

Great Linford Parish Council News & Views

Issue Five

March 2004

The Parish Council is now moving into a very exciting new phase as it prepares to open its first ever office at Neath Hill Local Centre. The site is very well situated as the central point in a large area that covers ten estates, and its primary aim is to provide a walk-in centre where residents can speak face-to-face with the Parish Council.

As a result of having a fixed office base we also hope to be able to enable residents to participate more actively - with information on facilities for hire, local events and activity groups. We hope to be a drop-in local centre for the Thames Valley Police area beat Officers, and have a meeting space for smaller groups within the Parish.

Whether as a contact point for Neighbourhood Watch Groups, a reporting centre for fly-tipping, graffiti and defective street lighting or just as a source of local knowledge and assistance it is hoped that the new office will make the Parish Council more

SOMETHING TO SAY?
If you have any material or wish to express an opinion in the GLPC News & Views (quarterly) then email it to editor@greatlinfordparish.co.uk or post it to: News & Views, 32 Sandy Close, Great Linford, MK14 5EE

accessible to its residents
You may have seen this project mentioned in the recent precept letter circulated by the Council - and the good news is that even with this year's increase the GLPC precept is still substantially lower than similarly-sized Parishes in the area! We're doing our best to give good value and this new Office is just one of the initiatives we are currently working on - look out for more developments in future issues of the newsletter!

*David Lovesy
Editor and Councillor*

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This publication is not affiliated with any other group or organisation, whether political, religious or

RE-DEVELOPMENT OF GYOSEI SCHOOL AT WILLEN PARK

The Parish Council was asked to give its views on the outline planning application to pull down the former Gyosei School, and re-develop the site as a 250 unit ExtraCare village. As part of the outline application the former school playing fields are to be used as a development site for another 170 houses and flats

This has been a difficult issue on which to comment, as there have been many conflicting reports about the nature of the scheme and the involvement of several the parties in the development. Some clear details emerged, which enabled the Parish Council to formally comment to Milton Keynes Council's Planning Department.

The Parish Council considered the following facts -

- 1 The former Gyosei School buildings are owned by English Partnerships [EP]. EP has made no attempt whatsoever to sell the school since buying it from the Japanese owners in March 2003.
- 1 Except for the school buildings, all the other land, [some 11 acres] has been owned by Milton Keynes Council [MKC] since April 1992. On this same date the playing field land, part of the 4,000 acres of Linear Park land, was leased to the Parks Trust for 999 years.
- 1 The Parks Trust lease requires that the land should be used "as recreational, educational and leisure time occupation of the public and for the benefit of the inhabitants of Milton Keynes"
- 1 The ExtraCare village will have 150 flats for sale; some 50 shared ownership and some 50 at an economic rent in a 5-storey development. All sales and tenancies will have to be made through a Registered Social Landlord and will

then have to be approved by EP and MKC.

- 1 The major source of investment to develop the ExtraCare village will come from the sale of the 150 flats in the ExtraCare village and the 170 2 and 3 storey flats and houses to be built on the playing fields.
- 1 Noise from vehicles on Portway and Brickhill Street is predicted to be such that under planning guidance issued by the government, "planning permission should not be granted", unless alternative sites are not available.
- 1 If planning permission were to be granted, Consultants recommend that a 2-metre high, motorway type fence will have to be built along the full length of highway boundary to both Portway and Brickhill Street adjacent the site. This will only be sufficient to allow 2-storey development on the site.

After much discussion the Parish Council's Planning Committee agreed 6 votes to 1 with 1 abstention that: - "This Parish Council opposes absolutely any housing development at Willen Park, on the open space, presently used as school playing fields and which do not form part of the former Gyosei School buildings."



Noticeboard

Tenants Resource Centre

31 Farthing Grove, Netherfield
mkc-housingforum@trocentre.fsnet.co.uk
01908 676215

At the centre we help tenants in many ways. It is open four mornings a week, Monday - Thursday between 10am and 1pm (later on Tuesdays).

It is run by volunteers, and we can always do with extra help no matter how small. Free training can be provided.

To find out more, drop us a line, phone, visit or email.

Enjoy Your Village?

Volunteer to Support Your Memorial Hall

As a Secretary:

- Attend meetings every other month to take minutes
- Follow-up queries by phone
- Write some letters
- Small amount of filing
- Support the Trustees



You Need:

- One-two hours per week
- Hour and half every other month (for meetings)
- Access to PC and ability to layout information/type
- To be organised
- An interest in Great Linford

Call Patricia: 01908 666117
Email: patricia@harris5455.fsnet.co.uk

JUST AVAILABLE - We have a few allotment plots available on the Hills Close site in Great Linford.

Advertisement removed because of legal restrictions about advertising on the internet.

ARE YOU SITTING COMFORTABLY?

The Parish Council have bought and installed another a seat for those who want to take a short rest on the way back from the shops, this time in St Ledger Drive close to the local centre and school. Last Year a seat was installed outside the CO-OP at Neath Hill Local centre.



HAZARD ALLEY

Opened in 1994, Hazard Alley - The Safety Centre Milton Keynes - is a community safety project, involving the police, fire, health, local government and the private sector. The aim is to help educate children in the 7-12 age range about the hazards of the modern world and to improve safety in the community.

Life-like safety scenarios are used by specially trained guides to deliver safety messages in an interactive and effective way, giving the children who take part a truly stimulating and memorable two and a half-hours.

Would you like to be one of the volunteer guides, helping to show small groups of children around the Kiln Farm Safety Centre?

Guides will be well trained with the opportunity to learn, at their own pace. Travelling expenses/attendance allowances are paid. If you would like to become a Hazard Alley guide, telephone (01908) 263 009.

PARISH COUNCIL SCORES

WITH OWN GOAL!

Thanks to the efforts of local children in Sandy Close they now have their own goal posts on grassland close to the play area. The Parish Council paid for the two posts after local children had raised a petition asking for a goal on the grass kick about area



DISABLED BEDS

Work has now started on our pioneering project to provide three allotment beds for disabled Parish residents on the allotment at Neath Hill.

As the first Parish Council in Milton Keynes to commission these plots, we hope this will act as encouragement for other Parish Councils to undertake similar schemes. Look for more news on this exciting project in the next edition of News & Views.



HMOs

The Parish Council has had a second meeting with Officers from Milton Keynes Council [MKC] about Houses in Multiple Occupation [HMOs] (see previous newsletter). The Council has appointed staff to actively investigate and assess HMOs throughout the city. To date around 50 registration application details have been sent to landlords out of a total of approximately 500 supposed HMOs in Milton Keynes. Some 60 HMOs are currently being processed under the registration scheme.

Parish Councillors recently visited an HMO in Conniburrow and met the landlord who had applied for planning permission on two properties. The HMO was well appointed and managed, with only four tenancies in a four-bedroom house.

The Parish Council encourages properly converted and well-managed HMOs but will continue to press for the registration and inspection of all HMOs in our area. If you believe there is a non-registered HMO near to where you live contact the HMO hotline on 253 271.

YOUR PARISH COUNCILLORS

Not sure who to talk to about your area? Here are the members of Great Linford Parish Council and their contact details.

Charles Allum (Downs Barn)	668215	Gail Robson (Great Park/Blakelands)	670609
Allan Pugh (Downhead/Willen Pk)	662441	Peter Bell (Great Linford)	201513
Mike Bendry (Great Linford)	01604 768468	Clarens Elliott (Chair, Conningbury)	01604
Brian Forsley (Downhead/Willen Pk)	666054	Sue Williams (Conningbury)	01604 7
Alan Williams (Great Hill)	677402	Jenny Sharp (Parish Clerk)	01908 217752
David Stiles (Great Hill)	232025	Alan Wright (Great Barn)	01908 217726
David Livesey (Connyland/Sandbeck Pk)	605502	John Figg (Great Linford)	669116
Mike Williams (Great Linford)	605664	Ian Shaw (Great Park/Albest Pk)	678563
Colin Crisp (Great Park/Blakelands)	618304		

To contact the Parish Clerk, Jenny Sharp, please telephone 01908 217752 or write to PO Box 7085, Kiln Farm, Milton Keynes MK13 0YA

Friends of Willen Hospice

The "Friends of Willen Hospice" was started 23 years ago and in that time we have raised nearly £1million.

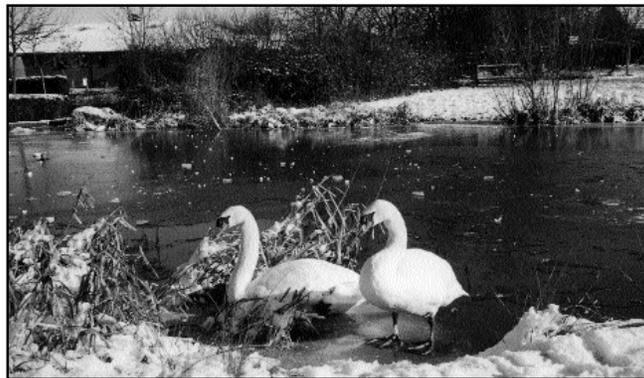
We are volunteers, from all walks of life, who aim to raise enough money each year to pay for the cost of running a bed at the Hospice. This costs about £60,000 a year.

We fundraise in various ways - coffee mornings, jumble sales, fashion shows, street collections and subscriptions.

If you feel that you would like to volunteer to help please telephone Joyce on 01908 312991 or Maureen on 01908 582571 - thanks for your support!

Swan Lake on Ice

Well, we had one good day of snow this winter and by gum it made an impact! On a more positive note this snowy snap was taken of some swans being Torville and Dean. Where was this shot taken - and more importantly what is the name of the building top left? Answers to the Editor, please by email to newsletter@greatlinfordparish.co.uk or by mail to The Editor, 32 Sandy Close, Great Linford, Milton Keynes MK14 5EE by 1 April 2004. A prize to the first correct answer picked from the hat!





THE ROLE OF PARISH COUNCILS

The 1965 Royal Commission on Local Government (The Redcliffe-Maude Commission) recommended that local councils should be empowered to do what they pleased for the benefit of their residents. The Royal Commission Report resulted in the 1972 Local Government Act, which removed many of the restrictions on the activities of Parish Councils. For example, before the 1972 Act, Parish Councils could not carry over surplus monies from one year to the next in order to fund major projects. This is something most Councils have to do these days to avoid having a massive Council Tax bill for any year in which any large project is attempted.

Subsequent legislation has added to the powers of Parish Council and they can undertake any of the following services: -

- Provision of allotments
- Develop and improve knowledge of the arts and crafts
- Provision of bars and laundrettes.
- Provision of Cemeteries, Crematoria, and Mortuaries and maintenance of churchyards.
- Provision and maintenance of public clocks.
- Provision of any form of public entertainment and of any premises for giving entertainment; this includes maintaining bands or orchestras and providing for dancing.
- The provision of buildings for public meetings and functions, indoor-sports, physical recreation, for clubs having recreation, social or athletic objectives.
- The provision and maintenance of footway lighting, to light roads and pavements
- The provision of litter-bins and the

support of anti-litter campaigns.

The provision and maintenance of public open spaces, pleasure grounds and public walks, public lavatories, car parks, cycle parks, public parks and associated facilities.

Maintenance of public footpaths and bridleways; planting and maintaining roadside verges.

Maintenance of public seats, shelters for general public use and particularly for bus passengers, erection of signs, which warn of dangers, announce a place name or indicate a bus stop.

Provision of indoor or outdoor swimming pools or bathing places.

Provision of facilities for conferences, the encouragement of recreation and business tourism.

Powers to maintain a village or town green.

In addition to all those things for which it has statutory powers, a Parish Council can do anything, provided it is for the general benefit of the community, and that the expenditure in any one year does not exceed £5.00 per local government elector in that particular Parish or community. Indeed, most things that the Parish Council might wish to do, or hope to do, could be covered by other legislation for which expenditure is unlimited. The only limit being imposed is that of the reluctance of parishioners to pay.

WHAT OF THE FUTURE?

There are serious moves afoot for Parishes to undertake work formerly the responsibility of the larger councils. This will involve Parishes in greater financial responsibility but residents should benefit through having a much higher quality of service.

A SHARP TONGUE

Our Parish Clerk Jenny Sharp lets off steam...

PAVEMENT PARKING

The recent Parish Council pleas seem to have fallen on mainly deaf ears. The problem continues and causes danger to pedestrians, wheelchair users and those with prams.

After further consultation with Thames Valley Police, we have now agreed that shortly, a joint campaign will commence and those committing an offence will be given a fixed penalty notice. Please be aware that the general rule on obstruction is that there should be sufficient room on the pavement for a wheelchair or double buggy to pass.

Please do not complain if you receive a ticket, there have been adequate warnings!

GT LINFORD

LOCAL CENTRE

From enquiries received by the Parish Council, there appears to be confusion as to who is responsible for the Great Linford Local Centre. The area of shops and all car parking areas are privately owned and therefore not the responsibility of either Milton Keynes Council or the Parish Council. We are however concerned about the general appearance of the centre and in particular have been concerned about the condition of the walkways. Following pressure from the Parish Council and a petition from local residents, repairs have recently been carried out on these areas.

We would advise residents that Douglas Duff in Milton Keynes are the agents for the owners and that all complaints should be directed to them, we will however continue to press for higher standards of cleanliness in the centre.

The Peartree Pond is owned by the Parish Council, who maintain the landscape which surrounds it. The pond itself is maintained very generously by the Peartree Pond Association, who voluntarily work on behalf of the community.

DOG FOULING

This subject continues to attract a large number of complaints to the Parish Council. We have recently had two further areas identified:

Hartley	Great Linford
Smeaton Close	Blakelands

Both of these areas have a large amount of offensive waste left on paths and grassed areas. If you walk your dog in either of these places please ensure that you clear up after. If residents can identify the culprits, then please contact the Parish Council and appropriate action will be taken.

ALLOTMENTS

The Parish Council sites at Great Linford, Neath Hill and Willen Park are currently full, however if you would like to join a waiting list for a plot, please contact the Parish Clerk. The Allotment year commences on 1st April and we have noticed that not all of the plots have been kept to an accepted standard during the last year. If not returned, then we will be asking those tenants to give them up in favour of those people waiting very enthusiastically for a chance to grow their own produce.

The Parish Council would like to express their congratulations to the plot holders on the Hills Close site, who have worked very hard and with great success in order to make what was a very run down site, now a very well managed one.

Work will shortly commence on the long awaited disabled beds on the Neath Hill site. This will be funded jointly by a grant from the Milton Keynes Parish Partnership Fund and the Parish Council. Would anyone interested in taking one of the beds, please make contact with the Parish Clerk.

Advertisement removed because of legal restrictions
on advertising on the internet



18/19/20 June 2004

There are many ways you can get involved in this
year's ever-popular festival!

PERFORM!

If you are part of a group, band or society and you think you might be suitable for our performance areas then get in touch! Stalls are also available for groups to raise their own profile or raise funds - contact us for details.

ATTEND!

The community is the lifeblood of this event - bring your family and we promise there will be something for all!

VOLUNTEER!

We always need people to help man stalls, put up staging/marquees, collect donations on the day and all manner of activities without which the festival would not be able to function. If you can give up some spare time - let us know!

EXERCISE!

Once again our popular Fun Run takes place on the Sunday morning - there are prizes for the winners of several winning categories and it's an excellent opportunity to raise sponsorship for your own good causes!

Visit our website for details.

www.watersidefestival.co.uk

You can e-mail us there to register your interest or write c/o David Lovesy,
32 Sandy Close, Gt Linford, Milton Keynes MK14 5EE