



What is in your Messenger this Month?

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Editorial

By Mick Ridley and James Read

The month's cover recalls the spectacular Red Arrows display over Old Warden (May 2016) that also graced the skies of Meppershall. It also reminds us of Corporal Jonathan Bayliss who lost his life in March when a Red Arrows Hawk crashed at RAF Valley. He was working in the elite team of expert engineers, nicknamed 'The Circus', travelling with the aircraft to ensure things run smoothly. This is a huge loss of someone giving their skills and service to something greater than themselves – and ultimately giving everything.



March also saw the loss of Sergeant Matt Tonroe of the Parachute Regiment while on duty in the Middle East. Acclaimed by colleagues for exceptional skills and dedication, Sergeant Tonroe gave his life in the service of our safety and security. Alongside these individuals, since World War 2, the Ministry of Defence reports a total of 7,186 deaths in 31 theatres of conflict.

In this month's Messenger you will find news of a new initiative marking the 100-year anniversary of the end of World War 1 (The Armistice). In addition to its annual Remembrance Day commemorations, the Church will be working to share deeper insights and personal appreciation of those listed on our War Memorial here. Perhaps you can help – see John Parsons' article. Also, take a look at the call for volunteer Case Workers from the Royal British Legion – becoming trained to assess and help arrange support for those needing the services of The Legion – also in this month's Messenger.

Is such service still important today? We pray for peace. But this month a new memorial to British victims of overseas terrorism will be dedicated at the National Memorial Arboretum in Staffordshire - last year as part of the Combined Maritime Forces (CMF) the Royal Navy helped seize almost 23 tonnes of drugs and British forces played a key role in resolving the ebola epidemic in Africa in recent years... the list goes on.

And beyond military, police or other formal service, whether it be your country, your community or simply friends and family, working to help achieve something 'bigger than ourselves' can be an inspiring and important thing – part of our past, present and future way of life.

Letters to the Editor

Dr. Cakebread and Partners,
Robert Lucas Drive,
Hitchin Road,
Shefford, Beds. SG17 5FS

Telephone: 01462 818620
Facsimile: 01462 818642
02 May 2018

Dear Patients of Shefford Surgery,

Whilst I understand all of your frustrations, to keep airing them on social media for all to see isn't helping with morale at the Practice. I can assure you staff are working their very best; clinicians are seeing and advising as many patients as it is safe to do so in a day. To keep reading about how inadequate and inefficient our service is does not help the situation.

The situation is simple. Shefford, surrounding villages and therefore our Practice has grown at a rate that is unsustainable under the current working model. We look after the highest number of Care Homes in the locality too. This demand-and-supply problem is not unique to us, but an issue facing all Practices up and down the country. We are, however, always striving to see as many patients as possible.

We do recognise that there are issues with appointments. However, whilst patients continue to book in to see Doctors for issues that could be seen by Nurses and others come to see a Nurse before seeking first line advice from a pharmacist, you can see that the problem will persist.

We have recruited more 'front-line' and 'upstairs' staff to answer calls at peak times (myself included!). Patients are complaining that their calls are taking a long time to answer or having to call many times but coming into the Practice at 8am to book an appointment only compounds this problem as it stops staff from answering the calls. As a result, we have limited the queueing system in the morning so that the Receptionists are able to concentrate on checking in patients into their 8am appointments and answering the phones. It also ensures that those waiting on the phones are not disadvantaged by those able to come into the Practice.

The Doctors have asked the Reception staff to direct patients to the most appropriate clinician for their symptoms, this means the Receptionist will need to ask basic questions about why you need to be seen. All staff are bound by confidentiality rules so this is no different than explaining to a 111 call handler what your symptoms are. The Receptionists have been trained to recognise what symptoms can be seen by either a nurse or a Doctor, these are also on our website under the "who should I see" section - please refer to these when requesting an appointment.

There is a national shortage of Doctors wishing to go into General Practice. To give you an idea of a usual GP day: 7.30/8am start, sometimes up to 30 results to interpret and act upon, see 20 patients, complete all necessary paperwork, such as blood tests, referrals etc, 12pm, then start on home visits for those that can't get in, sometimes as many as four or five each, 2/3pm then back to see more (up to 20 more) patients until 6 at the earliest. In between all

this they need to answer medication queries, phone patients back and action/ respond to hospital letters. Not to mention medication reviews. As you can see a busy day, often with no lunch break and staying until 7/8pm or taking extra work home.

We have been short of Doctors since the sad passing of Dr Sekaran and the retirement of Dr Moffitt. Since before Christmas, Dr Roy Boodhun has also been off on sick leave, his workload absorbed by the current Partners. We have been advertising for a Doctor for over a year. We have recruited two salaried Doctors: a new one, Dr Hafeez, will be starting for three days a week from next week; Dr Boodhun will be back from mid – April on a phased return. In addition, we have employed a full-time pharmacist due to start within the next month who can assist with medication reviews, action hospital letters, and will gain a qualification to prescribe in certain areas.

We as a Practice are ALL trying our best to offer a good and caring service to you all. If you feel that you have suggestions for improvement they are welcomed. Please email, constructively, to: katie.dearman@nhs.net, so that we can work together to shape a service that patients are happy with.

Thank you all for supporting us through this challenging time.

Yours faithfully, Katie Dearman (Practice Manager)

Dear Sirs,

Concern has been raised at recent Meppershall PC meetings regarding accidents on the A507 in our vicinity. Imagine my surprise therefore whilst travelling to the Chicksands Gin Palace to be confronted by a mobile digital road sign.

This sign was situated on a traffic island at the roundabout at the junction of the A507 and Ampthill Road and was announcing proposed road closures, the message changed every few seconds to give out dates and times of closure.

Presumably one is supposed to absorb this information whilst traversing the roundabout and keeping an eye out for the odd moron appearing from nowhere.

Brains appear to be sadly lacking in parts of the Highways Agency.

Kind Regards, Mick Trundle, Trundle Towers, Meppershall.

Dear Sir,

I would like to say thank you to my friends and neighbours who gave me help and showed such kindness after my emergency knee operation. Without you all I would never have coped. I am glad to say that I am now on the road to recovery. Also, just a special thanks to two special Ladies from Campton; without them I could not have managed.

Regards, Joyce Smith.

Notice of Village Hall AGM

Meppershall Village Hall Charity Number 300052

**Notice of Annual General Meeting (AGM) on Sunday 24th June 2018 at 6pm
in the Interim Village Hall, Meppershall**

AGENDA

1. Approve minutes of the previous AGM held on 26th November 2017.
2. Trustees and Treasurers report and approve accounts for the year to 31st March 2018.
3. Update on construction of the new Village Hall.
4. Election of trustees.
5. Any other business: a) Notified before the meeting b) Arising at the meeting.

Notes:

Item 1: The report of the meeting is available by request or on the website.

Item 2: The accounts will be available prior to the meeting on request by post or email or via the website.

Item 3: Updates have been included in The Messenger and on the website on a regular basis.

Item 4: Details of the existing trustees are available on request by post or email, all of whom are willing to continue. The current trustees are shown on the Village Hall website and the Charities Commission website under Meppershall Village Hall Charity number 300052.

Further nominations for the role of trustee, with a seconder and the nominees consent to act, should be provided in writing preferably ahead of, or otherwise at the latest delivered at the start of the AGM. The appropriate form for nominations may be requested by post or email. A nominee must be willing and able to fulfil all the legal duties and responsibilities of a trustee and make the necessary time available to attend at least eight meetings during the year as well as assist in the running of a self-help organisation by taking on and delivering specific projects.

Item 5: Items for other business should preferably be submitted by post or email at least two working days before the AGM so that appropriate research or information that is required can be collated before the meeting.

Postal request details:

David Birch
The Brook
18b Shefford Road
Meppershall Beds
SG17 5LJ

Graham Jones
10 Taylors Close
Meppershall
Beds
SG17 5NH

Dave Foskett
11 Orchard Close
Meppershall
Beds
SG17 5LW

Email contact details: enquiries@meppershallvillagehall.co.uk

Website details <https://www.meppershallvillagehall.co.uk>

Development Update – What's in a name?

As the building of the new Hall and Community facilities is progressing, the Trustees have had a number of people asking what the new building is going to be called.

Whilst Meppershall has had a village hall for many years, Gamlingay Community Centre is known as the Eco Hub, Henlow has a Pavilion, Ampthill has a Community Hall and London is well known for the Gherkin, Shard and Cheese Grater.

Whilst we're not going to fall into the same trap as the National Environment Research Council and end up with the equivalent of "*Boaty McBoatface*", if you do have any suggestions for an appropriate name befitting the wide range of activities and facilities that the new building will offer including Main Hall, Stage, Theatrical Performances, Meeting rooms, Bar & Café, Patio Area, Games Room, Snooker, Pool, Pre-School, Kick Boxers, Brownies, Table Tennis, Indoor Bowls, Sports Changing Rooms etc. please let us know at enquiries@meppershallvillagehall.co.uk.

There will be a £40 prize for the best name chosen and bonus £25 for children in Year 4 and below entering with a picture they have drawn of how they see the new MVH for their future.



Well - that's the appeal over and done with; now we wait for the Inspector's decision, which will be a few weeks!

But we want to say a very big "THANK YOU" to all the villagers who turned up every day to listen to the arguments, and to make their feelings plain. It was obvious that there was a deep feeling in the village against these plans, and that became obvious as soon as the hearing had to be moved to the main council chamber due to overcrowding of the meeting room.....so many supporters!

And thanks also for putting up with the rash of protest posters that appeared just before the hearing. We're sure the Inspector couldn't have failed to see them as he carried out his own observations, so thanks again to all of you who put them up in the windows, in the gardens, on the telegraph poles....

We simply don't know what the outcome will be, but one thing was clear - ***the legal arguments hinged only on the objections raised by CBC Planning to the original application.***

All of our concerns - about speeding traffic on Shefford Road, dangerous access to the proposed estate, completely inadequate access to the village by any means other than a car, hopeless bus services, loss of agricultural land - all of these major issues might not be given their full weight because the Central Beds planners and Transport advisors didn't see anything worth objecting about on the application. We will be making our District Councillors fully aware of how let down we feel by CBC on these matters, and we'll ask them what they're going to do about it. So, can you, by attending the Parish Council meeting and/or emailing them.

We'll keep you all posted both here, and on the Meppershall Noticeboard on facebook.

Once again - many thanks for your support.

Meppershall Action Group

Meppershall Parish Council

Here are the major points from the Council meeting held on Monday 9th April 2018 in the Interim Village Hall.

CBC Councillor Mark Liddiard reported the following: -

A letter has been received from the Chief Constable and further discussion will take place regarding changes to the road markings on the A507 between the Esso and Airman roundabouts. Also, there will be additional police patrols in the area using unmarked cars.

Although not in the Parish of Meppershall the following is close enough to have an impact. A planning application has been received by CBC for an enlarged hotel and small village at Beadlow. Plans can be viewed on-line.

The members of the public present commented on the terrible state of the footpaths around the village; are there finances in place to support local groups if the move to the new Village Hall become prohibitive; is it illegal to have bonfires on a building site – yes, it is.

Planning and Housing

Under consideration – Single storey extension and garage conversion 4, Shillington Road; Tower View Nursery 81 Fildyke Road Demolition of existing bungalow and greenhouses and erection of 10 dwellings; Land to rear of 70, Fildyke Road, lawful development certificate existing permanent dwelling house; 6, Taylors Close, two storey side extension; Land adjacent to 23, Shefford Road, (6 semi-detached chalet bungalows) removal of planning conditions 10 and 11.

Granted – Erection of detached house on land adjacent to Sandy View, Shefford Road; Single storey extension and garage conversion 10 Brookside.

Withdrawn – None

Appeals – 100 High Street, appeal DISMISSED. 59, Shefford Road appeal was heard at CBC offices, Prior Walk on 10th to 14th April 2018 we now awaiting the Planning Inspector's decision.

New Applications – 13 Shefford Road single storey rear extension, the Council had no objections to the proposal.

Meppershall Action Group

Cllr. Thomason reported that the preparations for attending the Gladman appeal against CBC's decision to refuse planning permission on the land behind 59, Shefford Road had been finalised.

Neighbourhood Plan

Cllr. Thomason reported that he had recently submitted a new application for funding.

Highways and Transport

Cllr. R. Smith reported on various road closures in the area over the next month

The Clerk had received a reply from Highways at CBC regarding the latest position on independent speed indicators stating that the Parish should wait until CBC had formulated their own plans on the subject

Environment and Leisure

The Clerk reported that she was in correspondence with CBC over contributions to the seasonal vegetation clearance.

The goal posts for Old Road Meadow will be installed when replacement goals are provided. The grass cutting plan for the village has been agreed. Due to the very wet weather of late please accept there may be some mess when the first cut is undertaken.

Cllr. Foskett reported that the roof on the new village hall had not been completed due to the weather but it was not expected to affect the timescales previously given. Although the financial support mentioned by a member of the public earlier was not a Parish Council matter the group referred to had a trustee on the Village Hall Management Committee and it was hoped that satisfactory negotiations could be concluded.

Procedures

The Employment Handbook and Policies will now be presented for adoption at the May meeting. The Clerk reported on what the Parish Council is required to do to comply with the new Data Protection Legislation, namely appoint a Data Protection Officer (DPO). The DPO must be independent to the Council so to try and reduce the cost the Clerk has spoken to local Councils with a view to joining together to procure the necessary services. Councillors voted for the Clerk to continue the discussions.

Training

Defibrillator Training has been scheduled for Thursday 31st May at the Interim Village Hall, Walnut Tree Way, at 11am.

The rescheduled Understanding Planning Course 1 will take place on Wednesday 16th May at Mount Pleasant Golf Course, Lower Stondon, at 7.30pm

Both courses are open to the public; if you are interested please contact the Clerk.

Next Meeting

The Annual Statutory meeting will be held on Monday 14th May 2018 in the Interim Village Hall at 7.45pm.

Peter Chapman, Chairman

chairman@meppershall.org

Personal Note

This meeting and report marks the end of my three-year reign as Chairman, the maximum allowed by standing orders. I would like to thank my fellow Councillors and the Clerk for all their support; the members of MAG for their sterling work in opposing the large developments proposed for the Village; the members of Save the Sugar Loaf for their expertise and hours spent in saving the Pub from closure; the editorial team of the Messenger for the number of times my reports have been late and finally the Parishioners who attend the Council meetings and those who have responded to these reports.

LEISURE TIME

CALLING ALL RESIDENTS - WE NEED YOUR IDEAS

The Parish Council needs to identify priorities for new or improved recreational open spaces and outdoor sport facilities within the village. We need this information to enable us to secure contributions toward these priorities and stop money going to projects outside of our village. Other villages have things on their "wish list" such as: skate parks, tennis courts, children's play equipment, allotment toilets etc...



Do you have an idea about how we could improve or create new leisure facilities in the village? If so, please email the Clerk (clerk@meppershall.org) who will put your ideas forward at the Parish Council meeting on Monday 11th June.

Remember – Great ideas create great results!



Community Defibrillator Seminar Invitation

All welcome

Thursday 31st May – 11:00am to 1:00pm

Meppershall Village Hall

All residents welcome but to reserve a place please contact the Parish Clerk on clerk@meppershall.org or 07930 813808

On behalf of the Parish Council the Community Heartbeat Trust will be demonstrating the use of defibrillators and explaining how the equipment works and its benefits to the community in saving precious minutes in the treatment of sudden cardiac arrest.

The more people that know how to use the portable defibrillator installed in our community, the more chance there is of saving the life of a victim of Sudden Cardiac Arrest.

Everybody is welcome and no special skills are required, just your willingness to play an important role in the event of a medical emergency.



The last few weeks of term flew past. We have a new PTA who worked extremely hard to ensure there were lots of events and activities celebrating Easter. A new style Easter egg hunt involved solving clues, working together in House teams as quickly as possible and a visit to the Easter Bunny. Every child within the school received an Easter egg - and these were not small!

On the same day we held an Easter Bonnet parade which our parents came to watch. There were many amazing bonnets with traditional ones with rabbits, eggs, flowers and chicks and the more unusual including a Darth Vader entry. At the end of the parade, parents were able to enjoy hot drinks and hot cross buns. Then the rain came down and it was of biblical proportions, which allowed more hot cross buns to be eaten whilst waiting for the rain to stop.

We finished the term with our Easter Service at St Mary's. We decided to change the service a little this year. Each class took a Christian Value associated with the Easter story and taught us a little about that value. These were Love, Hope, Courage, Forgiveness and Joy. The deep thinking around these values was very evident. Keith Callard taught us about the Resurrection and Rev. Roni finished the service with an Easter blessing. Eggs were distributed too.

We are now looking forward to a busy summer term – it would just be nice to see the sun!

Best wishes, Nickie Moore

Meppershall Pre-School



Croudace
HOMES.CO.UK

Ponderings

Pre-School

'To every girl and boy,
come outside, share the joy
on this fun and shiny day
come out today, sing and play.

Strike up a marching band
explore mysterious lands,

be a pirate, monster, or a princess, too...

do whatever is fun for you!'

by Barbara R. Johnson@nanascorner.com

Welcome warmer weather, we have really missed you and I think this poem reflects the spring we now all have in our step. We are in full stride of our first and last summer term in the interim hall and cannot help but be excited that we are one step closer to the opening of the new dedicated Pre-school later in the year. However, we aim to ensure every day is a fun and unique adventure for the children no matter where we are. We plan lots of fresh and exciting activities each week and explore our village whenever we can.

One thing that makes Meppershall Pre-school very special is just how dedicated the staff team is to make a difference to each child's development, but just as importantly we want to ensure each child thrives in our environment and at home, by having a good relationship with all of our families, who in turn support us by joining the management committee. To all our wonderful parents, carers and grandparents please come along and support us on 16th May at 8pm at our AGM which is being held at Meppershall C of E Academy. Thank you for caring!

The highly qualified team at Meppershall Pre-school is dedicated to offering the best possible care to all our children by creating a safe and stimulating environment, encompassing all individual needs.

We are open every weekday from 9:15am till 3:15pm (term time only) and take up to 24 children in each session from in and around the surrounding areas.

**Our sessions are filling up fast. Please ring Tamsin on 07816 357159,
or email meppershallps@gmail.com,
to enroll your child or join our waiting list,
or visit www.meppershall-ps.co.uk for more information.**

OFSTED URN EY551988 Registered Charity: 1031913

Notices

Jean Holden's Classic Car Show



Hello from Jean Holden,
On Saturday 23rd June I am hoping to run a Classics Show in the car park of the new Village Hall, in aid of St. Mary's Restoration Fund.

I have run the Classic Car and Bike Show at the annual Summer Fair for the last eight years and this year I would like to present a slightly different one. I would like to show ALL the various classic or interesting vehicles that we have in our village (and there are a surprising number) and locally, to include cars, trucks, motor bikes etc. So please, if you would like to show off your pride and joy for a very good cause mark the date in your calendar now. Please get in touch with me – my phone number is 01462 815161. In order to help with the organising, I really would like to know numbers by 31st May. I would ask each entrant to contribute £3 towards the Church Fund.

ALL SPECTATORS ARE VERY WELCOME AND IT'S FREE!

The Summerfield Railway

Bedford Model Engineering Society

Summerfield Miniature Railway

Off the A600 just past Haynes Turn

Public Running Days in 2018 from 10.30AM to 4 PM

MAY	Sunday 6 th		SEPTEMBER	Sunday 2 nd
	Monday 7 th (Bank Holiday)			Sunday 16 th
	Sunday 27 th		OCTOBER	Sunday 7 th
	Monday 28 th (BH)			Sunday 21 st
	Wed 30 th (Half Term) *			Wed 24 th (Half Term) *
JUNE	Sunday 10 th		DECEMBER	Sat & Sun 8th/9th Santa
	Sunday 24 th			Specials – pre-booking
JULY	Sunday 8 th			essential
	Sunday 22 nd			For further information,
AUGUST	Wednesday 1 st *			see our website:
	Wednesday 8 th *			www.bedfordmes.co.uk
	Wednesday 15 th *			*On our Wednesday openings,
	Sunday 26 th			only limited catering will be
	Monday 27 th (BH)			available.

Junior Church

St Mary's Church, Meppershall
Junior Church

Our next Junior Church sessions are:

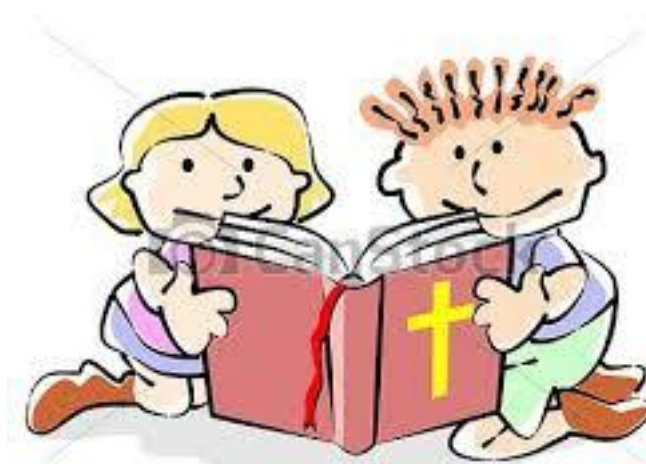
Sunday 6 May

11am at St Mary's Church

(ages 3 to 12)

and

Sunday 3 June, 11am



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Message from St. Mary's - Services & Events

Parish Church of St Mary The Virgin (Church of England)

Church Road, off Campton Road, Meppershall

www.stmarysmeppershall.org.uk ✝ facebook.com/stmarysmeppershall



Rector: The Reverend Veronica Goodman

01462 339962 – ronigoodman@gmail.com – usual day off Monday

Churchwardens:

Dawn Abbatt 01462 816962 Chris Valentine 01462 815971

Email: Meppershall.PCC@gmail.com

PCC Secretary:

Anne Parsons 01462 813333 Email: annie10639@gmail.com

Message from St Mary's...

April is the time of year when churches (in the Church of England) have their Annual General Meetings. It is a time to look back over the previous calendar year and to report so many aspects of our church life...

And so in this issue it is also a time for me, as Rector, to say a huge thank you to all who have contributed to the life of St Mary's over the past year: the Church Wardens, PCC, our Sacristans, Lay Leaders of Worship, caterers and churchyard working party-ers; the choir, organists, sides-people, readers, prayers, rota-makers, Junior Church team, CD Play-ers, cleaners, launderers, flower arrangers, bell-ringers and maintenance team. I apologise if I have missed anyone! Thank you to all who contribute their gifts generously, quietly, tirelessly. Thank you also to the Parish Council for their generous help with grass cutting in the Churchyard.

This sounds like quite a crowd! But actually, it is just a few people...

A special thanks to all who ran the Sparks Holiday Club this year and with Sir Prize and Sir Nightie-Nightie welcomed so many young knights and ladies. Thank you to all who put so much effort into enthralling over 100 children this Spring. Look out for Sparks 2018 from the 13th -16th August.

I am pleased also to thank the Friends of St Mary's for their generosity in raising funds for the Church - and for the fun and fellowship their events generate in the Church and the village.

Also, thank you to Matthew Jones for again telling us "A Christmas Carol" - both contributing to our preparations for Christmas and raising funds for the Church. We had a lovely evening! Matthew will be back on Dec 2nd this year.

I think I should add that, as there are many people who kindly wear "several hats" and undertake two or three (or more!) jobs in the Church, and others who have served faithfully for many, many, years, there is often actually a shortage of helpers and we are always grateful when new people offer to contribute their gifts - do get in touch with me if you feel this could be you!

I am personally also really grateful to my husband Revd Andrew Goodman and to Revd Paul Lanham, to our Reader Keith and Ruth and to all the others who have done so much to help and to cover during my treatment, which has gone well and is now completed. I am so thankful that so many come to pray in our Church, sit quietly in it, look after it, watch over it, and support it in so many different ways.

This year we are trying still to progress the repairs needed to the Church building. We recently made two unsuccessful grant applications. Even after many years of fundraising and generous giving, the cost remains beyond our means. We will re-apply to Heritage Lottery Fund (under a slightly different scheme) and to a variety of other grant awarding bodies, hoping to meet the shortfall. We still urgently need to replace the tower and transept roofs and undertake a variety of other works to make the building watertight and prevent further deterioration.

I am very grateful to those who spent so long putting together the grant applications we have submitted. We were told that there was "nothing wrong" with the applications, but only that the deadlines were heavily over-subscribed and many worthy applicants were disappointed. If you are interested or have experience of making successful grant applications, your help would be very much appreciated!

If you would simply like to support the cause by donating (which is enormously helpful as it also shows grant awarders that we have local support), then please visit our website (www.stmarysmeppershall.org.uk/giving) or talk to James Read about the Friends of St Mary's.

It is still our vision to build and to be a healthy church in this place - which at the end of the day has much more to do with being a strong and loving worshipping community in Meppershall than it has to do with the building only. As Pentecost (when we celebrate the first outpouring of the Holy Spirit on the Church) is on 20th May this year - let's pray that God will pour out his Spirit afresh on his Church here, even more, so that we may see his Kingdom come, on earth as it is in heaven, in Meppershall.

With every blessing, Rector Roni.

Services and Events – May 2018

At St Mary's unless stated below

Date	Time	Service / Event
Weds 2 nd May	10.00am	Holy Communion
Sunday 6 th May 6 th of Easter	11.00am	Holy Communion - Junior Church in the vestry
Tues 8 th May	2-4pm	Rectory Tea - Chat and a cuppa, all welcome
Weds 9 th May	10.00am	Holy Communion
Friday 11 th May	9pm	Silent Together Come to enjoy the presence of God in the tranquillity of the church - 30 mins.
Sun 13 th May 7 th of Easter	8.30am 11.00am 2.15pm 6.30pm	Holy Communion Morning worship – all welcome! Second Sunday Stroll – Old Warden via Southill Park (by kind permission). A rare chance to see one of Mid Bedfordshire's hidden gems in its spring glory. 7 miles: St Mary's at 2pm, or join at St Michael's Shefford at 3pm, ending at St Leonard's, Old Warden, by 5pm. More info or to coordinate return lifts: Meppershall.PCC@gmail.com / tel. 857836. "Come Holy Spirit" Prayer Service – preparing for Pentecost
Monday 14 th May	7.15 for 7.45pm	Bible Society meeting: AGM, beginning with refreshments, at St Michael's Shefford.
Weds 16 th May	10.00am	Holy Communion
Sun 20 th May Pentecost	8.30am 11.00am	Holy Communion Holy Communion Morning worship – all welcome!
Tues 22 nd May	2-4pm	Rectory Tea – Getting Serious over a cuppa. All welcome for chat and a catch up.
Weds 23 rd May	10.00am	Holy Communion
Sat 26 th May	9.00am	Celtic Morning Prayer
Sun 27 th May Trinity Sunday	11.00am	Holy Communion - Junior Church in the vestry
Weds 30 th May	10.00am	Holy Communion

Remembrance Sunday, 11th November 2018

Each year, the men of Meppershall who were called to leave their village to go to fight for their Country during the two World Wars are remembered at the church on Remembrance Sunday.

This year, the country will be marking the centenary of the ending of the Great War on 11th November 1918. As part of this anniversary St Mary's are hoping to commemorate the men who sadly did not return home with a deeper view of who they were and what happened to them and the families they left behind.

We would like to take this opportunity to ask if there are any families still in our neighbourhood who have any information they might be willing to share with the wider community, perhaps as part of an exhibition in church or as a record of a period in the history of our village. If so, could we please ask that you contact the Parochial Church Council, either through the Secretary or the Rector at your earliest convenience.

Thank you, we shall look forward to welcoming you to our commemoration in November.
John Parsons



Volunteers Wanted

The Royal British Legion is currently recruiting for volunteer caseworkers across Bedfordshire & Hertfordshire. Case workers play a vital role in enabling the Legion to deliver our Welfare services and are often the only person who will meet with our beneficiaries face to face. The role involves visiting Service personnel, reservists, veterans and their families in their home, and completing our application for assistance. Case workers also write a narrative report and complete an outcome star covering six areas of need; Finances, Well-being, Health, Housing, Activities and Social Life. After completing their report, case workers make recommendations to a paid member of staff, a Case Officer, as to what kind of assistance may be required. This can include financial grants, referrals to internal specialists (debts, benefits, War Pension/Armed Forced Compensation Scheme, mental health, independent living, criminal justice etc.), referral to external and statutory services and referrals to internal services (break centres, care homes, adventure breaks etc.). After a volunteer is finished with a case, they are able to see all the actions taken with a case through our online Case Management System (CMS).

Full training is provided, and expenses are covered, including travel up to 45p per mile. All of our volunteer caseworkers are DBS checked.

We are looking to recruit people with good social skills, who are able to drive to visit the clients' homes, and who are comfortable using a computer. If you are interested in the role, or would like some more information, please contact us on 0333 011 4480 or VolCoordSEM@britishlegion.org.uk



Neighbourhood Plan Newsletter

The Meppershall Neighbourhood Plan Group, formed of local Parish Councillors and residents, supported by Central Bedfordshire Council is in the process of writing a Meppershall Parish Neighbourhood Plan (NP). The plan will impact on how Meppershall is developed up to 2035. The aim is to have the NP published in 2019. The Neighbourhood Plan builds on the 2017 Village Plan and will run alongside the CBC Local Plan until 2035. It is concerned with Meppershall as a place; to ensure it remains and develops as a thriving rural community without losing what we all value of the present village. It will address key aspects of Meppershall. For instance maybe you want to:

Protect your favourite Meppershall spaces?

Ensure there are enough new homes for young families?

These and other key issues can be included in our Meppershall Neighbourhood Plan.

At the two NP public information sessions which ran in October 2017, in the interim village hall, it was suggested that the focus of the plan should be in 9 broad policy areas. We are continuing with these 9 broad areas.

Where can you help?

We will need your help in cataloguing and recording all aspects of what makes Meppershall great and will be consulting with you to seek your input on a range of topics. Our consultation process started with the launch of the NP process in October and will continue with questionnaires, further public meetings, gatherings and events, and conclude with a referendum in 2019, where villagers will be asked to agree with recommendations in the NP. We will also follow up by asking for your help in specific areas later in this year.

What now?

You may be aware that Meppershall Parish Council commissioned a Meppershall Green Infrastructure Plan (GIP) back in 2011, funded by CBC. This can be viewed at:

<http://bedsrcc.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/03/Meppershall.pdf>

The NP group have asked Bedfordshire Rural Communities Charities (BRCC) to help with updating this plan, to provide the latest information available and to start engaging with local landowners who will work with the NP team as part of the planning process. The updated GIP will provide important evidence to support the rural character of the village, which we know from the Village Plan surveys was very important to its residents.

The Neighbourhood Plan will also have plenty to say about housing development. It will not say that there should never be development, because that would not be listened to. What it will recommend, is the type of development that *would* be acceptable and suggest where it could be put, without damaging the character we seek to preserve.

When our Neighbourhood Plan has been through all its stages, which includes a 2019 public referendum and a review by a Government inspector, it becomes part of the planning framework for our part of Central Beds and must be taken into account by CBC planners.

“Have your Say”

The Neighbourhood Plan Team

Meppershall Social Club

MAY AT THE SOCIAL CLUB

*BINGO- Every Friday. Doors open 6.45pm eyes down 7.15pm

Members free entry, Non-members £1 entrance fee

*MEAT RAFFLE-drawn every Friday night during the Bingo Interval

£1 per square could win you your Sunday roast

*KARAOKE Saturday 5th May 7.30pm-late With Stuart & Dave's Club Sound Karaoke. 1,000's of tracks to choose from. Sing-a-long to your favourite songs at this fun for everyone evening in a relaxed and friendly atmosphere. This is pure Karaoke no in fill music, just people who love to sing having a great time. So, if you like to sing come along, we'd love to hear you.

*PAUL CARNE'S QUIZ NIGHT-Sunday 13th May at 7.30pm the most fun quiz on the planet, £1 per person, teams as big or small as you like, half of entry money to winning team, other half to the Social Club Charities for 2018. So far this year Team 'Sparks' has won the first two of 2018 can they make it three in a row? Or will your team be the one to stop them? It's still all to play for in this friendly fun for everyone quiz.

* Follow the Social Club for events on Facebook; search for Meppershall Social Club and 'Like' and 'Follow' the page for other activities. We also share events as they happen on the Meppershall Notice Board and on Facebook too.

*SNOOKER at the Social Club: members can play every evening when the club is open. For more information pop into the Social Club any evening or contact The Club after 8pm on 01462 815642. Club opens 8pm; we look forward to seeing you.

MEMBERSHIP for 2018 is available now (pick up a form at the Club)

Meppershall Social Club 01462 815642 after 8pm

MEPPERSHALL SOCIAL CLUB

YOUR SOCIAL CLUB NEEDS

YOU!

Located at the Interim Village Hall
Open every day from 8pm

Come and enjoy a drink with friends and support
your local community. Snooker, darts and
social events all year round.

Follow us @meppershallsocialclub on Facebook.

May Special:

Become a member in May and get your first
drink free*

*max value £3.25 for single membership or
£6.50 for a family membership.

Standard Membership:

Single £7.50, Family (2 adults & children under 18) £15

OAP: Single £5, Family (2 adults & children under 18) £10



In February the brownies got together with over one hundred other Rainbows, Brownies and Guides in the District to spend an afternoon thinking about other girls around the world, making new brownie and rainbow friends and renewing their promise. The girls took part in lots of fun activities during the afternoon which had a British theme, including decorating a tea cup, learning about and making a Union Jack flag, making a yummy afternoon tea, playing games and taking part in a quiz and treasure hunt outside.

It's amazing the difference a few months make. From having only six brownies and it being strangely quiet at brownie meetings, we have now had a surge of new brownies and we are now back to our noisy and busy brownie meetings. We recently enrolled eight new brownies and we have another five girls starting with us very soon, which will take us up to 19 brownies. We could therefore soon be full up, so please remember to register your daughter so that she is on our waiting list.

This term we have had fun with our Winter Olympics themed evening. The brownies made Olympic torches, and we had a pretend snowball fight, we played our own version of curling and made up our own ski jumping event. The girls all left with medals.

We also had a Peter Rabbit themed evening, where we made very cute rabbit coasters, had a beetle drive where we replaced the beetle with a much cuter rabbit and we played some other rabbit themed games. We also made Mothers' day cards and presents and finished the term with an Easter themed evening, involving an Easter egg hunt, making chocolate nests, and made Easter cards. We also completed our Science Investigator badge with some more science experiments, including learning about some famous inventors and we made a compass.

Hopefully the nice weather is just around the corner, and with the lighter evenings, we hope to be able to get out and about during our brownie meetings over the next few months.

If you are interested in your daughter joining Brownies or volunteering yourself, then please contact Snowy Owl (Suzanne) on 07817 392325 or you can register online at www.girlguiding.org.uk.



THE MEPPERSHALL PLAYERS



With only a few weeks left of rehearsals for our Summer Variety Show the Players are working very hard putting the final touches to the production. We will be performing this fun-filled spectacular on Friday 29th & Saturday 30th June, at Meppershall Interim Village hall. Curtain up 7.45pm, Tickets all £5 no concessions. Tickets on sale from Wednesday 2nd May, once again, due to the current hall our seating capacity is reduced, so get your tickets early if you want to see this fun for everyone Variety Show.

Box Office: Every Wednesday Evening 7.30pm-9pm in the foyer of Meppershall Interim Village Hall; alternatively call 01462 816336 Mon, Tues, Thurs, evenings 6pm-9pm or email Karen.mitchell11@talktalk.net. This will be for this production only as our Box Office will be online from October.

Our Box Office is changing; after nearly 35 years of providing a marvellous Box Office service for the Players', Roger's Bakery has retired from showbusiness. We would like to say a HUGE THANK YOU to Mary, Roger & all the staff at Roger's Bakery, not just for selling the best bread & cakes in the world but also for all the time they have given to the Players over the years. Not just selling our tickets, but also the superb costumes made by Mary's fair hands (which we still use on a regular basis), Mary dancing on stage to Thriller in 'Aladdin' Panto 1986 (rehearsals were great fun) and the wonderful cakes donated as raffle prizes. So, although we won't be dropping in with the tickets Mary, we will be dropping in for caramel slices, jam puffs, fresh cream scones Mmmmmmmmm.

Players dates for your diary:

Sun 3rd June S.T.M.A Summer Fair, Digswell Park Shefford 1-5pm

Fri 29th & Sat 30th June 7.45pm Summer Variety Show

Wed 11th July Players' A.G.M 7.30pm

Wed 18th July Snow White Pantomime Read through 7.30pm

Wed 25th July Snow White Pantomime Auditions 7.30pm

Fri 23rd & Sat 24th Nov Snow White Pantomime 2018

Fri 30th Nov & Sat 1st Dec Snow White Pantomime 2018

We would still like someone who loves to play piano for an 'Old Time Music Hall Variety Show' for 2019 and V.E and V.J Shows for 2020, could this be you? If yes, we'd love to meet you. Drop in on any Wednesday or contact Karen (Players' Secretary) on the number below.

Find the Meppershall Players on Facebook (Meppershall Players Community) Instagram, Twitter, and Meppershall Village Hall Website.

The Players meet every Wednesday evening at 7.30pm at the Interim Village Hall. Membership is currently free; we welcome people from the age of 9 to 90+ to indulge in all areas of theatrical performances, set-building, costumes, directing, acting, make-up, song & dance, etc. Interested? We look forward to meeting you.

Karen Mitchell (Players' Secretary) 01462 816336

Shefford Leisure Group

By Enid Pamment

Although we have seen several beautiful sunny days, it has been on the chilly side with even a little snowfall! There is always something to discuss in our country as the weather is so unpredictable. May I say that May is a beautiful time of the year with all the Spring flowers, people out tending their gardens, grass cutting and so it goes on.



Our last visits were Camden Market and a light hearted Cockney afternoon which was held on a boat in the Royal Docks. The weather was rather damp at Camden Market but it certainly did not stop the crowds of people milling their way around the stalls and enjoying their purchases. The canal did not seem too busy but I expect it was only to be expected and hardly surprising! Our light-hearted Cockney afternoon really was full of surprises! We met our 'white boat' named Tereza-Joanne permanently moored facing the runway of the City Airport situated in King George V Dock, one of the East End Royal Docks. The view of the City of London surrounding the boat was fantastic and although marred a little by mist we could view clearly the aircraft taking off along the runway at very frequent intervals. We were joined with another party from Horsham who were great fun and our entertainment was two 'pearly kings' who soon encouraged some of our groups to have a dance. Our meal which was served in a basket of either chicken or fish. We really had a mixture of ages as we had a family from California who were visiting relatives in Shefford; also a few younger teens enjoying the fun and they all left the boat with a smile on their faces.

Shortly we will have our 'Get Together' – which should prove a relaxing afternoon for everyone. Please let me know if you would like to come along as we are limited to the number of people and would be upset to disappoint anyone.

Several people have asked me if a Warner's trip could be arranged. Well, I have managed to sort a long weekend to Bembridge on the Isle of Wight. This hopefully will take place from the 5th – 8th October. Don't leave it too long to make up your minds – single accommodation in particular is always in high demand.

Enid

FORTHCOMING EVENTS PLANNED FOR 2018

SHEFFORD LEISURE GROUP ANNUAL GET TOGETHER – Wednesday 9th May 2018 – held at Mount Pleasant Golf Club from 2pm – 4pm. Afternoon tea & presentation.

THE COTSWOLDS EXPLORER – 3-DAY TOUR – May 27th 2018 for two nights – We will be staying at the 4* Oxford Whitney Hotel, just a short walk from the historic centre of Whitney, this hotel is the ideal base for travelling throughout Oxfordshire. The hotel features well equipped bedrooms, a heated swimming pool, spa bath, steam room and sauna which are all free for the group to use throughout their stay. Day trips include The Downton Abbey Matinee Explorer, Cotswolds Gold and the Cotswolds River Thames

Explorer. We also have a Blue Badge Guide to accompany us. Please contact for prices and any further details required. A flier is available if requested.

CHICHESTER CATHEDRAL'S spectacular floral event – Friday 1st June 2018 *

THE ROYAL ALBERT HALL (TOUR & LUNCH) – Sunday 10th June 2018

ELY CATHEDRAL FLOWER FESTIVAL – Friday 22nd June 2018 *

WINDSOR CASTLE & SAVILL GARDENS – Sunday 1st July 2018

WISBECH ROSE FAIR (FESTIVAL DAY) – Saturday 7th July 2018 *

SMUGGLERS & STRAWBERRY JAM (Essex) – Monday 23rd July 2018

SANDRINGHAM FLOWER SHOW – Wednesday 25th July 2018 *

LICHFIELD & THE NATIONAL ARBORETUM – Monday 3rd September 2018

BRICK LANE MUSIC HALL (London Palladium Show) – Friday 5th October with afternoon cream tea. Coach leaving Shefford at 9am. *

WARNERS – BEMBRIDGE I.O.W – 5th – 8th OCTOBER (Friday till Monday) 2018

THURSFORD CHRISTMAS SPECTACULAR – Sunday 11th November 2018. (*reserve list*)

JOHN RUTTER'S CHRISTMAS CAROL CONCERT (MATINEE) - ROYAL ALBERT HALL – Tuesday 4th December – Arena, Circle & Choir seats available. *

Kindly note: Trips marked with a * have been arranged by Stevenage Group Travel.

LONDON SHOWS CURRENTLY AVAILABLE – ALL MATINEE PERFORMANCES

(organised in conjunction with Stevenage Group Travel)

STRICTLY BALLROOM – THE MUSICAL: Wednesday 2nd May, the uplifting story that inspired the world to dance, based on Baz Luhrmann's multi award-winning movie *Strictly Ballroom*. Piccadilly Theatre – Stall Seats – Coach will depart Shefford at 10.45am.

LES MIS – Wednesday 23rd May – Queens Theatre – Stall Seats – Coach will depart Shefford at 10.30am.

CHICAGO – Matinee – Wednesday 23rd May – Phoenix Theatre, Stall & Dress Circle Seats – Coach leaving Shefford at 10.30am.

WICKED – with a 2-course lunch – Wednesday 20th June – Apollo Victoria Theatre – Stall Seats Coach leaving Shefford at 9am.

THE PLAY THAT GOES WRONG – with a 2-course carvery lunch – Sunday 24th June. Duchess Theatre – Stall Seats. Coach will depart Shefford at 9.30am.

THE KING and I – (Matinee) – Wednesday 27th June 2018 – London Palladium – Royal Circle Seats – Coach leaving Shefford at 10.15am. (*Reserve List only*)

PHANTOM OF THE OPERA –with a 2-course carvery lunch at Planet Hollywood – Thursday 12th July – Her Majesty's Theatre – Stall Seats – Coach leaving Shefford at 9.15am.

Please telephone for prices and availability of any holidays, outings or shows listed above.

For all holidays, including transport from Shefford and hotel accommodation, Shefford Leisure Group acts as an agent for the Tour Operator; their terms and conditions apply.

Shefford Leisure Group is open to everyone in the local community, who feel they would like to join us on our ventures and see places they would not see under their own steam. We are always happy to meet new friends.

Raffles are held and all the proceeds are for Keech Hospice Care for Children. For further information regarding dates, prices and availability or to receive our monthly newsletter, please contact Enid on 01462 851397 or e-mail enid.pamment@gmail.com.

Enid Pamment – Shefford Leisure Group

Shefford Craft and Produce Show

This year the Shefford Craft and Produce Show will be on Saturday 1st September, in the rooms behind the Shefford Methodist Church and free schedules are available in Shefford Library. You can also request a copy via sheffordcps@gmail.com

There are lots of classes for both adults and children to enter. We try to cover as wide a variety of interests as we can and you do not have to be a resident of Shefford to enter. Every child is eligible to enter a photograph and there are also age-related items. When at least one parent and one child enter, the family become eligible to win the Family Cup.

Adults can enter handicrafts, cookery, photography, preserves, garden produce, flowers & plants and floral art. Our Novice Class this year is in the floral art section and is open to anybody who has never won a first prize for floral art in any show.

This year as a Show Special, we are asking for items which we are hoping to donate to local care homes for their dementia patients. Knitted Twiddle Muffs and sewn Activity Aprons provide stimulation for restless hands, while helping to keep fingers flexible. A knitting pattern for the muff is available in our Schedule, along with ideas for the apron. People can enter two items to be judged and the winner will be chosen by visitors to the Show.

As well as being able to pick up a Schedule from the library foyer, we will have a stall at the Summer Fete on Sunday 3rd June where they will also be available, along with our fun quiz. We try to provide hints and tips to help exhibitors, but if you have any queries at all, the Committee are only too happy to help you as well as being able to talk to you at the Fete, contact details are printed in the Schedule.

Avoid Unnecessary Pain!

By the time most people seek treatment, they are:

- In severe pain
- Having difficulty moving
- Struggling to cope with work or family responsibilities

Does this sound familiar?

You may have been suffering with odd niggles and pains for months, taking the occasional - or even regular - self-prescribed painkiller as needed.

But you don't need to wait till you are in pain to have a treatment – the time to act is when you first notice relatively small changes.

- Maybe you're suffering with aches and stiffness?
- Or you realise that you can no longer turn to look over your shoulder to reverse the car
- Perhaps putting on your socks in the mornings has become difficult?

Any of these signs - pain, stiffness, loss of flexibility and movement - mean that something is not working correctly in your body. Why wait for more pain? An osteopathic check-up can prevent further problems.

We will discuss any concerns that you have, assess you and hopefully give some treatment.

You'll receive suggestions for "self-care" to relieve your particular aches and pains, prevent injury and stay healthy.

Plus, we find muscles that are tight and/or joints that have stiffened up – which you assume is normal but isn't! We help you realise what your body should feel like, how much movement you can have and that you could be pain free.

To find out more and arrange your health check, call us on 01462 811006 or email enquiries@SheffordOsteo.com. Start living your life again.

Warden Abbey Community Vineyard

This month, an interview with Jane Markham, Vineyard Manager at Warden Abbey Vineyard... ever considered volunteering to work on a vineyard?

Many people won't know there is a vineyard on their doorstep - when was it first planted?

It was founded in 1136! Warden Abbey was one of the earliest Cistercian settlements in England and it is linked to the world-famous Rievaulx Abbey in Yorkshire. Henry VIII dissolved it as a monastery in 1536. The monks planted two vineyards: the ten-acre Greate Vineyard and the four-acre Lyttel Vineyard. The vines we see today were planted on the site of the Lyttel Vineyard by the Whitbread family in 1986 – their last vintage was in 2008 (when they were still winning awards for their wine).

Bedfordshire Rural Communities Charity has managed the vineyard since 2010 as a resource for the local community. It is lovingly cared for all year round by local people giving their time to the project. Working with other organisations, we offer horticultural therapy, learning and skills development, helping people into employment and a range of volunteering opportunities. You can get involved “from vine to wine” or help with wildlife and heritage projects. We also aim to build appreciation of the countryside and local heritage, improve physical and mental health, reduce social isolation.

What does the vineyard produce?

We have around 3500 vines: four white grape varieties (Bacchus, Reichensteiner, Regner, and Muller Thurgau) on 5 acres of south-facing slopes. The average yield has been around 4,000-6,000 bottles (but has varied between zero and 24,000!) We produce dry white wines, plus sparkling wines made using the champagne method (perfect for Bedfordshire celebrations!) The wines are blended according to the performance of the different vines each year.

It's very important to us that our wines are made only from our own grapes and we're delighted to have won both national and international awards. One of our wines was even served at a VIP lunch for the Queen and Prince Philip when they visited Bedfordshire last year. Our grapes go to Denbies Wine Estate in Dorking, Surrey for the wine-making. Denbies is one of the largest wine producers in England. It has its own brands, as well as making wines for Waitrose, Sainsburys and M&S.

What will be happening this spring?

Once we have completed the pruning and doing trellis repairs, our biggest job is planting new vines. Our vines are over 30 years old now – the number we have and the amount they produce decline as they age. To be financially viable in the longer term, we need the vines back to full productivity. That will mean the future of this historic vineyard - as a community and educational resource - is secure.

People can help support the project by donating a vine through our Grow Your Tenner/Donate a Vine scheme. You can give a vine as a gift, tagged with the recipient's name, and they will go on the Roll of Donors. They'll also have the opportunity to plant their vine in the spring (or we'll plant it for them!).

What is a typical year for the vineyard?

January to May is our busiest time working on the vines - but we're pretty much there all year round, with only a few weeks when there is nothing to do.

May to October is our busiest time for tours, school and corporate visits. At this time of year, our volunteers run vineyard tours, including tours focusing on the medieval history of Warden Abbey. Our big event of the year and main fundraiser is our Open Day **Sunday 9th September 2018** when we have wine sales, tours, local stalls, BBQ, refreshments – and sometimes morris dancing too!

Our other seasonal work includes...

November to March: repairs to trellis and rabbit fencing. *January/February:* pruning the dormant vines. *March onwards:* grass cutting between vine rows, around once a month. *April/May:* weed, pest and disease control starts. *May:* "bud-rubbing" - removing unwanted buds that sprout from the main trunk (this saves the plant's energy for the fruit). *June to July:* "tucking in" - positioning new shoots within the supporting trellis wires to get maximum sunlight. *July to August:* trimming shoots back to control the leaf canopy. *August/September:* leaves are selectively stripped from around the fruit zone so the sun can ripen the grapes. *October:* harvest!

What are the challenges of running a vineyard in Bedfordshire?

Whilst climate change means higher temperatures and longer seasons, grape production is still pretty marginal here. There are a number of stages through the year where the weather can have a real impact. Not least in the spring where late frosts can have a devastating impact on the new buds. In 2011, frost meant we had no harvest at all, and the 2017 harvest was massively reduced so we will only get around 850 bottles.

Also, getting the word out to people in Bedfordshire that there is a vineyard on their doorstep producing award winning wines isn't easy. Many people can't believe it's possible – but it is! Compared to vineyards in traditional wine growing areas like France, our costs are higher because we're only small. We don't have the economies of scale. It's difficult and expensive to buy things like the vine guards that we need.

What does volunteering on the vineyard involve?

We have volunteer sessions in the vineyard on Tuesdays and Fridays throughout the year (plus occasional Saturday sessions). Our volunteers create a very sociable atmosphere for anyone who wants to learn about tending vines in a supportive, hands-on environment. They do everything required to make the vineyard work throughout the year.

There are many opportunities outside the vineyard too. Selling the wine at events, helping on school visits, marketing, developing the heritage side (we're planting a medieval garden to demonstrate herbs that monks would have grown), giving tours and talks – it is all done by volunteers.

One exciting and rewarding new project has been developed by the volunteers with St John's Special School in Bedford. In a pilot project last year, three students with learning

disabilities or autism, in their last year of school education, came to the vineyard every fortnight from April to July. They worked closely with a small group of committed volunteers to carry out a variety of tasks - digging holes, planting vines, potting, propagating, watering and stripping leaves to allow more sunlight to reach the maturing grapes. They gained confidence and learned new skills (so did the volunteers!). Strong bonds were formed and they received certificates and a young vine to take home.

We're looking to expand this activity to other schools and perhaps NHS organisations helping those who need rehabilitation after brain injuries, stroke etc.

If somebody is interested, how do they find out more?

We would love to hear from "budding" volunteers (!) Contact vineyard manager Jane Markham. info@wardenvineyard.org.uk. 07981 113714.

WARDEN ABBEY

The community vineyard

A Bedfordshire Rural Communities Charity project

2018



<p>Adults £10 Children welcome free Advance booking only</p> <p>See website for details times & booking</p>	<p>Vineyard Tours & Tastings</p> <table style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <td style="width: 33%;">MAY</td> <td style="width: 33%;">Sat 26th</td> <td style="width: 33%;"></td> </tr> <tr> <td>JUNE</td> <td>Sat 23rd</td> <td>Tues 26th</td> </tr> <tr> <td>JULY</td> <td>Tues 10th</td> <td>Sat 21st</td> </tr> <tr> <td>AUG</td> <td>Tues 7th</td> <td>Sat 25th</td> </tr> <tr> <td>SEPT</td> <td>Fri 21st</td> <td>Sat 29th</td> </tr> </table> <p>Walk in Monks' Footsteps 29th June, 10th July and 7th Aug</p>	MAY	Sat 26 th		JUNE	Sat 23 rd	Tues 26 th	JULY	Tues 10 th	Sat 21 st	AUG	Tues 7 th	Sat 25 th	SEPT	Fri 21 st	Sat 29 th
MAY	Sat 26 th															
JUNE	Sat 23 rd	Tues 26 th														
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AUG	Tues 7 th	Sat 25 th														
SEPT	Fri 21 st	Sat 29 th														

OPEN DAY Sunday 9th Sept 11am-4pm
Wine sales, tours, local stalls, BBQ, refreshments.

www.wardenvineyard.org.uk



Financial Matters

By Paul Savuto

The value of gaining expert advice from a Chartered Financial Adviser

Whether you're saving for your first home, investing in the stock market or trying to build your pension pot, taking [financial advice from an expert](#) and putting into practice the financial planning knowledge you gain, can significantly boost your assets.

Recent research has shown investors who take financial advice before [investing their money](#) made substantially more than those who invest on their own. In recent years investors who used financial advice typically achieved annual returns of between 0.5 and 2 per cent on average against the benchmark, after all fees and charges were deducted.

In comparison, investors who used an execution-only platform to invest their money themselves achieved average annual returns of significantly less – between -0.5 and 0.5 per cent against the benchmark. The [value of advice here is clear – investors who used an adviser saw their money grow faster](#), even when the additional costs of advice were factored in. Of course, returns vary greatly based on the performance of underlying funds and are never guaranteed, whichever way you choose to invest.

But don't be put off taking financial advice by the fees – [the value of the advice can quickly outweigh the upfront and ongoing costs involved](#).

Benefits of having a financial plan

As well as growing your money faster, having a bespoke financial plan in place brings a number of other important advantages.

Clear goals

[Sitting down with an adviser](#) will make you think hard about [what it is you want to achieve with your money](#) beyond your Isa's investment returns. Do you have dreams of buying a boat, paying your children's university fees or retiring abroad? A financial planner will look at your overall goals and help you devise a realistic, achievable plan to turn them into a reality.

Regular reviews

Whether you are the type to keep a close eye on your investments or you would rather simply invest and forget, taking advice from a professional means you will have annual reviews to keep track of your finances and progress towards your goals. The benefits are twofold; first it allows you to adapt your plan as your situation and needs change, and it refocuses your mind on what it is you are trying to achieve and allows you to make changes if you don't feel you are on the right course.

Tax efficiency

A good financial planner will make sure your money is working as hard for you as possible. This includes minimising your current and future tax liability. The UK's tax system is complex and difficult to navigate. A small oversight could cost you hundreds of thousands of pounds in unnecessary tax. A financial adviser will be aware of the traps and will be able to make your finances as tax-efficient as possible.

Product knowledge

There are seemingly endless investment and [pension solutions](#) available and each comes with their own rules, regulations and nuanced complexities. An adviser will do the time-consuming research for you and narrow down the range of investment options that are most suitable for you.

As part of the service at DGS, we take the time to understand our client's unique planning needs and circumstances, so that we can provide you with the most suitable solutions in the most cost-effective way. For a free review of your current plans and financial situation, please **contact Paul Savuto, AFPS, Chartered Financial Planner**, DGS Independent Financial Advisers Ltd. **07834 499595** or email ps@dgsifa.com. I'm based in Meppershall and I'll be happy to talk to you.

Junior Birthdays

A very happy birthday to those of you celebrating birthdays in May

Summer Bridger who will be 12 on the 1st

Alex Watkinson who will be 3 on the 3rd

Grace Finedon who will be 10 on the 3rd

William Brinkley who will be 6 on the 7th

Edward Brinkley who will be 6 on the 7th

Harrison Isaac who will be 12 on the 10th

Louie Curtis who will be 13 on the 11th

Alfie Harris who will be 10 on the 17th

Isabella Lambley who will be 15 on the 17th

Jennifer Ridley will be 7 on the 21st

Lily Hefford who will be 10 on the 21st

Rees Davies who will be 13 on the 23rd

Chloe Thorne who will be 16 on the 23rd

Eilis Fleming who will be 11 on the 31st

Senior Birthdays

Congratulations to:

Pam Halliwell, who celebrated her 90th on the 26th April.

Doreen Downing, who will be 85 on 1st May. Sally and Chris wish their Mum a very happy birthday.

Kenneth Male will be 90 on 18th May.

Josie Lane, who will be 93 on 20th May.

Doreen Pritchard, who will be 90 on 31st May.

Deaths

John Beverley Arthur Preston of Shefford Road died on 19 March 2018, aged 73. Condolences to Kelly, Cheryl and family.

Richard Tingey of Shillington Road died on 17 April 2018, aged 87. His funeral will take place at 11am at St Mary's, Meppershall on 3 May 2018. Condolences to the family.

The Team

CONTRIBUTIONS

The Editor welcomes contributions to the Messenger, whether as letters, articles or notices. Contributions should preferably be as attachments to e-mail (address below) but handwritten contributions may be sent by post or left in the folder kept at the Village Stores. Contributions should run to not more than one A5 page (except by prior arrangement) and should be received by the Editor not later than the 12th of the month for publication at the end of that month. Contributions received after the deadline may be held over.

DISCLAIMER

The Editor reserves the right to omit or alter any advertisement or article and to change the content, format or issue date of the magazine without prior notice. The Editor cannot be held responsible for the factual correctness of, or for any libellous comment or statement made in any advertisement, article or other contribution published in this magazine. Every effort will be made to avoid any deliberate attempt to mislead or otherwise cause harm or damage to any person or persons by any advertisement, article or any other contribution published in this magazine.

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<u>Collating Dates for your Diaries - 2018</u>					
May	29	Tuesday	Oct	29	
June	25		Nov	26	Double
July	30	Double	Jan 2019	27	
Sept	24				

Please note that dates in the above table indicate the month in which the collating will take place, at 2.30 pm in the Sugar Loaf. The issue being collated will relate to the following month.