba Adults	2.00 – 3.00	Giffard Park
		Pilates	3.15 – 4.15	Giffard Park
		Softball	6.30 – 8.00	Downs Barn
	FRI 29th	Paramount Parkour	9.30 – 11.30	Kingston
		MK Springers	1.00 – 1.45	Giffard Park
		Boot Camp	2.00 – 3.00	Giffard Park

ADVANCE BOOKING REQUIRED FOR ALL ACTIVITIES EXCEPT MKPA

Parish Council Office 10 Tower Crescent, Neath Hill Local Centre, Neath Hill MK14 6JY
For further information tel **01908 606613** visit our website **www.great-linford.gov.uk** or see our blog **glpcsummer.wordpress.com**

NEW HOMES
heading for Linford Lakes?

Over forty years ago the clank and roar of gravel extraction near Newport Pagnell came to an end and a major restoration project began. Nature has since woven a rich tapestry of wildlife at Linford Lakes, and it now contains one of only two dedicated nature reserves in Milton Keynes.

Kingfishers, dragonflies and even otters are just some of the creatures who rely on this mosaic of habitats. According to County Bird Recorder, Andy Harding, it is "arguably the most important site in Buckinghamshire for birds."

So when Barratt Homes announced plans to build housing and a new Country Park in the area in "a joint venture with the Parks Trust", many locals were taken aback. As well as its potential impact on wildlife, there are questions about traffic, infrastructure and flooding.

Barratt's propose to build up to 250 homes between Oakridge Park and Redhouse Park, plus a new country park and "multi-use" visitor centre with up to 200 parking spaces. The country park would occupy most of the site (59 out of 73 hectares) and would arguably form a natural extension to the (long overdue) linear park promised to residents of Oakridge Park.

Nationally, the pressure is on to build more homes, but although 15,000 new homes are already planned for Milton Keynes, Simon James of DLP, Barratt's planning advisors, says the strategy is out of date. "It's a sustainable site," he says, "well-located to the rest of the city and the services within it." At this stage, he says, "Our task is to analyse any potential impact on drainage, road safety and wildlife, and resolve any issues. We will not submit a planning application that is not robust, in all regards."

However wildlife enthusiast Tony Bedford is not reassured. Tony is chair of the Friends of Hanson Environmental Study Centre (FoHESC). The Centre welcomes school parties and visitors to enjoy the 100-acre Nature Reserve in the heart of the lakes.

"The Nature Reserve's location within the Great Ouse wetland corridor, along with its surrounding buffer of rivers, lakes, meadows and trees, all contribute to its success; as does limited human activity," says Tony. "But this development would smash a large hole in the barrier and destroy a significant part of the habitat. Add to that three years of construction work and it will inevitably drive out species such as owls forever."

In an interview with North by NorthEast, Phil Bowsher, Head of Landscape Strategy for the Parks Trust, said "As MK continues to grow we want to see new parkland to go with it. As a charity, this is what we do; for the public benefit. Yes, we've been talking to Barratt's and come up with some consultation ideas for the parkland area. For a site that size there should perhaps be a visitor centre, toilets and car parks. But there's no joint venture. The only potential PT interest is a future one, if the development takes place. And that's a big 'if'."

The type of parkland it might be is still an open question. "Setting it up as a destination park might not be the best way," says Phil. "Barratt's have gone in at one extreme. Another extreme would be to set it up as a nature park. But does it justify that? I'm sure a lot of people might want to enjoy it as an open space. Should we provide for them? Can we balance the two? We have to see what comes out of the [environmental] studies and consultations."

"Clearly, the Linford Lakes complex is a special place," says Councillor David Stabler, of GLPC, "which is why it is officially designated as Open Countryside, a Wildlife Corridor and an Area of Attractive Landscape in the MK Local Plan. Quite apart from its ecological impact, I am surprised that Barratt's want to build up to the floodplain after all the bad news last winter."

To guide its response, GLPC has already adopted a series of principles:

- GLPC opposes piecemeal development which could impact the whole of Milton Keynes.
- Development should not adversely impact GLPC residents, services or put unacceptable strain on existing roads, schools, shops etc.
- New developments must adhere to MK Planning policy and not set a precedent for development outside the Core Strategy.

ABOVE: Egret at Linford Lakes **BELOW:** View from Hanson Nature Reserve towards site of proposed housing estate. Most of the trees would be felled. *Photos by Tony Bedford*

If you have any views, please contact GLPC via the Parish Office or the website.

RANGER'S Report

By Simon Bates

Clearing graffiti in Conniburrow, blitzing litter in Blakelands: time flies when you're having fun! It's hard to believe that it's two years since I became Parish Ranger. Parish councils are changing and my own role is certainly taking some exciting turns. With MK Council (MKC) changing too, our partnership grows ever stronger as we try to ensure residents feel safe, happy and proud of their neighbourhood.

One recent joint project was a "Dog poo spraying pilot" on the Redway from the Grand Union Canal through Downhead Park via the underpass into Downs Barn. We installed signs and a number of bag dispensers along the route so there were no excuses to break the law. Well, even I was shocked on our first day out. In just half a mile we spray-painted 110 of the offending piles! Serco moved in to clean the area and we will repeat the exercise to gauge its effectiveness, sharing our new-found knowledge with MKC's Enforcement team.

We are also on the track of speeders. I have just completed training with MKC Highways in the use of SIDs (Speed Indicator Devices). These are the signs that display a green smiley face if you are driving safely and a red frown if not! As well as reducing speed, it helps us identify which roads need particular attention.

Our spring 'Bike marking day' with Thames Valley Police was a great success with 31 residents bringing bikes along for security marking. Thanks to our local PcSo's Tony Holden and Zach Tidy for working through some rather large queues. Another event will take place later this year.

This summer your Ranger's calendar is busier than ever, with two neighbourhood Tidy Up Days each month, Summer of Fun events and the Community Festival to name a few. However my main aim is to visit every estate to complete a Local Environmental Quality survey. This helps me pick up new issues, schedule in any work I can do by myself (such as cleaning graffiti) and report any other findings to relevant partners. My mission, as always, is to ensure that our lovely parish receives as much 'TLC' as possible.

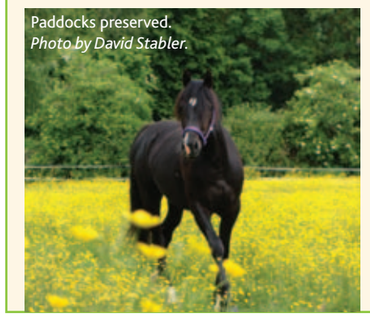
TOP: Bike marking at Neath Hill.

ABOVE LEFT: Blitz on dog fouling, Downs Barn.

ABOVE RIGHT: Redhouse Park residents join Tidy Up day.

"Unthinkable" Paddocks Project

The Parks Trust recently announced that it had dropped the idea of selling paddocks in Great Linford to fund parkland improvements. North by NorthEast met with the PT's Head of Landscape Strategy, Phil Bowsher, and Communications Manager, Nadir Farrell, to find out more.



Paddocks preserved.
Photo by David Stabler.

Q: Have you abandoned the idea completely or could it return?

PB: The odds of that happening are very low. The Trust put its head above the parapet with proposals to improve Manor Park and possibly sports facilities. But there just wasn't the support from the parish and community.

Q: PT said it had been 'contemplating what to some people is unthinkable' due to financial pressures, so has the situation improved?

PB: Yes. Our commercial properties took quite a hit in the recession, falling by about 30%, and that was a big driver to this whole idea. But after working on our plan to improve the long term financial position of the Trust, it looks better now than it did back in 2009.

Q: You estimated the cost of the Manor Park project at £2m. What was the value of the paddocks?

PB: To be totally honest we did some broad estimates but never got as far as doing a detailed financial appraisal. We always thought 'let's test the idea out and if we get support then we'll do the detailed number-crunching'. There might have been £2m surplus generated from the sale of the paddocks. But we never got beyond the ideas stage.

Q: But you invested quite a bit of effort in the Manor Park idea. How much did that cost?

PB: Including the leaflets and consultants approximately £25,000. That includes £15,000 for the Conservation Plan for Great Linford Manor, which is a piece of work we would have done anyway. It's one of our key areas of parkland and we understand it much better now.

Q: Has the public perception of the Parks Trust changed?

NF: In the wider public, we don't know, but we're doing market research over the summer so we'll test that out. In Great Linford a lot of people weren't aware that we are an entirely self-financed charity and don't cost taxpayers any money. So whilst people might have been worried or upset, it did give people a better understanding of why we do some of the things we do.

Full interview on GLPC website

news&views

why not send us your news & views?

CONNIBURROW 'BIG LOCAL' NEWS

By Mrs Charlie Davies, Community Development Worker

Big Local is a ground breaking project, funded by the National Lottery, which aims to achieve lasting change in 150 small areas across England. Conniburrow was awarded £1m to spend over ten years to make the area an even better place to live. Big Local Conniburrow is run by residents who alone decide how to spend the grant.

Happy days in Conniburrow.

After researching residents' views, the steering group has identified three priorities:

Conniburrow Pride:
To improve how we regard our estate and how it is perceived by others, to make it a place where people want to live, to encourage an active, happy and healthy community.

Social Cohesion:
To gather and enjoy each other's company, improve neighbourly relationships, address issues concerning young people, the elderly, those with disabilities and ethnic minorities.

Physical Infrastructure:
To improve the physical appearance of Conniburrow, encourage better maintenance, improve the parks and transport links.

These priorities are about to be submitted along with a plan and budget to the Local Trust for approval and release of the grant. Spread over ten years we recognise there is a limited amount we can do and we hope to find other partners to help make the money go further and build a better community.

Much has already happened: Fun Days, work with Southwood and Germander Park Schools and sports days with the MK Dons Sports Education Trust. Last year I joined the project as part-time community development worker and for the 'Year of Conniburrow 2014' we are running a variety of monthly events.

Any Conniburrow resident is welcome to attend our monthly meetings and we are looking for more citizens to join the group with responsibility for executing the plan. Even if you can only commit to a small amount of time we would like to hear from you. Contact Charlie Davies by phoning 07513 379492 or find out more via our website or Facebook page. www.biglocalconniburrow.btck.co.uk

Former Mayor Brian White with steering group members

"They shall not grow old..."

To help commemorate the men of Great Linford who served in the Great War, GLPC has given a parish grant of £400 to restore a Roll of Honour in St Andrew's Church, which was in sad need of repairs. The manuscript records the names of around 100 people who served in the war, with the names of the men who lost their lives picked out in gold. "It's a fine piece of calligraphy," says local volunteer Jill Clarke, who applied for the grant, "but over the years it had got water-damaged, the frame was broken, and it ended up hidden away at the back of the church. Thanks to the parish grant, we could send it to a professional restorer and we hope to return the roll of honour to its rightful place, beneath the war memorial plaque, in good time for August 4th." On that date, exactly a century ago, Britain entered the First World War. David Kent, a fellow volunteer, is also preparing a booklet on life in the village leading up to the war, with profiles of each of the fallen men. Any proceeds from selling the booklet will go towards upkeep of the historic church.

FESTIVAL FUN FOR ALL

Every June the Waterside Festival brings the grounds of Manor Park alive with music, crafts, food and fun in free event open to all. Depending on the weather up to 3,000 people visit Great Linford over the weekend and the GLPC grant of £2,000 provides security to ensure the safety of visitors and equipment. Anne Slee, festival secretary, says "The festival has something for everyone: live music, entertainment, dance, bookstalls and dog show in a very relaxed atmosphere, in a beautiful setting." Anne is one of a regular group of volunteers who work very hard to stage the event and keep it fresh with new elements, such as archery and a literary stage for the spoken word.

Fun at the Festival. Photo by Jamie Slee

"It costs about £25,000 to stage the event," says Anne, "and we just about break even. So donations such as the regular parish grant are essential to keep the Waterside Festival going."

andfinally...

a calendar of local events to look out for

JULY & AUGUST

Neighbourhood Plan Workshops

Drop-in any time from 2pm – 8pm.

Thursday 10 July
Great Linford Cricket Pavilion

Monday 14 July
Cross and Stable, Downs Barn

Tuesday 15 July
Salvation Army Hall, Conniburrow

Thursday 17th July
GLPC Office, Neath Hill

Summer of Fun
28 July – 29 August

More activities than ever before!
See inside section for details.

SEPTEMBER

Allotment Association Produce Show
Sunday 7 Sept

Memorial Hall, Great Linford.

Guerilla Gardening
Friday 12 Sept 10.00 – 12.00

Let's beautify a patch of public space!

OCTOBER

Apple Day at Downs Barn Orchard Sunday19 Oct

Celebrating the best fruit of the season.

PARISH RANGER DAYS

Join your friendly Ranger in a neighbourhood tidy up.

JULY Thursday 9 and 24

AUGUST Wednesday 6 and Friday 15

SEPTEMBER Wednesday 3 and Thursday 18

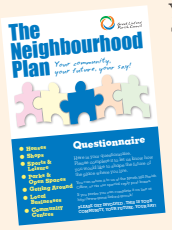
OCTOBER Wednesday 1 and Friday 17

NOVEMBER Wednesday 5 and Thursday 13

DECEMBER Wednesday 3 and Thursday 18

For an updated calendar of events please visit the website www.great-linford.gov.uk

YOUR NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN
Upcoming workshops



Your Neighbourhood Plan has got off to a great start. The questionnaire went live in April and over 600 households have responded so far. Typically only two or three percent of residents respond to these surveys but so far over 10% of households in some estates have replied.

Already, the initial results are proving useful, with clear patterns emerging on certain topics. For example, there is immensely strong support for protecting open space across all districts, while residents in new areas such as Redhouse Park have flagged up the need for more local shops and services.

After analysing all your replies the next important step will be the drop-in exhibitions and workshops in July (see calendar, left). This is for residents to review the survey conclusions, and to help us fine tune the ideas into a draft plan. More details of the workshops will be published shortly, so look out for our posters and information on the parish website. There is still a way to go, but with your help we are making big strides.

Great Locality
Proud Community

www.great-linford.gov.uk

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