

North**by** North**East**



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

contacts

GLPC Parish Councillors, the wards they represent and their contact details.

All Councillor email addresses: firstname.surname@great-linford.gov.uk

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Great Locality
Proud Community

spring 2019

comment

Will you stand up to make a difference?

As you are already reading this issue of NorthByNorthEast, you obviously take an interest in your community. But would you consider working as a parish councillor for the good of our locality?

All parish councillors are elected for a four year term, and stand down in election year, which for Great Linford Parish Council is 2019. We are now calling on residents to stand in the upcoming local elections. Some councillors will stand for re-election, but we want to hear from residents who might be considering the role for the first time.

Could this be the position for you?

Councillors act as the voice of our community, and represent the interests of those who live in your neighbourhood. As a councillor you can make a real difference to the area; by engaging with residents, local groups and businesses to find out their needs; by making decisions on which services and projects the council should take forward; and getting involved to ensure the services are meeting your community's needs.

You might like to put yourself forward, but think, 'I'm not sure I could spare the time'. Actually, research shows that councillors need to spend an average of three hours a week on council work – and that includes attending meetings and speaking with residents.

Great Linford Parish Council encompasses 12 wards, with the number of seats dependant upon population. Our parish has a total of 20 seats. You can represent where you live, or any of the other 11 areas. In order to stand for election, you need to be over 18; a British, Commonwealth or European Union citizen and a registered elector in the Parish.

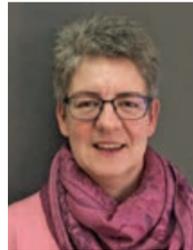
The role of a councillor comes with real responsibility, but in return you get great satisfaction by working directly for the good of the area where you live.

Have we persuaded you to stand for election?

If you are interested, you need to move quickly – the deadline for nomination papers to be with the returning officer at Milton Keynes Council is 4pm on Wednesday, April 3.

Elections will be held on Thursday, May 2, 2019, and all elected councillors will be required to attend the Annual Parish Council Meeting to be signed in on Monday, May 6, 2019. Contact parish manager Eirwen Tagg by calling 01908 606613 or emailing parish.manager@great-linford.gov.uk

We look forward to hearing from you.



Eirwen Tagg
Parish Manager

www.great-linford.gov.uk

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North by NorthEast

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Shire Horse by Andre Kay
Photo by Wendy Searle.



Budgeting to benefit EVERYONE

Peter Widdowson, Parish Councillor for Giffard Park & Blakelands shines a light on the Parish Council budget, the precept and explores what it means to you, the resident.

When you receive your Council Tax bill, the amount you pay is itemised to show where the main amounts of money are destined for: Milton Keynes Council (MKC), the police and fire services and your local council, Great Linford Parish Council (GLPC).

The amount shown as payable to the local council is known as the precept.

The total local budgetary requirement (the budget) is agreed by your local councillors in a budget meeting in December. The requirement is funded by income and the precept and if appropriate, reserves, which reduces the precept required from residents.

The budget covers the costs of running and maintaining the properties; Green spaces; sports grounds and allotments that are managed by Great Linford Parish Council.

It includes costs for the staff in the Parish office and our two rangers who keep the Parish tidy and deal with local environmental issues. Our councillors are not paid for their services.

The rest of the budget is used to provide community support activities and events which the Parish Council sees as essential for assisting residents.

The problems faced by Milton Keynes Council, which has increasing demands in the areas of Social Care and Education in particular, mean it is less able to carry out all the additional activities we have taken for granted.

For example, the landscape maintenance budget has been cut by more than 50%.

We have written in earlier editions about the pressure from Milton Keynes Council for local councils to shoulder more of the burden of service provision. Your council hasn't decided to take on services requiring large capital investment or contractual costs, such as landscaping, but the threat remains.

Such a departure would incur a substantial increase in the precept we ask you to pay each year.

Support for charities who supplement the Council's activities has also reduced, yet the need has increased. Great Linford Parish Council has stepped in where the need is affecting our own residents directly.

We already host the Citizen Advice Bureau and runs its 'Breakfast Club' providing opportunities for local support organisations to make themselves available and to explain their roles.

Increasingly, Parish office staff see their role as 'signposting' people - directing them to where they may find help. A new initiative is to support the training of mental health counsellors because we are aware of an increasing need for this service (particularly among young people) and the shortage of counsellors to cope with demand.

We are also aware that places to meet are an important part of the picture.

Active community groups that support people need places to meet to bear down on loneliness, encourage uplifting activity and foster new skills and enjoyment.

It is clear to us that there is insufficient capacity in the parish for meeting places and we are pursuing the provision of an additional meeting place, drawing on money that arises from the development of new areas such as Redhouse Park.

For the year 2019-20 we have set a precept for a Band D property at £64.60 per year, which is an increase of £2.44 or 4%.

Your input in the direction we take is important. In May, your councillors are required to stand for re-election. Make sure you make your views known. The Annual Parish meeting is also an opportunity to do so.

PROPERTY MEETING PLACES COUNSELLING PRECEPT EVENTS COMMUNICATION GREEN SPACES COUNCILLORS RANGERS LANDSCAPING ALLOTMENTS SPORTS GROUNDS YOUR VIEWS BREAKFAST CLUB COMMUNITY SUPPORT

GLPC ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

?? MAY, ?PM AT THE PARISH OFFICE



The benefits of VOLUNTEERING in the community



Whether you have time on your hands, or can only spare an hour or so every now and then, volunteering is a great way to meet people and build your self-confidence, and of course it benefits the area that you live in.

It's a win-win, really, as Joanna Pain discovered when she decided to volunteer in our community.

"I was so fed up and just needed to do something," she told NorthbyNorthEast, explaining her reason for getting involved.

Joanna was keen to get out and about again following an illness which had left her feeling isolated and pretty fed up.

It wasn't the easiest of decisions for her to join the parish rangers on a tidy-up day, but she was so pleased that she decided to take the plunge.

"It was difficult to attend, but once I got there I was fine," she admits, "I managed to have some great chats and found out more about the Parish Council." Through conversations with the rangers, she was asked if she would like to take on some administration work with the Parish Council, and she jumped at the chance.

"I'm doing it to get back out there, to build my self-confidence, and to be around people, and hopefully find out what work I am capable of undertaking," she said.

For Joanna, the benefits of donating time are clear, and she would urge anyone to consider giving it a go too. She said: "Getting involved in your community can only be a good thing; it can help alleviate loneliness, and listening to others can help take your mind off your own problems for a little while, and help you to see things in a new light.

"I am hoping I will get to learn some new skills and have a sense of achievement," she added. "Having a purpose in life is important and sometimes we need to rediscover that purpose. Doing the litter pick had a knock-on effect and brought me another opportunity. Who knows, a few hours admin a week might bring other things into my life and I hope it will help me find that sense of purpose that we all need..."

To find out more about volunteering visit www.great-linford.gov.uk

TOP: GLPC volunteers.

ABOVE LEFT: Joanna Pain.

Just what is the Strategic Plan?

Parish Manager Eirwen Tagg explains a little about a very important document.



During a recent Breakfast Club meeting, some of the residents asked us how the parish council plans ahead and how we decide what to spend money on.

The answer lies in the four-year Strategic Plan.

This document is hugely important; setting out the key priorities on issues raised by residents, and the external impacts that may affect our neighbourhoods and communities.

One of the aims of the plan is 'to nurture the environment of our community, particularly its landscaping and visual appearance.' We know this is important to people because it is one of the most commonly raised issues.

As Milton Keynes Council continues to reduce services, the result is clear to see; weeds are breaking through paths, and litter and leaves aren't being swept as frequently, which means that the areas are dirty, unsafe and look a mess.

As a result, this year we are looking to work in partnership with other parishes to invest in weed spraying and road sweeping equipment.

The Strategic Plan also acts as a reference document about your estates.

It gives information about the parish council operation, defines the neighbourhood planning policies, and shows the link that we have with other official bodies that impact our communities. It records the work we have done so far, and what we hope to undertake in the future.

The Strategic Plan is certainly not bedtime reading, and is a very weighty document.

But for anyone wanting to know more about how their money is used where they live, it will provide some answers.

If you would like to know more, please drop me a line at parish.manager@great-linford.gov.uk

Revealing, Reviving & Restoring GREAT LINFORD MANOR PARK



Great Linford Manor Project Coordinator Darrel Canvin updates us on The Parks Trust's plans for the area in the year ahead.

In July 2018, we were awarded £3.1million by the Heritage Lottery Fund to Reveal, Revive and Restore Great Linford Manor Park. Since then we have been busy working to ready the project for 2019.

Planning Application

We at the Parks Trust are working in response to comments received on our planning application. We are preparing revised proposals for some aspects of the restoration plan. This plan aims to promote accessibility, restore key features and provide interpretation. It is envisioned that planning permission will be acquired in Spring 2019.

Getting involved

The Friends of Great Linford Manor Park, established in 2018, is a volunteer group dedicated to helping promote and steward the park. They do this through practical volunteering, helping deliver and implement activities, and by representing the views of the local community in the project. If you would like to find out more or get involved, email the group at friends.glmp@gmail.com

Event highlights

During the year, there will be around 80 events taking place at the Park including art sessions, scavenger hunts and a canal boat ride. These are mostly small in scale and designed to cater to a variety of local audiences, enabling visitors to experience the rich heritage of the park.

Some events to look out for are:

- Community Archaeology Project, April 8-13
- May Day, May 4
- Heritage Open Day, September 22

If you have any questions about the project, please email GLMP@theparkstrust.com or call on 01908 233600.

ABOVE: North Pavilion surrounding by Daffodils in Spring



A QUICK CLICK TO BETTER RESULTS



It is important that Great Linford Parish Council is able to communicate effectively with all our residents.

This newsletter is one way to keep parishioners in touch with developments and issues, but on a daily basis the parish council website should be a quick and easy go to.

Last year we reviewed the website, and decided it needed to be refreshed to make it more user-friendly.

The website should be the central hub when it comes to communicating with residents.

So we set about finding a more simple, cost effective solution. The new site, which launched last month, has a new operating system that is fresh, uncluttered, and easy to navigate, with simple to use icons.

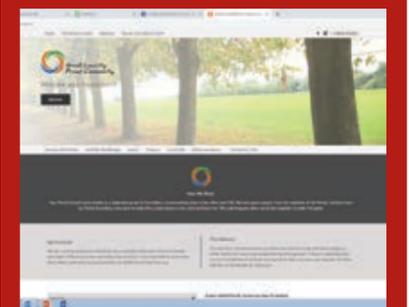
Finding the information you need now takes fewer clicks, and is an easier process.

Furthermore, the new site can be viewed correctly using smart phones too – a feature that wasn't previously possible.

The new website also allows us to integrate and update our social media accounts (Facebook, Twitter and blogs) meaning that you can check the latest news in one place.

It also offers live feeds to other sites too, including Milton Keynes Council's 'Report It' page, and it offers user login for local groups including allotment holders, parish guardians and the Great Linford football and tennis clubs.

Please click to www.great-linford.co.uk and investigate the changes.



We would welcome your comments and suggestions for improvement or new content moving forward.

Great Linford Tennis Club – SERVING THE COMMUNITY

Great Linford Parish Council (GLPC) are delighted to have renewed our partnership with Great Linford Tennis Club (GLTC) with a new agreement which gives the tennis club the security of a new 10 year lease and substantially reduces the cost of maintaining the facilities to council tax payers.

The new agreement means that the cost of club membership has needed to increase so money can be ring-fenced to ensure that the courts, lights and other essential assets are maintained in top condition. But even so, Great Linford Tennis Club remains one of the best value for money tennis clubs in Milton Keynes and the surrounding area.

GLTC have committed to working with the parish council and the local community to ensure the tennis club is open to all GLPC residents and to providing an introduction to the game of tennis for everyone, regardless of age or ability and to providing low cost coaching at all age levels.

In turn, GLPC have made additional toilet facilities available along with access to changing and meeting rooms.

Going forward GLPC hope that - dependent on funding and planning considerations - as part of general improvements to Marsh Drive Sports facilities, we will be able to work with GLTC to provide improved court surfaces along with new changing and recreational facilities.



“Great Linford Tennis Club offers opportunities for players of all ages and abilities,” said coach Matt Evans. “The courts are available for members and non-members (through pay and play) year round and we always love to see new players on our courts”.

Social play runs every Thursday at 7pm with our adult club night where adult players are welcome to come along and meet our regular players.

Coaching with head coach Matt Evans and club coaches Sue Evans and Pete Higgs takes place throughout the year for a range of abilities, catering for both children and adults with a range of weekly coaching and holiday camps.

Details of where to find GLTC, what the club offers and how to join can all be found on the website: greatlinfordtennisclub.co.uk

why not send us your news & views?

WORK ON THE HINDU TEMPLE CONTINUES

Regular readers of NorthByNorthEast will have seen the feature on the Hindu Temple and Community Centre in the last edition.

The new space had been informally known as the Tamil Temple, however this has now been amended to the aforementioned Hindu Temple. “‘Tamil Temple’ was not appropriate,” said Dr Mylvaganam Veeravahu, from the Milton Keynes Murugan Temple Trust. “Tamil is a South Indian language and there are large numbers of Tamil speaking Christians, Muslims, Hindus and other religious groups. This new title is more fitting.”

Work has been continuing on the site at Glazier Drive in Neath Hill in recent months, although it has taken slightly longer than envisaged.

It is now hoped the building will be up and running by April, dependent on the progress of any internal work necessary to complete the project.

As previously reported, the space will be used for daily prayer meetings, religious services, to celebrate family occasions, host clubs for toddlers and Senior Citizens, cultural classes and yoga and meditation services.

NEW CHAPTER FOR THE LITTLE BOOKSHOP

Two years after the Little Bookshop at Great Linford Local Centre closed its doors, the community has rallied round and the doors have

now opened on a totally refurbished meeting place.

Crowd-funding and grants plus funding via the Co-op, and a huge effort by local building firm Evolution and a team of volunteers has resulted in the ‘bookshop’ café being totally modernised.

It now boasts a meeting area to chat and share community news, a children’s reading area for storytelling, new disabled toilet and an area for making refreshments.

There is also a separate meeting and activity room can also be booked at friendly rates, with access to GigaFast broadband, printer, copier, laminator (friendly fees applicable) and usb plug sockets!

Several groups are already using the meeting room for crafts, poetry, story-telling and IT & science classes.

“This has been a major local effort” says Alan Senior, local resident and organiser. “People really missed the Little Bookshop as was and so we have tried to create a similar friendly venue but with a facelift and some modernisation. To have the very first Gigabit Café in Europe is quite a proud claim for our community. If we can get grown-ups helping kids with reading and the enjoyment of books, whilst the younger generation share IT and computing skills with their older neighbours, that could help to bridge a generation gap and really bring the community together,” he added.

Future plans for the unit include a community fridge and longer opening hours but this can only succeed with the help of volunteers from

the community, after all it is a community space!

Currently a small management team and a roster of volunteers run the café with limited opening on weekdays and on Saturday mornings (to start with!).

The Little Bookshop can be found at 2A St Ledger Drive, Great Linford Local Centre, Milton Keynes, MK14 5HA. For more information, volunteer opportunities or to book the room (available at £10 per session) drop an email to thelittlebookshopcafe@gmail.com Details of opening times and activities can be found on Facebook [thelittlebookshop](https://www.facebook.com/thelittlebookshop) and website.

NEATH HILL PARKING ISSUES CAUSE CONCERN FOR RESIDENTS

Inconsiderate parking at the entrance of mews, car parking spaces being utilised by commercial vehicles, and residents preferring not to make use of allocated garages has led to significant parking issues in parts of Neath Hill.

Areas causing particular concern include Currier Drive, Serjeants Green, Glazier Drive, Armourer Drive and parts of Tower Drive.

On occasions some areas have been missed on rubbish collection day, simply because badly parked cars have caused an obstruction and made the roads impassable by the refuse trucks. More than a dozen collection dates have been missed during the past two years.

Neath Hill resident Paul Letch said: “People parking diagonally, and parking on blind corners obstructs the

junctions, which results in a hazard to pedestrians and school children. Brooksward’s and St Monicas’ school children use the routes daily and until something changes, there is an accident waiting to happen.”

Paul believes that a few changes will make a big difference.

Milton Keynes Council (MKC) is responding to the concerns, and carried out an initial consultation process last year.

During the parking review which concluded on September 7, the council received a large response from Neath Hill residents. As a result of the comments made during the consultation period it has now prepared a consultation report and its recommendations moving forward.

Paul Harrison, MKC’s Network TRO Manager, said: “The council is carrying out a further consultation on the recommendations, and a letter and plan showing the revised proposals will be sent to all of the affected residents in Neath Hill. Milton Keynes Council would like to take this opportunity to thank the residents for their participation in the initial consultation and for their continuous support in seeking a solution to the parking and road safety concerns in Neath Hill.”

Anyone wanting to speak to someone at MKC about the parking review is asked to direct their enquiries to paul.harrison@milton-keynes.gov.uk

The consultation report will soon be made available on the Great Linford Parish Council website.

‘It’s 30 for a REASON!’



Back in June 2017, residents approached community officer Ruth Panther about concerns they had with road safety on St Leger Drive in Great Linford.

Ruth then began working with the Milton Keynes Council Traffic Officers to see how to address the issues, and was introduced to the Speedwatch Campaign.

Speedwatch has been trialled all over the country; it involved residents on a voluntary basis monitoring and collating details of vehicle speed on roads in their neighbourhoods.

It sends a message that speeding isn’t wanted in the community, and it captures information of those that don’t keep to the legal limits for the police to tackle.

Several active residents have since petitioned Milton Keynes Council (MKC) Cabinet with the support of Councillor Walker to raise their concerns about St Leger Drive.

A small group of residents have since pursued the options with Milton Keynes Council.

The data collated from Speedwatch doesn’t indicate a road safety issue that could be dealt with by road layout changes, so there is no definitive answer to resolving the problem so far.

GLPC and the volunteers will now continue with Speedwatch to get the message across that ‘It’s 30 for a reason.’

Temporary signs will also help get that message across to all road users.

We are looking at Speed Indication Devices (SIDs) too, which will encourage people to watch their speed.

MKC have proposed to put up £26k for some road safety initiative – this has yet to be finalised in the budget meeting, but hopefully the money can be used by the professionals to help residents feel safer.

Thanks to those residents who got involved with GLPC, Cllr Walker and also to Cllr Minns who is newly on board with the campaign.

If you want to get involved please contact Ruth at office@great-linford.co.uk

and finally...

BIG LOCAL

supports community cohesion

Big Local Conniburrow is one of 150 groups operating nationwide, which have been set up to improve community cohesion, revamp the environment and foster pride in the locality.

In short, Big Local Conniburrow wants to create opportunities for residents, and it has been given a hefty sum to help it achieve those priorities; the scheme has been awarded one million pounds of lottery money.

Conniburrow residents benefit from a hub in the heart of the community (at 34 Bramble Avenue) which offers regular activities; Creatives can show their flair with a drawing class, a coffee morning gives people the chance to connect and natter, and a weekly weight loss group is run by Why Weight.

A new 'Crafty Cuppa' session started in January, which lets adults take part in craft activities, while their children are safely cared for at the Conniburrow Children's Centre.

Since the inception of the Big Local initiative, Conniburrow has benefited from the creation of an orchard with a selection of fruit trees and raised beds, which is open to all members of the community to enjoy.



Regular fun days, events and excursions are held throughout the year, and if you fancy freeing your inner singer, getting involved with the community choir is a great way to start.

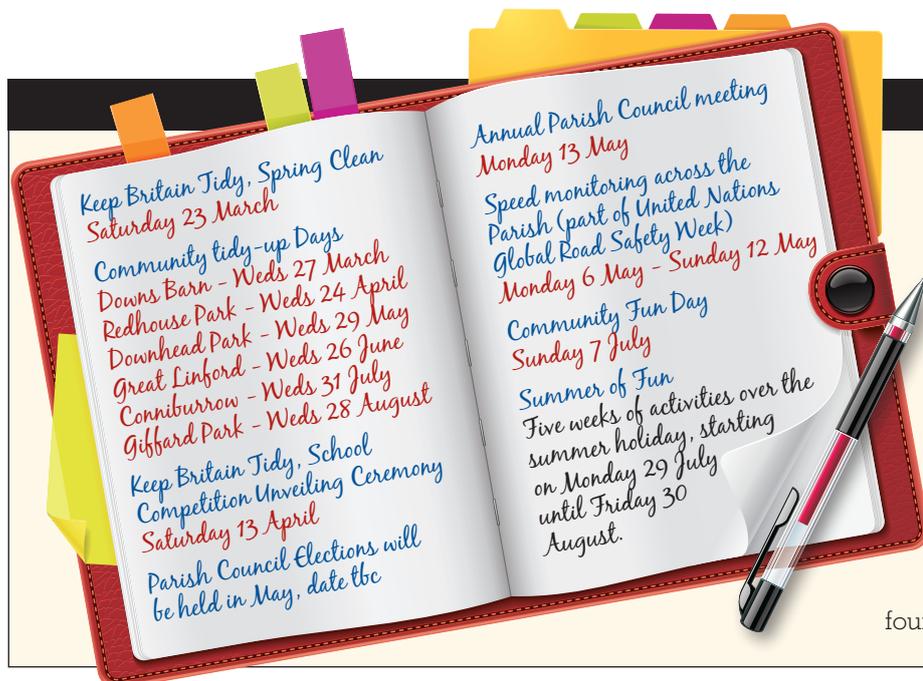
Perhaps you are a local resident or part of a group who has an idea for a project that would benefit the wider community? Big Local is able to award small monetary grants too, so go and have a chat.

"BLC welcomes everyone whether from Conniburrow or any other part of MK," said Emma El-Badaoui, community mobiliser with Big Local Conniburrow.

"If you would like to enjoy some of the activities we have available, share suggestions regarding any local issues or need information or advice, please pop in, we would be happy to see you."

A partnership meeting is also held at the premises on the first Monday of every month.

For more information on Conniburrow Big Local
call 07519 121213.



Local events to look out for

Join Rangers Wendy and Steve, for a neighbourly Tidy-Up Day.

Spotted an area that needs a tidy?

Let us know! Help us support the community with a tidy-up. We supply equipment and refreshments, just wear suitable clothes.

Perhaps your company supports community action days and would want to work with us to help 'love where you live'.

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



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