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The newsletter of Loughton Parish Council

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OCTOBER 2012

Redevelopment of the Stratfield Park Leisure Centre, Great Holm.



Visualisation of the proposed development

On 3rd September 2012 Milton Keynes Council refused an application for planning permission for the redevelopment of the site of the Stratfield Park Leisure Centre, at Gatcombe in Great Holm, next to Lodge Lake.

The site current comprises a leisure centre which is privately owned by 84 households in Great Holm. The proposals involve the demolition of the leisure centre and the erection of 7 large 3 storey detached properties on the site. Five of the houses would be five-bedroom properties and two of them would be four-bedroom properties.

The application attracted a number of public representations, many of which have suggested that 7 properties are too many for the site, objecting to the properties being 3 storey in height, and expressing concern about the impact of

the development on Lodge Lake.

The site is currently designated as a “Community Facility” in the Milton Keynes local plan 2005 and under local policies the applicants must demonstrate that there is no longer a need for the facility for any type of local community use. The owners attempted to market the property for 6 months in 2009-10 and received no offers for community use.

The reasons for the refusal state that there was insufficient evidence of an active and up to date marketing campaign for the site to demonstrate that the site is no longer viable as a leisure facility and there was no agreement on a financial contribution towards replacement of a replacement facility. It is not yet known whether there will be an appeal against this decision.

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Community Emergency Plan

Parish Councillor Simon Kirkman explains what is under consideration and how local volunteers could help.

Update from the Neighbourhood Action Group

Parish Councillor and Chairman of the NAG Peter Ballantyne reports on the latest activities and initiatives in this area.

Column by the Parish Clerk

Jenny Wilcox writes about life as the Parish Clerk and what her job involves in working for the Parish Council.

News

Parks Trust plans to sell off Loughton green space for development

Green spaces in Loughton identified for housing development to raise money for the Parks Trust.

Large extension planned to Becket House in Loughton

Planning application within the Loughton Conservation area.

Permission granted for MacIntyre centre redevelopment

Building work to start in November 2012 and last 10-12 months.

Helping to build the local community

The Parish Council has set aside a grant fund of £2,000 in the 2012-13 financial year for grants to local community groups. The purpose of this fund is to develop local community groups operating within the parish such as the Scouts, Guides, sports clubs and other similar community associations and to enable them to extend their activities. Groups receiving a grant will be expected to attend the Annual Parish meeting in April to report on the outcome of the grant. For information on the scheme and how to apply, please contact the Parish Clerk.

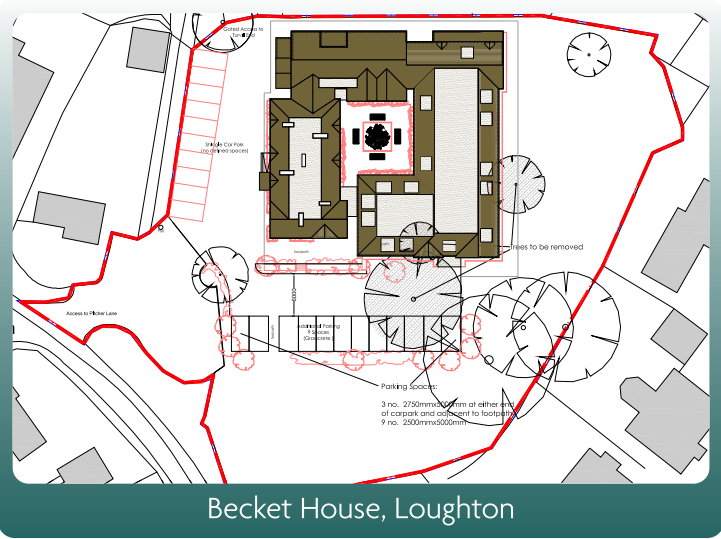


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Large extension planned to Becket House in Loughton



Becket House was built in 1843 as the Rectory for All Saints Church in Loughton. Although not a listed building it is built in a gothic style with many fine characteristics. It stands within the Loughton Conservation Area at the top of Pitcher Lane near to the junction with Church Lane and School Lane and can also be accessed from Lincslade Grove. The property is now a nursing home run by Spemle Limited for people with dementia and currently has a capacity for 27 residents.

In 2008 planning permission for a two storey rear extension for 19 additional bedrooms was granted but this has since expired without being implemented and the property subsequently changed hands. Now the new owners of the property plan to submit a further application for planning permission to build a large two-storey extension to the property which could increase the numbers of residents up to a maximum of 50. Local residents are likely to be concerned at the impact of this development on the traffic to and from the site.

As the property is in a conservation area, the planning application must demonstrate that it “enhances or preserves” the area.

Parks Trust plans to sell off Loughton green space for development



The Parks Trust has identified two sites in Loughton it wants to sell off for development. One site is the paddock behind the bungalows along Bradwell Road in the part of the road to the west of Lincslade Grove heading towards the Badminton Centre. The other site is lying beyond the Badminton Centre and the H4 Danstead Way, also along Bradwell Road up to the A5.

The aim is to raise funds for the Parks Trust to ensure that it can continue maintaining the green spaces it owns in Milton Keynes in the future. The Trust says it has carried out an audit of the land that it owns and has decided that these sites have little value.

Residents in the local area are likely to be concerned about the loss of more of the green spaces in Loughton that are characteristic of the area and the creeping urbanization. The proposals have identified a total of 45 such sites across Milton Keynes and have generated considerable controversy in the local press recently. Planning permission has not yet been applied for and will be required before any development can go ahead.

Thames Valley Police in Loughton Parish

There have recently been some changes to the policing arrangements for Loughton Parish. Due to the recent government cuts to the budget of the Thames Valley police, we have now lost PC Martin Kemp. Martin was the officer responsible for the neighbourhood of Loughton Parish for the last few years but he has now been redeployed to cover another area.

The local neighbourhood officer for the Shenley Church End area, PC Albert Bernard, has now had his area extended to include the whole of Loughton Parish. He now covers the whole of the Loughton Park ward including Crownhill, Medbourne, Grange Farm and Oxley Park. He is assisted by several Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs)

Neighbourhood Policing teams work with local people and partners to identify, tackle and prevent local, low-level crime, anti-social behaviour, and any ongoing concerns. They also provide a visible, accessible and accountable police service and aim to make the neighbourhood safer. They focus all of their efforts on their dedicated neighbourhoods, building relationships with local people.

Neighbourhood Policing teams can be contacted via 101, the Thames Valley Police non-emergency number. Always call 999 in an emergency. You can also send an email to the local neighbourhood policing team for Loughton at LoughtonNHPT@thamesvalley.pnn.police.uk

On the www.police.uk website you can find street level information about the number of recorded crimes in the area and the outcomes of investigations. Overall Loughton Parish is a low crime area. Whilst there are serious incidents from time to time including assault, burglary and robbery, the overall level is low compared to other areas in Milton Keynes.

The local Neighbourhood Policing teams hold regular “have your say” meetings every month in the local community to listen to local concerns and to set priorities.



What is a police and crime commissioner?

On 15 November 2012, for the first time, you will be able to vote for your local police and crime commissioner (PCC). This is a new role and the job of the PCC will be to oversee the police and ensure they prioritise what matters to you.

A police and crime commissioner will be elected by you to oversee how crime will be tackled in your police force area (in London, the Mayor is the PCC). Their aim will be to cut crime and to ensure your police force is effective. They will bring more of a public voice to policing and they will do this by: Regularly engaging and meeting with the public to help set police and crime plans.

Ensuring the police force budget is spent where it matters most.

Appointing the chief constable, and if necessary dismissing them, if they have not performed well.

The PCC will not ‘run’ the police force. Chief constables will continue to be responsible for the day to day operations of the police, but they will be accountable to the public via PCCs.

PCCs are voted in to serve you and if you think they are not, then you can vote them out at the next election in 4 years time. PCCs will have an enormous amount of power and will make and influence key decisions that will impact on how your local area looks and feels - from CCTV and graffiti to tackling gangs and drug-dealing. Use your vote to put that power in the hands of the person you think will serve you best.

Interested in becoming a Parish Councillor?

There are 10 members of the parish council and the required quorum for a meeting is 4 members.

Due to the recent resignation of Councillor Joyce Ballantyne, there is currently a vacancy for a member of the Parish Council for Great Holm ward.

Ten electors in Great Holm have requested the Returning Officer that the vacancy be filled by an election. The parish by-election will be held on 18th October 2012, if there is more than one nomination. Otherwise if there is only one applicant, they will be elected unopposed.

To apply, contact the elections officer Pamela Loose at Milton Keynes Council on **01908 252529** or pamela.loose@milton-keynes.gov.uk for details of the closing date and how to submit a nomination.

The whole Parish Council is due for re-election in 2015, as these are held every four years. Further information is available on the parish website.

Changes to the Loughton Parish Council website

The Parish Council recently launched a new website. Previously the website address was www.loughtonpc.org.uk but as the Parish Council is a tier of local government it has decided it is more appropriate to adopt a .gov domain. The address for the new Parish Council website is now www.loughtonmk-pc.gov.uk.

The parish website is busy with traffic; over the 6 months to the end of July 2012 there was an average of 400 unique visitors to the site every month.

Loughton Parish also has a twitter presence @LoughtonPC and the latest twitter feed appears on the home page of the website. So far the Parish has attracted 141 followers.

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Loughton and Great Holm Neighbourhood Action Group

Chair : Peter Ballantyne

Most readers of this first Loughton Parish Council Newsletter will be aware of the existence of the Loughton and Great Holm Neighbourhood Action Group (NAG). As a joint initiative between Thames Valley Police and Milton Keynes Council, 31 such groups were set up to cover all areas of MKC territory.

The idea was that these groups would be lead by local residents, who would consult to identify three areas of concern in their area (called Neighbourhood Priorities), and then try to improve them.

The group is currently made up of 11 local residents, three of whom are parish councillors, along with representatives from The Parks Trust, Thames Valley Police, and Milton Keynes Council and we meet monthly (except December). Sub committees are formed as necessary for major projects.

By reacting to local needs this would legitimise the activities of the group - and solve local problems (hopefully). Many NAGs chose specific targets e.g. improve a particular road junction, or stop public drinking in a particular location. I am pleased to say the issues identified by local residents in this parish were more general, and although we go through the same public consultation exercise every year, the same three Neighbourhood Priorities are chosen by you each time. They are:-

1. Traffic Issues (mainly speeding and parking)
2. Environmental Issues (e.g. litter, landscaping, general appearance)
3. Anti Social Behaviour (e.g. graffiti, noise, drinking in public) This gives us the freedom to tackle most problems we find or are brought to us.

There are two areas where constraints restrict our activities:- disputes between neighbours (but we can supply details of the Milton Keynes Arbitration Service), and planning matters. We are governed by a very strict constitution, and we are not allowed to hold any funds for our activities, although there is a central fund to which we have access.

Since our foundation in Spring of 2008 our notable successes have been

1. Planting 6,000 spring bulbs around the Great Holm Obelisk
2. Repainting the 400 yellow Redway pipe bollards in Loughton and Great Holm
3. Reducing the parking problem outside Hilltops Medical Centre by enlarging the Holmwood School staff car park by 14 spaces.
4. Getting graffiti removed from various locations.
5. Improving the safety of the steps from Watling Street bus stop to the underpass redway to Crownhill.
6. Getting the Obelisk lighting renewed (Great Holm)
7. Cleaning all the road name plates in the parish
8. Repainting the play equipment at the bottom of Petworth in Great Holm.(see photo)
9. Reporting potholes and other road defects (including signage).
10. Offering substantial help at the Queens Diamond Jubilee Community Celebrations in Loughton.

We have also played a major role in solving the Pitcher Lane (Loughton) flooding problem, and getting the broken and dangerous speed reduction humps on Lincelade Grove (Loughton) and Highgrove Hill (Great Holm) repaired.

As may have been expected there have been a few failures along the way. We were hoping to renew the blue pedestrian/cycle signposts at redway junctions repaired or replaced but have told, by Milton Keynes Council, not to do this since they are looking at this problem on a Milton Keynes wide scale, and do not want piecemeal solutions. Another non-success was cleaning the unsightly lime/acid brick stains off the Great Holm obelisk - despite the best efforts of the Great Holm fire station, with whom we have excellent links.

Being a pro-active group we regularly undertake Environmental Visual Audits (EVAs) along with Thames Valley Police. This quantifies the amount of litter, dog mess, graffiti, etc and helps us to focus our attention on matters which need addressing.

Thames Valley Police present monthly crime reports for our parish which also help us to focus on important issues.

I have not reported the 101 smaller projects we undertake - like missing grit bin lids replaced, flooding of underpasses, getting safety lines marked across the redway junction with Southwick court, stopping the roadside selling of used cars and reporting cars parking so far onto pavements that pedestrians have to walk into the road around them, but if you see something fixed - it is likely to be as a result of your NAG doing something about it.

Our ongoing issues include getting the cycle restriction barrier at the bottom of Bignell Croft (Loughton) redesigned to force cyclists to slow down, verge parking on Paynes Drive (opposite Loughton School) and on Kensington Drive (opposite McIntyre). We also plan to plant bulbs (and possibly low maintenance shrubs) around the entrances to Great Holm - with a grant from Loughton Parish Council.

For this latter project we DESPERATELY need more volunteers. We have a dozen helpers from our consultation days, but the more helpers we get, the easier it is for everyone. If you can spare a couple of mornings and/or afternoons and are fairly fit, we would LOVE to hear from you. Planting will take place both at weekend and weekdays during October - everything is provided. Please email us at info@lghnag.org.uk or phone us on **01908 768 615**

Peter Ballantyne Chair



Neighbourhood Action Group

Milton Keynes Council gives permission for development of the MacIntyre Centre site

On 30th August 2012 Milton Keynes Council development control panel approved MacIntyre's application for the re-development of the Lifelong Learning Centre at Haddon, Great Holm.

The MacIntyre Centre is a charity which supports people with learning difficulties and enables them to live in the community and has operated in Great Holm since 1988.

The new development involves renovation of the existing building which has become a little tired and outdated since it was built in the late 1980s. There are plans to add new facilities such as a hydro pool and sensory room. The access to the building will also be improved - including new lifts, stairs and power assisted doors.

The land at the back of the site, next to H5 Portway, formerly used as a garden centre is designated for a new residential wing housing up to 6 people.

The new two storey residential wing is designed to be in keeping with the existing building, mimicking the award-winning design of the current Learning Centre.

The curved building will follow the line of the grid road and Kensington Drive going up into the estate. It will sit on the land that the greenhouses used to occupy.

There were concerns from some local people about the size of the new wing and the proximity of it to the H5 and Kensington Drive and whether it would dominate the junction. The Development Control panel adjourned the application in July 2012 and asked MacIntyre to look again at the possibility of reducing the height of the new building. However MacIntyre said it was not possible to do this without compromising the design and the Development Control Panel decided to grant permission to the original plans.



MacIntyre Centre

Chairman's viewpoint



I was elected Chairman of Loughton Parish Council in May 2011 only on the casting vote of the outgoing Chairman - so this made for a slightly difficult start to my tenure in that it illustrated that I did not enjoy immediate confidence of my fellow members and have had to work hard in the role to establish myself. I was pleased however to be re-elected unopposed in May 2012 and now I am beginning to settle in to the job and focus on really getting things done.

As a parent of children aged 12,10 and 7, I've been rather disappointed with the children's play area facilities within our area. There's an excellent play area in Great Holm in Kensington Drive but the play areas elsewhere aren't great. In one play area in Loughton all the equipment has been removed as dangerous and that play area now stands empty. Most of the other play areas have hardly seen anything new in 20 years or are in poor repair. Loughton Parish contains some really wealthy areas and it's quite surprising and disappointing that the play areas aren't better than they are.

The play areas belong to Milton Keynes Council rather than the Parish but I'm afraid Milton Keynes Council is not going to take the initiative on this on its own. So I've been working away on it. Together with colleagues, I've had numerous meetings with the officer who is responsible for looking after the play areas. Hopefully, there is now a real prospect that we can start with a major renovation of the play area at the Loughton

Sports Ground. You can see the plans for that in this newsletter, and we hope to get a grant from WREN (who administer the landfill tax grant scheme) to pay for a large part of it.

Planning issues take up quite a bit of time, and the Localism Act 2011 has given Parish Councils a new role in planning in that we can initiate a "Neighbourhood Development Plan" which once adopted must be taken into account by the local planning authority on any application for planning permission. I have been coordinating efforts to create a plan in consultation with local stakeholders which we can then consult local residents on later this year. I get annoyed when the planning committee ignores the wishes of local people; maybe once this plan is in place, they'll have to take more notice of us.

The localism agenda has also created opportunities for the Parish Council to acquire local assets and services from Milton Keynes Council which can be more efficiently run at local level. Top of this agenda in our area will be taking a transfer of the freehold of the Loughton Sports Ground and Social Club and possibly the Great Holm Community Centre. Both of these assets have been badly neglected by Milton Keynes Council and a lack of investment has seen them deteriorate. I'm hoping that in the hands of the Parish Council we can revitalise these neglected buildings at the heart of our community. There are still some grants and resources available but it needs local people to work away on improvements to make them happen.

Being a parish councillor is wholly unpaid and involves a considerable time commitment. However we are fortunate to live in a really wonderful area; and it's very satisfying to protect it from harm and to achieve tangible improvements. I'd encourage anyone interested to get involved.

Peter Todd

Confusion over Loughton parking restrictions

Milton Keynes Council recently decided to extend the parking restrictions in Loughton to impose a blanket ban throughout Loughton (save for a couple of small exceptions) on street parking without a residents permit between certain hours.

They decided to do this without any consultation either with the Parish council or local residents. The only attempt at consultation was to erect some notices which listed a number of different areas and mentioned changes to the parking restrictions but these did not make clear that the changes were affecting nearly the whole area of Loughton.

Such changes should not be made without proper consultation with local people and the Parish Council. However Milton Keynes Council highways department embarked upon the changes anyway and commissioned numerous new signs regarding the new parking restrictions which were installed throughout Loughton. Some of these signs are at the entrance to the area. The signs originally were originally covered in plastic bags but most of these have now come off.

When the nature and extent of the changes became clear, there were a number of complaints to the MK Council highways department. As a result of these complaints and intervention from local ward Councillor Andy Dransfield, the highways department decided to put the changes on hold pending consultation.

Milton Keynes Council have stated that the original parking restrictions are still in force and have not been removed but that they are not enforcing the new restrictions, notwithstanding the presence of all the new signs.

Unfortunately however, the civil enforcement officers don't seem to be aware of this. One local resident, Peter Rothery who lives in Ebbsgrove, Loughton has contacted the Parish Council to report a discussion that he had with 2 civil parking enforcement officers on the morning of 3rd September in Ebbsgrove.

"There was a male and a female enforcement officer patrolling Ebbsgrove. I pointed out to them that they were potentially wasting their time in Ebbsgrove as there are no signs stating that this is a restricted parking area. The female officer advised me that there didn't need to be as there were large signs at all entry points to the area of Loughton. As far as she was concerned the whole of Loughton was a restricted parking area. I advised them that those had been rescinded/not enforced and they replied that they were still in force as they had not been advised to the contrary. I replied to say that the extension had never in fact come into effect, pending a further review and offered to show them an email I had received from the Council. I suggested that they contact the Officer concerned at which point the female officer become quite rude"

So for the time being the Officers at Milton Keynes Council are of the view that the original parking restrictions only apply, but some enforcement officers are unaware of this and are following the signage.



From the Parish Clerk

My name is Jen Wilcox and i am Parish Clerk for Loughton. I have been married to Tony for 18 years and we have 2 children Adam and Paige. We have lived in Loughton for 15 years and both children attended Loughton First and Loughton middle schools and then went onto Denbigh with Paige still studying hard at Denbigh.

I was looking for a life change when I saw the Parish Clerk position advertised. I had been wanting to work back in the community I knew and love and it seemed an ideal opportunity.

At the time I became Clerk, the Parish Council appeared to be a very sleepy "vicar of dibbly" affair. I hadn't seen much activity or change in Loughton in the years since moving here but then I had also not attended Parish Meetings so did not quite know what went on. I felt the childrens play areas, sports and youth facilities were lacking and I hoped my career experience could be useful for the improvement of our community.

At the same time as taking on the role of Parish Clerk role (then on average 5 hours a week) I also returned and retrained as a Childminder so that I could fully integrate back working with the schools and children of Loughton. I had previously Childminded when my own children were little and considered it to be one of my happiest times. Now with children in their teens and needing support I felt I would be able to combine both work and home as I had once before!

Both roles have grown immensley in the 2 to 3 years since. We have a new Parish Chair who is working very hard for the people of Loughton parish. New projects undertaken, new play areas for loughton on the way, support and grant for the Loughton Sports and Social Club, grants to local groups like for the diamond jubilee party, the cubs and scouts, the NAG and MK Pride. I never seem to have a dull minute with quotes for work, dog waste bins, cheques to write and finances to keep updated, meetings to attend and minutes and agendas to write, planning applications and also the new parish website, and of course the allotments. I also advise the council on their legal responsibilities and also all the emails and work generated by the new localism act.

I'm not sure what the next 2 to 3 years will bring. Both my business "wooshchildcare" and the work of the Parish Council have grown considerably and it is a very exciting time !

Jen Wilcox Parish Clerk

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All Saints' Church Loughton - Your Local Parish Church

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Minister: Rev Dave Bell; Contact via the Parish office: 01908 568586. Churchwardens are Roger Blackburn 01908 568624 & David Thom 01908 670653.

Services at 8.00am (Holy Communion) and 9.30am (Family Service) every Sunday

All Saints' is part of the Ecumenical Parish (EP) of Watling Valley where Anglicans, Baptists, Methodists and United Reformed Church members worship together. We also support Christ The Sower School in Grange Farm. The Ministry Team comprises Rev Mike Morris, Rev Dave Bell, Rev Steve Mosedale, Rev Nick Adlem, Rev Tim Haddon, Phyllis Bunnett LLM and Derek Martin LLM. Watling Valley EP is part of the Milton Keynes Mission Partnership.

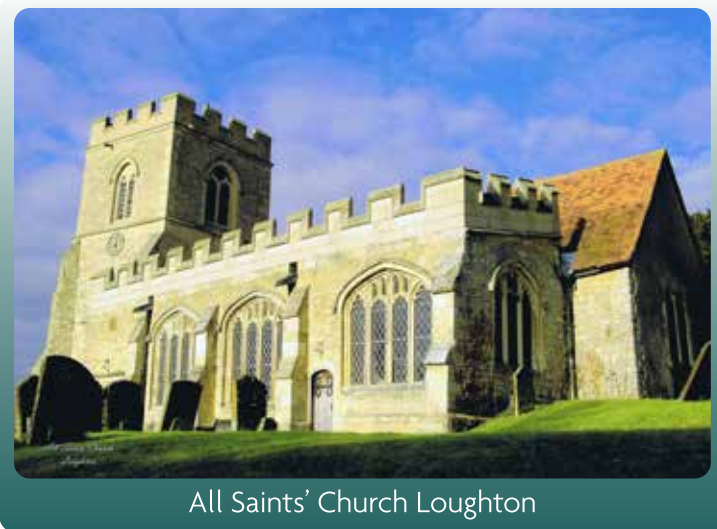
The church is the oldest building in Loughton, dating from at least 1218. However it has modern facilities, heating, and a light and airy interior. The tower has a peal of six bells and these are rung by a group of bellringers who are available for weddings, funerals, and other celebrations. On the north side is the Church Room (which can be hired) with accessible wc and a tea kitchen.

All Saints' aims to be a welcoming church. The 8.00am service is quiet and contemplative, following the structure of the Book of Common Prayer, whereas the 9.30am service is less formal and caters for young couples, families, and older members of the community all together, with a children's area within the congregational seating. After this service refreshments are served in the church room. A Fair Trade stall is open on the first and third Sundays at this time.

New families are welcomed into the congregation during the 9.30 service.

Baptism services are held on Sunday afternoons at 2.00pm in alternate months and usually comprise two or three families so that there is plenty of room for each family's relations and friends, the church seating being set out accordingly. To book a baptism please contact our Baptism co-ordinators **Ruth Martin 01908 507489 and Linda Cato 01908 502225.**

Weddings are booked through Ruth Davies at the Parish Office **01908 568586**, and supervised by our weddings co-ordinator **Rozi Rowcroft James 01908 395870.**



Funerals can be booked through the Parish Office to secure a minister, and burial arrangements made through David Thom 01908 670653.

There is an active programme of worship and celebrations during the Church year, starting with Advent and our Carol Services in December, along with our Christmas fund raising event. A Christmas Card giving details of our seasonal services is delivered to every home in Loughton and Great Holm towards the end of November each year. Look out for it!

During Lent there are Parish wide home groups studying a particular topic, either a York Course or one of the Gospels. These usually meet weekly on weekdays.

Every fortnight during school term time the Coffee Plus group meets in the Church Room for Bible study on a Wednesday. Contact Eileen Wilson 01908 561055.

During Holy Week before Easter there are evening services on each day in one of the Partnership Churches. The church is also open on Good Friday for a vigil.

On Easter Saturday morning there is egg rolling down School Lane and hot cross buns served in the church room, as well as an egg decorating competition.

At Pentecost (Whitsun) we have a Partnership wide service at one of the Churches. Other Partnership services are also held periodically.

In June we hold a Summer fund raising Event, around varying themes, and of course this is also the season for Weddings. For the relief of parents a Holiday Club is run at Christ The Sower School during a week in August.

At the end of the summer holidays (2nd Saturday of September) we participate in the Bucks Historic Churches "Ride and Stride" event to raise money through sponsorship for All Saints and other churches in Buckinghamshire.

We have a Harvest Festival celebration at the end of September and the produce gathered goes to The Food Bank who we also support during the rest of the year.

The beginning of November is marked by All Saints' Day our Patronal Festival.

We hold a Remembrance Day service on the Sunday closest to Armistice Day, 11th November, and then soon the Christian Year begins again with Advent.

Through a percentage of our planned giving we support the BridgeBuilder, Prospects, and World Vision, charities.

Further details of services and other events are posted in the Church Porch, or on our website at www.wvep.org/all_saints.

We look forward to seeing you!



Great Holm - Lakeview Green

When my wife, Joyce and I moved to Great Holm almost 24 years ago, we felt that the village had been fully developed, we had a shop, school, doctor's surgery, community centre, bus service, and pub. There were three churches nearby. In fact everything needed for an idyllic life, especially since our (almost new) flat overlooked Lodge Lake. It seemed a hospitable, friendly, stable place to live. How things change!

Everyone got older and their needs changed, the Kam Tong appeared, the surgery became a Medical Centre, key worker flats were built at the junction of Goodwood and Kensington Drive. Two new play areas were built at the obelisk. More recently has seen an application to vastly enlarge McIntyre, and the Stratfield Park Leisure Complex has been sold to allow further housing development.

It was this latter event which prompted me to action, fearful that our amenity land adjacent to the leisure complex would be the next victim.

Under the new 2006 Commons Act, anyone could register any piece of open land as a Village Green, by applying to the Registration Authority - in this case Milton Keynes Council. They would need written evidence to confirm that the land had been in use for recreational or leisure activities for a continuous period in excess of 20 years.

Following local publicity, press reports and personal contacts, I managed to obtain no less than ten written statements to include with the submission.

All seemed set fair to register the green. A public consultation was held to select a name for the green. By awarding two points to the first (or only) choice and one point to the second, the results were extremely close.

Lakeview Green	109 points
Lodge Green	105
Lakeside Green	102
Great Holm Green	83
Jubilee Green	61

With only seven points separating the top three, it was a close-run contest.

Although the Parish Council had sent me on a 'Village Green Registration' course, it was decided that I should make this application as a private individual, without the need to go back to anyone to consult (and possibly delay) the registration process. I did put the results of the naming process to the Loughton Parish Council, which confirmed, on 21st May, that it was happy for me to proceed for the registration of LAKEVIEW GREEN.

I suspected that Milton Keynes Council may not have procedures in place to deal with this application and wanted to make sure that the application reached the correct department.

I spent three days on the 'phone trying to find out, without success, to whom the application should be sent. In the end it was suggested the "Law and Governance" would be the most appropriate department. Subsequently the application was hand delivered on the 18th June.

Since then I have followed its progress around the various departments of the Council. I believe that initially it was passed to 'Property Disposals' who forwarded it to "Council Assets". From there it went to the Countryside Manager, who passed it on to the "Neighbourhood Engagement Officer". By this time I was getting quite frustrated, as you can imagine. No actual work was being done on the application - just a merry-go-round to see who had it when the music stopped - BUT the music was still playing!. The very latest I hear is that it has gone back to Law and Governance - where it all started over two months ago!!

I know that this is the first such application Milton Keynes Council has had since the 2006 Commons Act came into force, and the determination of the procedure to register this land is unique but it does make one wonder how equipped the Council is to accept new and novel challenges.

Peter Ballantyne
Parish Councillor
Chatsworth, Great Holm



A Community Emergency Plan for Loughton Parish

Loughton Parish Council is giving consideration to the development of a Community Emergency Plan (CEP). The idea of creating a CEP is a government led initiative to build resilience within communities to cope with adverse events. (Examples might be severe flooding, heavy snowfall, or extreme temperatures). To achieve a meaningful CEP a number of things must happen. A comprehensive risk assessment must be carried out to identify probable risks and other risks specific to Loughton Parish. Probable risks, as already mentioned, could be extreme weather. A specific risk for Loughton Parish could be that we are directly on the flight path into Luton Airport. How would we respond in the unlikely event of an aircraft coming down in our vicinity?

How could we react if there was a major rail incident on our doorstep? A properly constructed CEP aims to identify probable risks, prescribe a course of action for each risk, and create a communications strategy with residents and emergency services for co-ordinating a response. An essential part of the CEP is the cataloguing of resources available within the community and this is perhaps the most challenging part. We will need to identify people who would be interested in getting involved in the process of creating the CEP and people who, in the event of a critical situation can offer support either in the form of hands on (anything from making tea to shovelling snow) or in the form of making equipment available such as an inflatable dinghy, water pumping gear, anything to which they have personal access that might be useful in a given emergency. Loughton Parish Council still has to make the decision as a body whether or not to proceed with creating a CEP.

If you have a comment that you would like to make or would like to offer practical support as described above we would very much like to hear from you. Please contact Councillor Simon Kirkman at simon.kirkman@loughtonmk-pc.gov.uk

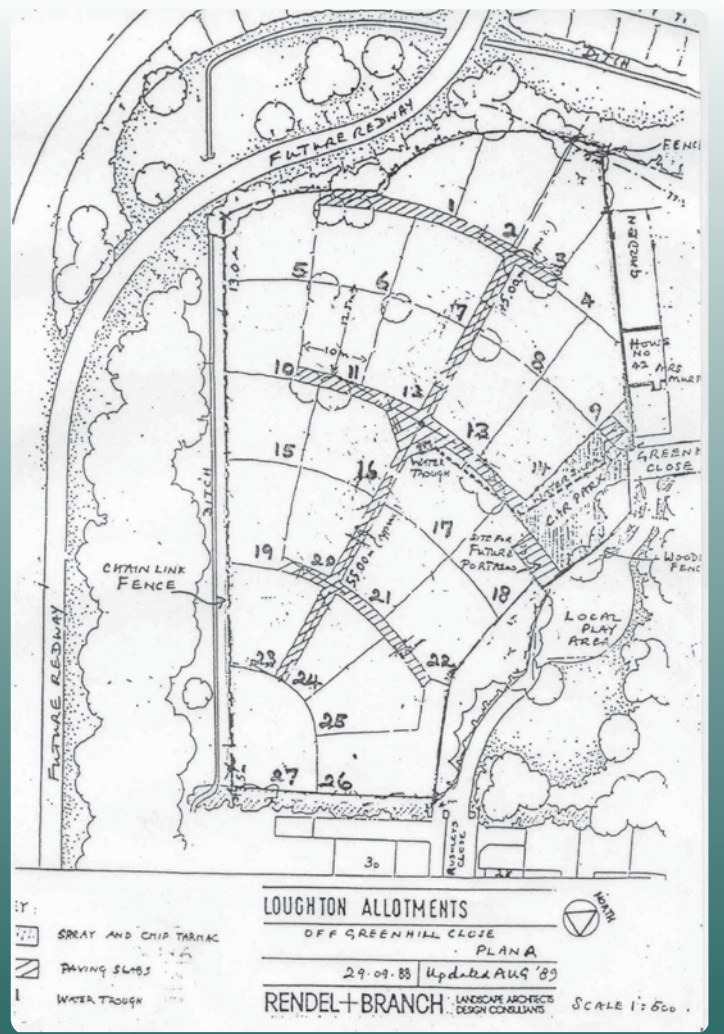
Parish Allotments

The Parish Council currently has one allotment site – at off Greenhill Close Loughton.

There are 27 allotments and they are all currently being cultivated and there is a waiting list but priority is given to local parish residents. The Parish has established rules which apply to the cultivation. The Parish provides a water supply and the annual rent is currently £16 (or £8 for a half plot). This is not an ample provision for the 6,000 residents of the parish.

The local plan has allocated another site within the parish to allotments. The site is off Bradwell Road just beyond the bungalows between Lincslade Grove and the Badminton Centre. The site has been cultivated for a long time – and includes evidence of the ancient ridge and farrow cultivation system.

Despite having been allocated to being allotments when Loughton was developed as part of the city masterplan, the allotments have never been established and it remains an open area of grass. Current estimates are that it would cost about £40-50k to provide the leveling, fencing, road access, & hard standing for car park that would be required to bring it into use. It seems unlikely this could be achieved unless sufficient grant funds could be accessed. The Parish Council would be interested for feedback on the level of demand for allotments.



Allotments Map

Environment

The Parish Council provides the dog hygiene bins and the emptying service throughout the parish. The Parish Council employs a local company, Marcus Young Landscapes, to provide the emptying service. Last year the Parish spent over £5,000 on this service. All the bins are currently emptied twice weekly. The Parish also provides a litter bin in Lodge Lake car park.

Recently, as a result of requests from local people, we installed a new dog hygiene bin in Loughton along the footpath between Ashpole Furlong and Whitworth Lane. The process of installation involves consulting with local residents and with Milton Keynes Council, so it is not entirely straightforward.

The Parish Council is intending to review the current provision of bins and see if any changes need to be made to the current service. Is a new bin required in your area? Do you ever find that a bin is overflowing and needs more regular collection? Do you think the Parish spends too much on this service and could some bins be removed to reduce the overall cost? We would welcome all feedback on this, which will be taken into account in the forthcoming review of this service.

There has recently been an outbreak of graffiti on the bridge support where the H5 Portway crosses the stream that feeds Lodge Lake, Loughton.

There has been a small amount in this area for some considerable time but recently there has been an escalation of activity with new graffiti appearing. The Parish Council has reported this to Milton Keynes Council graffiti team to be tackled and residents are requested to report any suspicious activity to the Police.



Graffiti on the wall

Council tax charged by Parish Councils in Milton Keynes

Annual parish council tax for a B and D property 2012-13

This table shows how residents of Loughton Parish pay less than 25% of the average for Milton Keynes ie £15 per property per annum (at band D) compared with £62.21 per annum on average

Parish	£ per annum
WOUGHTON	£147.13
OUZEL VALLEY	£134.98
CAMPBELL PARK	£125.30
BLETCHLEY & FENNY STRATFORD	£113.83
WEST BLETCHLEY	£113.57
WOLVERTON	£90.00
WOBURN SANDS	£83.02
WESTON UNDERWOOD	£78.46
HANSLOPE	£64.45
OLNEY	£61.98
NEWPORT PAGNELL	£60.98
BOW BRICKHILL	£58.54
EMBERTON	£57.28
CASTLETHORPE	£55.52
STONY STRATFORD	£54.89
STANTONBURY	£53.90
SHERINGTON	£52.38
NEW BRADWELL	£52.36
SHENLEY BROOK END	£51.61
STOKE GOLDINGTON	£49.94
LITTLE BRICKHILL	£49.89
BRADWELL	£43.28

PARISH DIAMOND JUBILEE CELEBRATION

Loughton Parish Jubilee Diamond Jubilee Celebrations were held on Sunday, 3rd June 2012 at Loughton Sports & Social Club and sports ground.

The day was very very wet. It continued to rain all day long. The Bouncy Castle suppliers declined to attend on health and safety grounds. We were relying on this being an ‘all-day’ activity for both adults and children.

To mitigate this as far as possible, we started the face painting and crown making earlier than planned. Because the grass was wet and slippery we also had to abandon all the races we had planned (three legged, egg & spoon, sack race and running backwards). Instead we had a ‘standby’ game involving throwing bean bags. This proved very popular - even in the rain.

Woburn Sands Brass Band ensemble played for almost two hours and a few hardy souls had their picnic in the large marquee. A barbecue was available selling hamburgers and hot dogs.

At 1:15pm, the National Anthem was played, a Loyal Toast was made, followed by three cheers and then a letter from Her Majesty was read out thanking us for our good wishes and wishing our event a success.

The Fun Dog Show proceeded as planned, there being seven classes and a “Jubilee Champion - best in show”. The excellent prizes generously donated by Jollye’s Pet Superstore (Westcroft) were well received, and Tracy Greenhill, a professional dog trainer, did an excellent job of organising and commentating during this event. Class winners also received a small trophy, and a winners medal. The top three dogs in each class were awarded rosettes to wear.

Parish	£ per annum
LAVENDON	£42.38
RAVENSTONE	£42.24
HAVERSHAM cum LITTLE LINFORD	£41.29
SHENLEY CHURCH END	£39.00
WAVENDON	£36.63
ASTWOOD & HARDMEAD	£30.03
WALTON	£29.53
KENTS HILL, MONKSTON & BRINKLOW	£29.12
GREAT LINFORD	£27.14
CLIFTON REYNES & NEWTON BLOSSOMVILLE	£25.82
GAYHURST	£25.45
CENTRAL MILTON KEYNES	£25.41
LATHBURY	£25.23
SIMPSON & ASHLAND	£21.99
BROUGHTON & MILTON KEYNES VILLAGE	£20.98
NORTH CRAWLEY	£19.00
COLD BRAYFIELD	£17.81
CHICHELEY	£17.67
MOULSOE	£17.18
LOUGHTON	£15.00
TYRINGHAM & FILGRAVE	£14.01
AVERAGE	£62.21

Throughout the afternoon Thames Valley Police PCSOs gave out 200 helium balloons (donated by the Harvester), and bubble blowing tubes (purchased for the event). They also joined in events.

Later in the afternoon, Nigel the Magician gave a 45 minute performance in the marquee, followed by distribution of free popcorn (also donated).

For safety reasons the tug-o-war was abandoned, but the welly whanging and rolling pin hurling went ahead as planned.

Other activities included a penalty shoot-out, various stalls, including a raffle in aid of animal charities (which raised £100). McIntyre also had a craft-making stall, which proved popular.

At about 5pm the ‘King Biscuit Boys’ played a variety of types of music in the main marquee.

During the evening there was a live entertainer in the club-house, who was also very popular.

Throughout the day there were two minor injuries (delt with by Guardian Fist Aid) and no cases of unruly or ASB behaviour.

Based on the number of parents who signed the ‘face painting health and safety disclaimer’, we estimate that throughout the day 400 folks attended.

There were 25 designated helpers, without whom this event would not have been possible and we would like to pay tribute to everyone who helped in any way - including those shifting 27 tables and over 100 chairs to and from Loughton School and Stratfield Park Leisure Complex.

We consider this event to be a great success, despite the inclement weather.

Peter Ballantyne, Simon Kirkman and **Robbie Caddock** (joint coordinators)

Extension to the All Saints Church graveyard



Existing graveyard at All Saints Church

The parish council has been working with All Saints Church to create an extension to the graveyard at the top of Pitcher Lane. The existing graveyard is a place of beauty – as you can see from the photo above. There is an acute shortage of burial space nowadays and the existing graveyard is full.

There is some land adjoining the existing graveyard which has been used as allotments. The Parish Council has recently purchased the land from the Church with the intention of leasing it back to the church as a graveyard. You can see the site for the extension of the graveyard in the photograph below.



New graveyard site at All Saints Church

The Parish Council have been discussing with the Church the arrangements which are required to establish the extension of the graveyard and bring it into use. It is now proposed that a management agreement for the site is entered into between the Church and the Parish Council. This agreement will establish a management committee to run the new graveyard, which will consist of two representatives of the Church and two Parish Councillors. The Parish Council have agreed to dedicate the land in perpetuity for use as a graveyard. Those entitled to be buried there will be residents of the civil parish of Loughton at the date of their death or who were normally resident within Loughton Parish but at the date of their death were confined outside of the Parish in hospital, hospice, nursing home or private accommodation due to illness. People having resided within the parish for at least 10 years will be entitled to purchase plot reservations.

Works will be carried out to the site prior to bringing the site into use as a graveyard including levelling the ground and sowing it to grass and tidying up the hedges. These works will be funded by the Church. The site will be brought into use in two phases. Initially there will be a partition of the new site and the side nearest the existing graveyard will be used first. Once that part is full then the graveyard will be eventually extended to the whole of the new site – although it is envisaged this could take quite a few years.

The redevelopment of the play area at the Loughton Sports Ground

There are two children’s play areas at the Loughton Sports ground. One area has had all its play equipment removed as dangerous, and stands empty and unused. The other, main area is rather run down. It consists of 3 parts; the rather boggy kickwall area, the skate area and the area of swings, see-saw and a roundabout.

Working in partnership with Milton Keynes Council, a plan has been drawn up for a complete redevelopment of the main play area at the Loughton sports ground. The new plan would see a significant improvement of the play area.

The new area would have a play boat with slides, two types of swings, a see-saw, spinner, springer, a large wooden climbing forest with ropes, towers and slides, a basket swing & ham-mock swing. The existing surfaces will be replaced and the kickwall cut down to create a castle effect with “drawbridge”.



Play Area

The ground surfaces would all be changed. In the grassy area of the existing kickwall a new french drain would be installed below ground to prevent the pooling of water that happens at the moment. Rubber matting would be installed to reduce injury caused by falls but allowing the grass to grow up through it so that the matting would not be seen. The central play area where the skate park is would have a surface of sand or pea shingle and the area nearest to the sports ground which is currently an old plastic wetpour surface would have the old surface removed and rubber matting and grass would be installed.

The Parish Council has submitted an application for a grant to WREN (the organisation which administers the landfill tax). It is hoped that a grant of about £75k will be received which will be supplemented by Milton Keynes Council and Loughton Parish Council to cover the cost of the project. It is hoped that a grant award will be received by early December and that work can then start on tendering the contract. This is likely to take a few weeks and the equipment has a 8 week delivery time so realistically works are unlikely to start before the winter. If the weather is poor, this might delay a start to the works. However the existing play area will need significant works done to it before the installation of the new area can commence. Realistically it might not be until easter 2013 before the new play area is ready for its opening ceremony.