

North**lo**y North**E**ast



News from your Parish Council

www.great-linford.gov.uk



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

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spring 2017

comment

Welcome

Welcome to our latest issue of North By North East. As Spring approaches, the nature-lovers amongst you will be looking forward to the new season's flowers and blossom. We do hope you can send in some photos of your favourite outdoor nature-spots in the local area.

A warm welcome too, to our six new Councillors! They have been with us for just a few weeks and are already getting stuck into the Parish work. There is an article on page 5 where they tell you about themselves and the wards each of them are serving.

It is really exciting to have a full-strength Councillor team. It will mean that all the areas of the Parish are now fully represented and that we can address more Parish issues and improvement projects.

We also have a new Office recruit Alex Nenadovic - you will meet him front of house when you come to the office.

Tremendous Tuesdays have really become established at the Parish Offices and provide a variety of free services and drop-in sessions - see pages five and eight of this issue for details.

Last comment: We do welcome you too, to join in our Ranger Days and TLC days and many of the other events that we have put together for residents, throughout the year. Get involved and you can help make a difference to your locality.

We hope you enjoy reading the rest of this Issue!



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North by NorthEast
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Swans on Peartree Pond,
picture by Alex Nenadovic

Approaching the MK Strategic Plan with eyes wide open



By Councillor Peter Widdowson

In my article in the last magazine, I explained the dilemma that the parish council would face following the reduction in Government funding for Milton Keynes Council (MKC) and the subsequent reduction in spending on the non-statutory services that they deliver.

Some parish councils are proposing to respond to the situation, by agreeing to take on services such as landscaping, and are increasing their precept (local tax) to fund these new activities. Great Linford Parish council has not responded in this way, as the costs of negotiating and maintaining a contract for landscaping would place an unsustainable strain on the Parish finances and resources. Also there would be the costs of acquisition and maintenance of the equipment and staff required, which are very considerable. Importantly, we do not have a mandate to undertake these responsibilities.

Nevertheless, MKC has now made clear the areas on which they will reduce

expenditure. These include litter-picking, both manual and mechanical, weed control and play area maintenance, including removal of dangerous litter.

GLPC are fortunate in having a Parish Ranger service which has enabled us to tackle the smaller problems of litter and environmental tidiness and we have provided in our budget for the coming year to expand that service.

We also plan to build on the successful Summer of Fun and Community Fun day activities and outreach to the local community, with such services as support for the Food Bank; hosting of the Citizen's Advice Service and the breakfast club.

These are the sensible and controlled expansion of services, which we already deliver and for which we are receiving favourable comment. To take on wider responsibilities for services currently delivered by MKC would require a substantial increase in the cost to the local population, for which we would need to have wider public endorsement. It is a subject which we hope to discuss with residents at the Annual Parish Meeting this May.

In view of the above, GLPC has resolved to raise the cost to the average Band D property in the coming 2017-8 financial year from £56.89 to £61.69 per year, an increase of £4.80.

ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

Monday
8th May
7:30pm

It is a statutory requirement that every parish holds an Annual Parish Meeting for members of the public to express their concerns on local matters.

The Meeting, is chaired by the Parish Council but it is a meeting of the parish. Residents are encouraged to come and raises questions about local concerns. If you have a question email the parish manager by 26th April and we will attempt to get answers.

As a parish, we will also make available as much information about the Milton Keynes cuts and their impact on our neighbourhood. An opportunity to tell all present how we as a community can deal with them.

See Facebook and website for more information.

BELOW: Parish Guardian Tom Brook wades in Peartree Pond.





CONNIBURROW Community Orchard

By P Fitzgerald



Big Local
Conniburrow
Partnership

Did you know that there were originally big plans for the open spaces in Conniburrow? These included some wacky ideas yet one that stood out was the creation of the Community Orchard. Big Local Conniburrow (BLC) agreed that this should be a project of benefit to the residents of Conniburrow and works are well underway to make this happen.

Already construction has started on the site, readying it for the planting of fifty fruit trees, including apple, cherry, plum plus other soft fruits. This is expected to be complete by April 2017.

Also in the plans are a seating area, raised planters and wild flowers and a herb garden. It is a vision that will provide not only a brand new space to be proud of in Conniburrow, but also a place for residents to enjoy and to get involved with.

There will of course be some disruptions in the surrounding area whilst the works are carried out. BLC apologises in advance for any inconveniences caused in this short time. The benefits when the orchard is completed will be 'fruitful' for sure!

The Orchard will definitely become a jewel in the future of Conniburrow, so

why not join and help make a difference! Remember 'ordinary' people can do extraordinary things! Together we can make things happen!

The BLC would love to hear from residents that would like to become a Friend of the Community Orchard, for further details please get in touch by email: Biglocalconniburrow@gmail.com or call 07562 121732.

You can also follow the progress of the Community Orchard via their Facebook page: <http://biglocalconniburrow.btck.co.uk/CommunityOrchard>

What can YOU get involved in for YOUR community?

Be a Parish Guardian – no qualifications necessary!

Volunteers (Parish Guardians) from the community help Ranger Simon tidy-up neglected areas, improving the environment for everyone. You are the 'eyes and ears' of our community. Anyone can be a Parish Guardian, no qualifications necessary! Some of the projects being undertaken this year are:

Willen Park Some of the 600+ hedging plants and trees, obtained free from the Woodland Trust, have been used to replant the maze at Hammond Crescent play park area. On hearing of this

project, one of our lovely Parish Guardians offered to make a seating area to replace the old benches, using a tree trunk donated by the Parks Trust. Working together, this park is slowly returning to how it once was.

Fossil Group In April, volunteers from Fossil Group will be spending a whole week working with the Parish Council to help improve neglected areas of the community. Look out for us on Blakelands, Conniburrow and Downs Barn. If the company you work for runs a similar scheme, there are plenty of areas within the Parish that

would appreciate the attention. With large numbers working as a team we can really make a difference to a neglected area.

If you have a special skill or interest that you'd like to share with the community, we would be happy to help you. Information on all activities can be found on our website www.great-linford.gov.uk or Facebook. Why not sign up for our monthly eNewsletter for information sent direct to your inbox? If you have something to offer or would like to help out, please contact office@great-linford.gov.uk

Take part in Ranger Days
See back page for details.

**Join in the Fun:
Summer of Fun
24th July - 25th August**

New activities this year could include kayaking, motorbike safety training for under 17s and Learn Ukulele. Keep an eye out in early July for the full brochure on the website.

**Community Fun Day
Sunday 6th August, 10am-5pm**

Live music from Freight Train Riders, dancing, floating shops, stands, stalls and family fun! If you'd like to be part of the entertainment programme, drop us a line. Especially welcome are community clubs and groups, so you can showcase the talents of your members!

Meet your new COUNCILLORS

1 Ernest
Councillor Ernest (Ernie) Butler,
Conniburrow

Ernie says "I would like to help people involved in youth projects and support people who need it - making things better if possible. I love the walks you can take in and around MK and enjoy visiting the shopping centre".

Ernie was also a Parish Councillor at his previous location, prior to his move to MK.

2 Nellie
Councillor Nellie Hyacinthe,
Downs Barn

20 years ago, when I first visited MK, I heard a lot about the 'Concrete Cows'. The Milton Keynesians seemed quite passionate and proud of these cows, and I was like - have they not seen real cows, really! Little did I know I would equally end up falling in love with them and the beautiful green spaces this city has to offer.

As a Parish Councillor, I will try my best to work hard and contribute positively towards Community Welfare, Cohesion, Social Inclusion and Integration, areas I am passionate about, and which I believe can help improve the well-being of the residents of the Great Linford Parish and also those of all residents of Milton Keynes.

3 Martin
Councillor Martin Burgess,
Neath Hill

I moved here from Surrey with my wife Susan around three years ago. I am a confirmed 'petrol-head' and am interested in anything automotive! We have a Rumanian rescue dog, which you will see us walking daily around Neath Hill and adjoining areas. I want to concentrate on the outdoors and hopefully find ways to encourage and include the disadvantaged members of the Parish.

Redways are a great idea here. They keep pedestrians and cyclists safe and it encourages exercise. Where else can you travel for miles safely and access a variety of facilities a walk or cycle ride away!?

4 Teresa
Councillor Teresa Martignetti,
Downhead Park & Willen Park North

Teresa says "I have joined the parish as a Councillor, because it is a rewarding and worthwhile way to help my local community. My goal is to be an effective Councillor, one that has a real interest in the residents and I am very keen to learn and get stuck in."

I have been a hair stylist and have also run successful community groups including a baby/toddlers group and run one for mums to help them meet with others".

5 Steve
Councillor Steve Neate,
Bolbeck Park and Pennyland

I have been a resident in the Parish for just under 29 years, during this time I have seen the area mature and become an extremely pleasant place to live.

Volunteering has been common in my life: helping on the Ranger days, bringing news to the blind, helping people improve their driving skills and delivering items for the NHS. I even find time to work my allotment. As a qualified account I have been involved in manufacturing and the charity sector.

I want to give something back to the community and use my skills and experience to help others in the Parish.

6 Jimmy
Councillor Jimmy El-Zamek,
Conniburrow

I am keen to help the community in any way I can. I am currently the treasurer of Conniburrow Big Local.

I have been in management for many years, dealing with problem solving, working under pressure and helped to develop staff - I hope to bring these skills to good use with GLPC.





Community Chest

Tremendous Tuesdays!

All held at the Parish Offices

The Breakfast Club

1st Tuesday of every month
9am - 11.30am

- Practical advice
- Tackling issues
- Get to know people in your community
- Sharing cultures, experiences and knowledge
- Empowering you to improve your lives
- Facilitating new groups
- Network

The Breakfast Club's principle is to get people together to share ideas and concerns. Also this will spark new ventures.

We have held three sessions and the outcome has been a Sewing Club and a Guitar Club, and a closer connection and support for the CAB, Food Bank and Smoking Cessation.

What else do you think the community could benefit from? What do you want, need to learn? Come along and find out!



The Sewing Club

Every Tuesday 1pm-3pm

- Meet new people
- Share cultures, experiences and knowledge
- Share / learn new skills
- Gain confidence
- Meet Jackie, Lynn & Mary! They are residents, just like you!



Weekly Tuesday drop-in sessions:

Citizens' Advice Bureau (CAB) 10am-1pm

- No appointment necessary (just turn up) clinic.

Food Bank 11.10am-11.30am

- Distribution of food parcels.
- The office is also a collection point for donated foods during our opening hours.

Smoking Cessation Clinic 2pm-4pm

- Appointment required.

Watch this space for future community groups, suggested by and run by you!

- Basic Breathing for Relaxation Techniques
- IT Support Workshops
- Guitar & Singing
- Speakers Club
- Basic Cookery Skills
- Book exchange

The Parish Council can provide an area to meet for the initial start-up of new groups. If you are interested in helping to set up and continue with the running of a group, contact Ruth Panther, office@great-linford.gov.uk

news&views

why not send us your news & views?

We welcome your views. Please send your letters to:

POST
Parish Council Offices
Great Linford House
1 St Leger Court
Great Linford
MK14 5HA

EMAIL
parish.manager@
great-linford.gov.uk

MARSH DRIVE DEVELOPMENT

Further to months of research and public consultation, we received a consultant report on the improvement and expansion of the Marsh Drive Sports Ground.

This initial masterplan will now be developed further and a business case is being produced to ensure the proposals can be afforded and will be used to maximum benefit by the community.

We would like to thank all members of the community who took the time to contribute to the consultations and helped to shape the proposals. We hope residents will continue to share their thoughts and suggestions as the project moves on.

MK50

To celebrate the MK50 we have a project in hand to work with third parties to improve and install new benches and new planting in Hammond Crescent and Blakelands – watch out for the dates on the web or FB and get involved

GYOSEI ART TRAIL 2

A walk and talk session along our Gyosei Art Trail was one of the recent events celebrating MK50.

From the feedback we continue to receive, it is bringing pleasure to more and more people both from the immediate communities

through which it passes and from others from further afield who discover it.

People continue to ask, "Are there going to be any more?" We certainly hope so, but the project extension is currently on hold and there are no immediate plans to add to the existing trail or extend it. Why?

We already have a list of potential artworks and sites, some of which will enable members of the public to participate in creating the artworks themselves – watch this space!

If you have a talent for fund-raising and would like to help, please contact the office.

Summerhayes Lights

£11,250 is the grand total for this year's Summerhayes Christmas Lights display - in total £57,000 raised since 2004. Well done to all involved.

There are inconveniences to some residents with the amount of vehicles going in & out of the street during this time. If anyone can come up with a solution as to how the traffic can be handled, please share it with us.

MAKING PLASTIC MATS FOR THE HOMELESS



Freezing nights in January turned our thinking to the plight of the homeless. Whilst we can't provide them a place to stay, we can try and make life a bit more comfortable for them. Workshops on how to make plastic sleeping mats from old plastic bags brought the community together.

T'n'C Afternoon

Teas and coffees at the Cross & Stable Church, Downs Barn Boulevard. A coffee session instigated by the Parish Council with Community Action:MK gives you the chance to get out of the house, meet people from your local area and enjoy some occasional guests – MKDonsSet Armchair Aerobics! Join us for T'n'C on Wednesdays from 1.15pm-2.45pm.

BELOW: Dragonfly sculpture on the Gyosei Art Trail, photo by Tony Bedford



BELOW: Summerhayes Christmas lights



and finally...

Want to try something **DIFFERENT?**

Speakers, quizzes, meetings, outings, events – why not join the WI?

Great Linford WI was formed in 1982 and currently has 30 members. A friendly group, always keen to welcome new members, to join in with their annual programme which involves a selection of speakers covering a wide range of subjects, social evenings, quizzes, Spring and Harvest Suppers, etc.

Supporting and participating in local events such as the Parish Council's Community Fun Day and Apple Day for fundraising purposes, the WI also have a book and jigsaw stall at their monthly meetings.

The Buckinghamshire Federation of WIs issues a monthly newsletter with interesting outings and

events to attend, together with news from other WIs within the county. More information on the WIs within Buckinghamshire can be found on their website - <http://www.bucksfwi.org.uk/>

The GLWI meets monthly on the 2nd Wednesday at 7.30pm, meetings are held at Fulwell Court, St. Leger Drive, Great Linford, MK14 5HB. A Group Meeting is held twice a year hosted by a different WI within the group which includes North Crawley, Olney, Ravenstone and Newport Pagnell.

So why not pop along and visit your local WI before you decide if you would like to join. Please contact President, Mary Horne on 07940 299504 if you would like further information.

theWI
INSPIRING WOMEN



Local events to look out for

Join Simon, our friendly Parish Ranger, for a neighbourly Tidy Up day.

We supply equipment and cups of tea! Just wear suitable clothes.

Ranger Days are held on a Wednesday between 10.30am – 12.30pm on a different estate each month.

TLC Days target specific areas of concern and are held on different days of the week, between 10.30am – 12.30pm.

All event details can be found on our website www.great-linford.gov.uk



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