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Editorial by Mick Ridley and James Read

Spring is in the air (despite occasional colder days). The next couple of months are a magical time to get out and see some of the countryside in and around the village. If you do, you may spot some of the fantastic wildlife that makes its home here and becomes more obvious in the coming months - scurrying, chirping and flitting about. Try searching online for pictures of the following creatures and let us know if you see them!



One of our favourites is the Yellow Hammer. This small bird, a bit bigger than a sparrow, is unmistakable as the males have a bright yellow head and chest. They are globally endangered but can sometimes be seen around Meppershall – for instance bobbing around the tops of the hedges on the path out below Crackle Hill or west of the Church towards Gravenhurst. They need undisturbed, substantial lengths of dense hedge to flourish. They have been seen in at least one garden on the west side of the village already this year.

Inside the village and possibly in your garden you will see all sorts of finches, tits and sparrows. Like many birds, they prefer established gardens with a hint of chaos and wildness about them. If you want more feathered visitors, bear it in mind when planting and pruning. Meppershall's sparrows seem to be really abundant – but nationally they are sadly on the decline especially in cities. Some conservationists suggest putting out mealworms alongside birdseed to help them in the nesting and breeding season. Many species are directly affected by modern agricultural practices that reduce weeds, worms and insect populations.

Soaring overhead, you may spot birds of prey. The red kite was reintroduced to the Chilterns many years ago and they have arrived in Meppershall in recent years. You'll know them by their sheer size, long forked tail and wide wings with feathers flared out at the end. They can be confused with buzzards which you will see more frequently out on the fields with their shorter, fan-shaped tail. The smaller Kestrel and Sparrow Hawk are also fairly common here – both are nimble, quick hunters that sometimes come close to houses to pursue something tasty. Female sparrow hawks have a distinct 'checker board' pattern on the chest and under their wings. The kestrel is more orange in the body with grey wing tips and a long tail. You'll see both here, hovering around to spot food on roadsides and fields.

Finally, owls: if you're very lucky, at night you may hear (or even see) a tawny owl, little owl or barn owl around the village. The tawny owl's famous "terwitt-terwoo" is actually the screech of the female trying to locate or talk with a male, which will answer with the characteristic 'terwoo' hoot. The male and female may be some distance apart so you have to listen hard to get the whole 'terwitt-terwoo' experience! The high mature trees in and around the village – particularly the limes around the church or the giant sycamores and others around the top of Coneygate and Monks Pool – are perfect perching points for them.

These amazing wildlife neighbours are just a quick sample of what you can find in our part of Bedfordshire. They are here because there are still sufficient wild areas, trees, hedges and open ground in which they can flourish. The Green Infrastructure Plan for our village (page 6) will be one way of expressing our love of these things. Are we keen to be a place where they can make their home for many years into the future? Do we want many more generations to be inspired by them and enjoy them? We would love your thoughts and comments on this – whether you agree or disagree. What wildlife have YOU seen? Share your sightings via email or on our Facebook page. And why not put on your boots and visit Polehanger Wood this spring? See the article by Andrew Foster in this issue (page 24) for more information about this very special local beauty spot.

Letters to the Editors

Dear Editors

I noticed from your February issue that members of the village are concerned over a certain fraction of the village youngsters causing problems. I lived in the village for 50 years until 2001 and then moved to Milton Keynes. This is not a new issue, it maybe on a larger scale now but this is down to the fact you now have a lot larger village and a bigger mixture of types of families; some good, some bad. This will always be the case; the problem lies with society on the whole. You have a lot more media than before, so kids expect more. Drug taking /underage drinking /fighting went on when I was younger and I know that it went on when my 4 kiddies were teens. A lot is how parents deal with their children and the village as a whole and the parish council need to get seriously involved. The police need to show a presence more than just a quick ride through in a car. They need to get out and walk around to get to know the trouble makers then talk to the parents. I'm not saying it will cure it but it must help. The bigger your village gets the more likely you are to have problems. I wish the village well in whatever you do to stop your problems but think on and work together. Nobody wants any kiddie hurt or worse dead and do not for one-minute think it will not happen in your village because the seeds are now being sown so act and act now

Terry Game - former resident

Dear Editors

For the first time in a long time, councillors outnumbered residents at the Parish Council meeting in February. This shouldn't be the case, given that as usual, several important issues were discussed, and a very informative briefing given by District Councillor Mark Liddiard covering changes to Central Bedfordshire education policy, as well as significant statements on planning, highways and traffic safety, which concern us all. And the Parish Council ALWAYS has this element of briefing on district council goings-on.

These monthly meetings are a really good way of finding out early about things from outside Meppershall which actually affect us IN Meppershall - it's well worth giving up a couple of hours once a month to get the lowdown on these issues.

And residents also have an opportunity to address the meeting and ask questions, make requests, or raise issues of personal or general concern. Not every council allows this, and it's something we should use. Being honest, raising an issue doesn't always mean it will be addressed immediately, although very often action does follow. But issues are recorded and people do listen. You might find supporters or a solution from someone else attending. Or just a sympathetic ear. You'll never know unless you attend.

So, try to come along - the council meets in the village hall at 7.45 on the second Monday of every month. You don't have to say anything, unless you want to. And there are plenty of chairs.

A Concerned Resident

To the Editors of our village magazine.

I would like to say, after speaking to some of our new residents that without exception the Meppershall Messenger has been very well received. They have found it really helpful to find local traders making them feel confident in who to approach. They have also found it friendly and certainly welcoming especially for people who are new to this area.

This really is something to be proud of so well done to the team who tirelessly put the magazine together voluntarily.

Enid - Shefford Leisure Group



JOIN MEPPERSHALL'S SPRING CLEAN- UP! Be part of the pick

The Great British Spring Clean is a campaign with one simple aim: to bring people across the country together to clear up the litter that blights our environment.

On Sunday March 31st, starting at 10am we are calling on all Meppershall residents to help improve our village environment and take part in Meppershall's own Spring Clean-up. We aim to collect and safely dispose of litter from our streets and green spaces, recycling as much as possible. All we ask is for 2 hours of your time!

So please get the family involved and join the Meppershall Spring Clean-up and help us make a stand against litter.

How can you get involved?

- Turn up on the day, or better still sign up to help by emailing lovemeppershall@meppershall.org
- Meet at the Village Hall at 10am on Sunday 31st March for a briefing and to collect supplies
- Spend 2 hours collecting and sorting litter
- Village Hall bar will be open for those wanting refreshments and later Premiership Football on BT Sports will be available

Event organised and supported by Meppershall Parish Council and Meppershall Village Hall working in partnership.



Meppershall Village Hall

Regular Hiring Events in March

Monday – Friday	Walnut Tree Cafe (9am-2pm) Meppershall Pre-School Meppershall Social Club (Evenings)
Saturday-Sunday	Meppershall Social Club
Monday Evening	Meppershall Brownies
Tuesday Evening	Krusader Martial Arts
Wednesday Morning	Craft Club (10am-12pm) Felorian Bump & Beyond
Wednesday Evening	Felorian Fitness
Thursday Morning	Felorian Pilates Class
Thursday Evening	Krusader Martial Arts
Friday Morning	Felorian Fitness Circuits
Friday Evening	Bingo
Saturday Morning	Felorian Fitness Class
Monday 11 th March	Parish Council Meeting
Saturday 16 th March	Uche Elke (Limited tickets available)
Monday 18 th March	MVH Trustees' Meeting

The Village Hall is now home to an increasing number of organisation and events, and it's great to see that the Walnut Tree Cafe and the Bar are proving so popular.

Craft Club offers an opportunity to meet like-minded crafters, share skills and a chance to work on any craft that you are doing, or plan to do and haven't yet started.

Felorian Fitness are offering a number of personal training, nutritional advice and group exercise classes for all levels of fitness and goals.

Krusader Martial Arts welcomes everyone from 6-76 for self-defence and martial arts classes.

Meppershall Social Club continues to run various events each month including Bingo, Karaoke and vinyl record nights.

Bookings for the Hall, Meeting Rooms and Saplings area can be made online at www.meppershallvillagehall.co.uk, where it's easy to see what other events are being put on, and what dates are available for your own private bookings.

We've had a number of comments about the acoustics in the new hall, and we're working with both Croudace and Sound Reduction Systems, a specialist consultant to improve matters.

The Village Hall Trustees

Green Infrastructure Planning Workshop by Andrew Pain

The evening of January 23rd saw the new hall pressed into use for a real community endeavour - a workshop covering the Green Infrastructure Plan (GIP), which will form part of the Neighbourhood Plan later this year.

The organising team were pleasantly surprised, not to say astonished, when the event kicked off with more than 50 people in attendance, ranging from 16 - 80 years of age, all of whom wanted to participate in the GIP process and help preserve and enhance our village for future generations. Fortunately, we'd overstocked on refreshments so nobody was disappointed ...and the hall's design with the central kitchen made catering simple.

The workshop element went superbly, and we received a large amount of feedback from the teams. Ideas put forward for consideration included dedicated play areas, outdoor gym equipment, enhancements to the Old Meadow Nature area, better management of footpaths and open spaces, wildlife planting, as well as preservation/enhancement of some existing "untouched" corners of the village that many people simply weren't aware of.

And that was the point of the evening - to share ideas and thoughts, and to get people thinking about Meppershall as a whole, not just the parts that we're individually familiar with. Many were surprised at just how large an area it covers, and what they could include in our Plan. From close to the Greyhound track, via the Airman Pool (the former brick quarry and railway siding - yes, who knew?) to the woodland beside the river running along from Campton to the A507 - it's all Meppershall; except the water tower, which isn't, surprisingly...



The Neighbourhood Plan team will be refining all the feedback we received, and incorporating it into the draft plan, which will then be reviewed by the residents before going into the neighbourhood plan to go before Central Beds for adoption. It's a long process, but when completed it will be a true representation of what villagers feel they want, which is the point of the consultation and participatory process.

So, thanks to the 50+ attendees for a) turning up, and b) participating to the extent that you did. And thanks also to the volunteers who spent so much time publicising the evening for us - without your help it wouldn't have been the success that it was.

Peter Longland - Obituary

Peter was one of the 'nuts and bolts' people every organisation needs in order to keep running successfully. His contributions to St Mary's Church were numerous and wide ranging. He and his wife Shireen were faithful and regular attendees at both weekly services and special occasions alike. Peter was a long-term member of the Parochial Church Council always ready with his support. Towards the end of his time in Meppershall he was a regular member of the Village Choir, singing with them at services and other community events when the choir sang for the residents of various nursing homes, in the Village Festival and in the Sugar Loaf with carols for Christmas.

As a person with a background in engineering and design Peter was always ready to fix things and maintained and used the churchyard mowers for many years. He was also instrumental in setting up and encouraging volunteers to join him and adopt a part of the churchyard to mow through the summer. Our volunteers are still with us and are enormously appreciated.

In a further echo of his working life his drawing and design skills were used to great effect with sketches of the church for use on Christmas cards, on special service sheets and for his friends and in the preparation of technical drawings for use for works around the church itself. Many will remember the teddy abseiling as part of gift day; Peter built and operated the equipment we, and others still use today.

Another aspect of his background roles was the Gift Aided Giving scheme whereby a charity such as the church can benefit financially by partially reclaiming tax paid by its donors. Peter was the originator, supporter and vigorous advocate of the scheme and maintained the required records and reclaimed the invaluable contributions to funds for many years.

As is often the case when someone has to relinquish their part in an organisation, it takes several people to continue their work. Peter has been and will continue to be missed. May he rest in peace.

Editors comment: The Meppershall Messenger team also remember Peter with great appreciation as well as sadness at this time. With Shireen, Peter was one of the collation and delivery team and made lots of important contributions to village life. In fact, the Longland dining table was home to the monthly Messenger collation 'event' for many years! His excellent line drawings of village buildings and scenes will stand as a testimony to a man with great creative gifts alongside his technical talents. We send love and best wishes to Shireen and family.

My Life by Evelyn Winifred Jepps – nee Dilley

I was born on the 3 March 1920 at 29 High Street Meppershall. When I was 3 years old, I went to Meppershall School, we had to walk those days to get there at 9.00 a.m. Home for dinner at 12 noon and back again for 2.00 p.m. Then home again at 3.30 p.m. No cars about those days.

We had lovely fields to roam around in. During the summer holidays we used to go with the farmer when he was cutting the corn so we could get a ride on the cart. Much fun those days.

Every Sunday we had to go Church or Chapel that was a religious day, no playing or knitting!

Then when I was 11 years old, I went to Clifton school, the bus picked us all up. I left there when I was 14 years old. I think, I learnt more there in three years, than I did at Meppershall! We didn't have a very nice teacher.

Jobs were few. I went to work for my Uncle at a Newsagent shop at Stondon near Henlow Camp. I used to bike from Meppershall to the station at Henlow Camp to collect the papers then go back to Meppershall to deliver them. When I had finished, I would cycle back to the shop and look after my Uncle and Aunt's little girl. Then left again at 5.00 p.m. to cycle home. All for 10 shillings a week!

I think that I stayed for 2 years then I tried the Glove Factory in Meppershall. I wasn't there long as my sister Lilly got me work with her at a Hat Factory in Luton. We had to cycle to Shillington to catch the bus in all weathers and we had to pay five shillings a week for the bus journey which was a lot of money in those days, but after a while I was on peace-work, so I earnt a bit more money.

Our enjoyment was on Saturday to go to a dance, one week at Pirton and one week at Shillington where I met my husband Eric, we didn't have a car, but Eric had a motorcycle, but I used to catch the bus and meet him there, so I paid my own entrance fee! Lilly and Ida would come with me we had such a good time. Later on, the Birch buses started to run around the villages to pick us up, so we didn't have to cycle to Shillington anymore. It stopped for us outside our house 29 High Street!

Eric and I became good friends, we got engaged when we had been together 2 years, we were going to save up to get married when war broke out, when Eric had his call up papers to join the Army, so we said if we still felt the same way for each other, we would get married on his first leave which happened to be sick leave. He had hurt his knee. Anyway, we got married in Meppershall Church by special licence. I had a blue dress, black hat and shoes, just sandwiches and wedding cake, close friends and family came – I think it was a Thursday and then Eric had to go back to camp on Sunday. He had leave every 3 months while in England but didn't get much leave when in Germany or France. He was away with the Army for six years – seemed a lifetime.

We were forced to get a job in ammunitions, but what I saw in the factories I didn't fancy I could have earnt good money, but I chose to work in Mr Millard's nurseries at the top of the village. His men had gone to war. We worked hard digging, growing tomatoes, cucumbers and lettuce. It was less money but I enjoyed it after a while. We

had lots of laughs with the others. We had Italian prisoners of war – we liked them, but the Germans we didn't like. They were brought in the morning and collected at night. I wouldn't have been living where I am today if it wasn't for Mr Millard. He knew the cottage was coming empty, so he put a word in for me – houses were scarce then. I was pleased as I thought it was a place for Eric to return. He came home on leave twice when he was in England. I had to live in it by myself otherwise they would have taken it back. We had money coupons for clothes. I used most of mine on curtains. We had to carry a gas mask in a box everywhere we went, black out the windows and lamps on bicycles.

I lost my father in 1943 – it was a sad loss he was 65 years old – he had that awful complaint cancer!

Eric came home Good Friday 1946 – demobbed from the Army. He went to work in the Co-op in Luton, but he wanted more money so he tried the Vauxhall Motors in Luton, but he wasn't there long. Our son David was born in 1947 lovely baby. Then Eric saw a milk round advertised, so he bought it and started in the business. He built it up to 5 rounds and he had to employ people to work for him. I was not very pleased about it as it was seven days then. We never had holidays.

In 1953 our daughter Patricia was born, those were the days when our children were little.

We had the milk business for 26 years, sold out the year decimal money came in. Then we had a little shop in Old Welwyn – a grocery store which we both enjoyed for 5 years before Eric retired at 65 years old.

We continued to enjoy our retirement – until our son David was taken from us 25 years ago – this was a very sad period in our lives. Eric died 9 years ago and I have sadly missed him.

I am told I am blessed to have lived long enough to see all of the grandchildren grow up and even have great grandchildren.

Evelyn

November 2018

Evelyn Winifred Jepps – nee Dilley – 3.3.20 to 19.12.18

Patricia, Maureen, and family would like to thank everyone for attending Evelyn's funeral on the 15th January.

It was such a lovely turn out. Also, many thanks for the ladies and gent who helped with the tea back at the village hall.

Kind Regards

Tricia

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

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PCC Secretary:

Anne Parsons 01462 813333 Email: annie10639@gmail.com

Message from St Mary's...

As I sit writing this on the warmest Valentine's Day in recent times, I am reminded that Spring is just around the corner. The days are starting to get longer and there are welcome signs of new life all around us. Daffodil bulbs are starting to break through the soil, buds are appearing on trees and birds are a more common site in our gardens. Furthermore, throughout our village, there is a feeling that the newness of spring is heralding a new sense of life and vibrancy to life in Meppershall. The new village hall is an amazing resource for the whole village. It was wonderful to see the hall full to bursting at the Friends of St Mary's Quiz Night and it felt particularly special when I recently wandered into the Walnut Tree Café at lunchtime to be welcomed by the sight of so many village friends and acquaintances smiling and enjoying time together. The sense of new beginnings is all around us.

Most recently, it has been a pleasure to visit dozens of new families as they settle into their new homes in the village. St Mary's church has been delivering welcome bags to new residents and it has been fantastic to hear that, although new to Meppershall, people are already feeling welcomed and a part of the village community. (If you are new and have been out when we have visited with welcome bags, apologies! Please do message us on the St Mary's Meppershall Facebook page as we really do want to welcome all newcomers to our village community).

Of course, for Christians this season is all about new life. Lent begins this year on 6th March (Ash Wednesday) and traditionally Christians use the 40 days of Lent prior to Easter to pray, fast and prepare for the celebration of Easter Sunday – the highpoint of the Christian year – the day when we celebrate the resurrection of Jesus.

Lent, of course, is traditionally a time when people give something up for the period leading up to Easter but maybe, like me, you might also take the opportunity of

doing something new for the period of Lent: for instance, something that would be of benefit to your own life or – even better - something to benefit others. Fundamentally, Lent (like the emergence of spring itself) is a time to reflect, ponder, prepare for and celebrate new life. As we witness the emergence of spring we give thanks to God for new life – something which has been put so beautifully by the American poet Ralph Emerson:

*For flowers that bloom about our feet,
For tender grass, so fresh, so sweet,
For song of bird, and hum of bee,
For all things fair we hear or see,
Father in heaven, we thank Thee.*

Keith Callard - Reader, St Mary's Meppershall

Closure of churchyard footpath by Chris Valentine, Church Warden

Whilst we can celebrate the fact that parts of the church building date back to the 12th century unfortunately time and weather have taken their toll on the building's fabric. Many of you will have seen that we have had to erect safety fencing (courtesy of Croudace Homes – thank you!) which partially obstructs the path to the south of the church building. This is due to the failure of some of the high-level render and masonry. Following recent high winds further masonry has fallen onto the path necessitating its closure for safety reasons. Consequently, the only access to and egress from the building is past the boiler house. This means that you need to turn immediately right when entering the churchyard through the main entrance gates. Please do not attempt to access the church building any other way. This closure should not affect the many dog walkers who pass through the wider churchyard on a daily basis.

The Parochial Church Council (PCC) is currently reviewing the future programme of repairs and works. Following a recent unsuccessful application to the Heritage Lottery Fund we are exploring other sources of funding.

Church Services and Events – March 2019

At St Mary's unless stated below

Date	Time	Service / Event
Friday 1 st March	2pm	World Day of Prayer Service
Sunday 3 rd March Last after Epiphany	11.00am	Holy Communion, plus Junior Church.
Weds 6 th March Ash Wednesday	10.00am	Holy Communion Lent begins
Friday 8 th March	9pm	Silent Together Enjoy the presence of God in the tranquillity of the church - 30 mins.
Sunday 10 th March 1 st in Lent	8.30am 11.00am 2.15pm	Holy Communion Morning Worship – all welcome! Second Sunday Stroll – another loop close to Meppershall – from the church gate and via Coneygate to Chapel Farm, out on Cow Lane to the edge of Henlow Camp and back via Upper Stondon and the Watertower. Join us!
Mon 11 th March	7.15pm for 7.30 start	Bible Society: God judges people and priests. Jeremiah chapters 1-7. With Revd Paul Lanham at St Michael's, Shefford.
Tues 12 th March	2-4pm	Rectory Tea - Chat and a cuppa, all welcome
Weds 13 th March	10.00am	Holy Communion
Sat 16 th March	2pm, 3pm	Family baptism services
Sun 17 th March 2 nd in Lent	8.30am 11.00am	Holy Communion Holy Communion Morning Worship – All Welcome!
Weds 20 th March	10.00am	Holy Communion
Sat 23 rd March	9.00am	Celtic Morning Prayer (breakfast from 8ish)
Sunday 24 th March 3 rd in Lent	11.00am	United Benefice Service for both Shefford and Meppershall – everyone welcome. Free breakfast served from 10am.
Tues 26 th March	2-4pm	Rectory Tea - Chat and a cuppa, all welcome
Weds 27 th March	10.00am	Holy Communion
Sunday 31 st March 4 th in Lent	11.00am	Mothering Sunday - Holy Communion, plus Junior Church including Mother's Day Crafts for children

Key dates for April

Saturday 6th April: Churchyard Working Party (volunteers to clear up, eat cake etc)

Thursday 25th April: Annual Parochial Church Meeting (APCM) at 7.00pm



We are very busy at Brownies with 21 girls, which is great if not noisy. It is very handy that we now meet in the new Village Hall which has given us lots of space for all the girls to run around and play lots of fun games.

We started the term with our usual games evening and welcomed our new brownies. Our main theme over the last few weeks has been working on a brownie challenge badge called 'The Greatest Showgirl', which has included activities and crafts based on the songs and film of a similar name!

We have also started to introduce the new Girlguiding programme, which has been designed to transform what girls do in Girlguiding, to bring badges and activities up to date. The new programme has introduced new topics, new skills and new ways for girls to broaden their horizons. Everything the girls do in the new programme fits into a theme, the six themes are: Know Myself, Express Myself, Be well, Have Adventures, Take Action and Skills for My Future. The new programme is designed to form 60 per cent of the activities the girls do, with the other 40 per cent being anything else the girls would like to do.

We attended the District Thinking Day activity afternoon at Raynsford Academy on Sunday 24th February. Our theme this year was India, and over 100 Rainbows and Brownies from Meppershall and our neighbouring villages, spent the afternoon doing lots of fun activities, including Bollywood dancing, a treasure hunt, cake decorating, glass painting, and henna tattoo patterns.

At our first meeting back after Christmas, we were presented with a cheque from the Social Club for £185.70, which, added to their previous donation of £400 from the Race Night held last year, means they have very kindly donated nearly £600 to Brownies. Some of this money has already been used to provide resources for the new programme and Tawny Owl and the Brownies need to think about what we would like to spend the rest on. Thank you to the Social Club and to everyone who supported the events where this money was raised.

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.

Meppershall Pre-School

Watch Them Grow



Croudace
HOMES.CO.UK

Have we really just completed our first half term in the new setting. Wow that did go fast. We have had so much fun and are all really enjoying the 'Around the World' theme. So far, we have looked at Great Britain, Italy, China, Germany, and Thailand. We have studied their customs, festivals and celebrations. We also brought our room to life by painting big maps, and making flags, light catchers, masks and lanterns; and we enriched the senses with different foods from these countries, like pizza, noodles, Bratwurst sausage, potato gratin and sticky rice. We also have a globe to show the children where each country is. Yvonne Wong who works at our setting brought Chinese New Year to life on 5th February, and the children particularly enjoyed decorating the room that week with red and gold banners, and painting pigs for the year of the pig. Wasana who lives in Meppershall and comes from Thailand also came in to talk to us about her home country for which she has a great fondness. Next, we are going to look at Poland, Australia, France, Africa, and America, not forgetting the Caribbean islands along the way.

We constantly adapt to change and changing seasons, and spring is one of the most magnificent to watch unfold. We watched the snowdrops emerge in February, now we have the daffodils and beautiful blossom on the trees. We have so much to be thankful for. New life and new beginnings. This leads me on to say we would like to wish Andrea Gardiner all the best when she moves onto pastures new this month. She has been an integral part of the team, working hard to ensure a seamless move across to the new setting in January. We will miss her greatly and want to thank her for all the extra time and hard work she put in.

All our families have settled into the new rhythms of pre-school life and have really enjoyed the new surroundings which are bright, spacious and exciting. We feel very lucky to use this facility and have already had more uptake for sessions throughout the term. Please do not delay to request information if you are interested in booking sessions for your child.

The highly qualified diverse 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 currently open every weekday from 9am till 3pm and take up to 24 children in each session from in and around the surrounding areas. (term time only)

**Our sessions are nearly full. Please ring Tamsin on 07816 357159,
or email meppershallps@gmail.com,
to enrol your child or join our waiting list.**

Meppershall Social Club by Lisa Frost

We were a very small committee and at our AGM held on 20 January we were delighted to gain 4 new members and a number of people willing to join our helpers list providing assistance at events laid on throughout the year.

We host a number of charity events throughout the year and at our next committee meeting we will be choosing a local and national charity to support for the coming year. Last year we raised £1,170.00 split between the 1st Meppershall Brownies and Breast Cancer Care. This year with your support we hope to raise even more.

If you have recently moved into the village come and check out the Social Club, everyone is welcome. We are open; 5pm - midnight Monday to Friday; 12 noon - midnight Saturday and Sunday.

There are a number of regular events held which include; Bingo on a Friday Night (eyes down at 7.30pm); Barbeques; Quiz Nights- 3rd Sunday of the Month; Karaoke- 2nd Saturday of the month; Discos & Vinyl Nights.

We are fortunate to have a snooker table and a pool table in the games area next to the Social Club Bar. We also have a number of crib and domino players who play in a local league. We hope to restart our darts team once the dartboards go up - dartboard available **most** evenings after 9pm and of course we now have 2 bars.

We have lots of **live** sporting events coming up on our screens, Premier/ Europa & Champions League and of course the Rugby - ask at the bar for further details

Our next live event is Uche Eke Soul Singer, tickets £10 per person, on sale at the bar.

We always welcome new ideas for future events and people who are willing to help at our events. **If you are interested please leave us a message on our Facebook page** <https://www.facebook.com/meppershallsocialclub/>

Membership is now open for the coming year - reasonably priced at £15 per family and £7.50 per person over 16. Membership forms can be collected from behind the bar, membership offers reduced bar prices and a discount at some of our events.

Coming up in 2019		
Date	Event	Time
16 March	Uche Eke Soul Singer – Live music – Tickets £10 per person - proceeds go to Brain Tumour Research	8pm - close
20 April	Tina Turner Tribute – Live music	TBC
May – date TBC	Race Night	TBC
15 June	Take That Tribute – Live music	TBC
17 August	Michael Bible Tribute – Live music	TBC
21 September	Frankie's Guys – Live music	TBC
16 November	Michael Jackson Tribute – Live music	TBC
21 December	The Heatwaves Soul & Motown – Live Music	TBC

The live events above will cost £10 - £20 per ticket, for more information on these events phone helen on 07989 914 941 or leave a message on the Social Club page and we will get back to you.

Shefford Leisure Group by Enid Pamment

MARCH 2019



So far, so good! We really have fared quite well with the weather, although it has been cold at times, we have been fortunate to have escaped the snow – well most of it anyway!! I certainly will not consider putting my winter woollies to one side yet!! Again, we have experienced beautiful skies, both sunrise and sunset, the Spring bulbs are showing their heads, snowdrops are beautiful and plentiful and next it will be crocuses and daffodils. Let's hope we don't experience too much wind to break them down!!

So much is happening in the surrounding areas with all the new buildings, our village is no exception and we now have a very busy new 'coffee shop' opened a short time ago and is already popular for people to meet in the mornings which enhances the village. With the help of The Meppershall Messenger, newcomers can easily find local reliable tradespeople, somewhere to go and meet others, so loneliness does not creep in.

Most of the trips listed have proved quite popular and have sold very quickly. So sorry to disappoint people where tickets or places were not available, but hopefully I will be able to book another date later in the year. I will book a seaside trip during the summer and will add it to the list in due course. If there is anywhere you wish to see or travel, please let me know and I will do my best. People have enquired regarding a River or Ocean cruise, so for our 'Get Together', Martin Hay an expert has agreed to join us for the afternoon so he can answer any questions you may like to ask.

Thank you for your annual subscriptions – it all helps! Anybody who would like to know more about us, please phone. You are more than welcome.

I do hope you enjoy March and when we are preparing April, one quarter of 2019 will have vanished! Until then, take care of each other.

Enid x

FORTHCOMING EVENTS PLANNED FOR 2019

Coming to Milton Keynes Theatre:

JOSEPH & HIS AMAZING TECHNICOLOUR DREAMCOAT – (Matinee) – Wednesday 10th April 2019. Leaving Shefford at 1pm

***THE MOUNTBATTEN FESTIVAL OF MUSIC (Matinee)** – Saturday 16th March 2019 - Royal Albert Hall. - Choir and Circle Seats – Leaving Shefford at 10am.

NATIONAL MEMORIAL ARBORETUM – Thurs –16th May 2019 – Leaving Shefford at 9am.

CHELMER & BLACKWATER NAVIGATION CRUISES – Saturday 25th May 2019. Leaving Shefford at 9am to The Paper Mill Lock, near Danbury. – Ploughman's lunch included. (*Sorry reserve list only*)

THE COTSWOLDS JEWELS TOUR – Wednesday 29th May 2019. Visiting Stow-on-the-Wold and Broadway. Leaving Shefford at 8.15am – Anticipated back to Shefford by 7pm.

LES MISERABLES – Thursday 30th May (*Matinee*) Leaving Shefford at 1pm.

CAMDEN MARKET – Sunday 2nd June – Camden Lock Market by the Canal, was the original craft market established in 1974, but now has a much wider spectrum of goods on sale. Both this and the ever-popular Camden Stables Market – centre of the alternative fashion scene. coach leaving at 8.30am.

'GET-TOGETHER' – Wednesday 12th June 2019 – Time 2pm to 4pm. – Representative from Keech Hospice Care where we will present your annual cheque. Also, a visit from 'Go Cruise' Company Director Martin Hay can answer any questions on Ocean or River Cruises, there will also be a Tombola, accompanied with an enjoyable afternoon tea, set in lovely surroundings at Mount Pleasant Golf Club.

WISBECH ROSE FAIR – Thursday 4th July – Leaving Shefford at 9am

VINTAGE ESSEX Sunday 21st July 2019 – Leaving Shefford at 9am for Chelmsford. In partnership with Lodges Coaches of High Easter near Chelmsford, we bring Vintage Essex

A very entertaining new day out for groups who like to see a lot without walking too far! We spend an afternoon at the Lodge HQ in the Essex Rodings. This trip includes morning refreshments and a ploughman's lunch, where you will see the collection of old coaches immaculately restored 1940's 1950's. They also have 'chitty chitty bang bang (not the flying one)! We will also visit to the chocolate box village of Finchingfield before homeward bound., there will be time for a 'cuppa' before returning home by 6.30pm.

MANCHESTER – LIVERPOOL Monday 29th July – Friday 2nd August 2019. Staying at the Best Western Cresta Court Hotel with en-suite facilities. The hotel is adjacent to the famous Trafford Centre. The holiday includes a Blue Badge Guided coach tour and a cruise on the Manchester Ship Canal plus visit to Port Sunlight Village. Bookings now being taken. Rooms can only be held for a limited time. For further details please contact Enid.

STOWE HOUSE & GARDENS – Sunday 8th September 2019. We will leave Shefford at 9am so we arrive at our destination for coffee and a tour of the house & school which

can be quite amusing, afterwards we re-board our coach to take us to the gardens which is a National Trust property. There is also a cafeteria and superb grounds.

THURSFORD CHRISTMAS SPECTACULAR – Sunday 17th November Leaving Shefford at 9am. Will return to Shefford by 9pm. Stopping en route at Elvedon and Fish & Chip restaurant on our way home.

COCKNEY CHRISTMAS MATINEE – Tuesday 10th December 2019. Leaving Shefford at 9.30am for lunch at 12noon. Held on the Tereza-Joanne in London's Royal Docks (E16 2QY) which includes a Christmas lunch. We will leave for homeward bound by 4pm.

JOHN RUTTER'S CHRISTMAS CELEBRATION – (Matinee) Wednesday 11th December 2018. Royal Albert Hall - Leaving Shefford approx. 11am.

LONDON SHOWS CURRENTLY AVAILABLE

(organised in conjunction with Stevenage Group Travel) – 2019

Kindly note: Shefford is not a regular pick-up point however arrangements may be made to transport you to either Baldock, Letchworth or Hitchin to collect the coach, this depends solely on how many people require Shefford as a pick up for any particular show.

LION KING – (Matinee) Wednesday 13th March – Lyceum Theatre – Stall Seats – Leaving Shefford at 10.30am.

LET'S FACE THE MUSIC (Matinee) – Royal Philharmonic Orchestra – Sunday 17th March – Arena Seats rows 11 & 12, Circle Seats row 2 - Royal Albert Hall – Leaving Shefford at 11am.

DON'T PANIC – The Hilarious Vintage Comedy Show (Matinee) Thursday 4th April. This theatre visit includes a lunch of pie & mash (Meat or Vegetarian) with a cup of tea – Coach will leave Shefford at 9am.

9 – 5 THE MUSICAL (MATINEE) – Wednesday 10th July 2019. – Dolly Parton's rollicking musical. Stall Seats, Savoy Theatre – Coach leaving Shefford at 10.30am.

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

Kindly Note: Trips marked with a * have been arranged by Stevenage Group Travel. If there are only a few people booking their trips, to save time their 'regular' pickups are Baldock, Letchworth, Hitchin and Stevenage as sometimes it is not viable for a

coach to come to Shefford first and it makes it difficult for drivers' hours etc. We do hope you understand.

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.

Looking forward to meeting you,

Enid Pamment – Shefford Leisure Group

St Mary's Church, Meppershall Junior Church



Join us on

Sunday 3 March (usual session)

also on

31 March Mother's Day Crafts

(during the service)

11am at St Mary's Church

(ages 3 to 12)

A Guide to Using Footpaths Through Farmland by Andrew Foster

Many of us appreciate the local area using the footpaths that criss-cross our countryside. With Spring arriving, there will be the chance to make the most of longer and warmer days, budding and blossoming plants, and the wide array of birds, insects and mammals that can be observed out in the open.

As the opportunities increase, where can we walk? What rules should be followed and what routes are there to enjoy?



Where can I walk?

On Public Footpaths: Public footpaths are usually waymarked with yellow or green arrows attached to posts. They will be shown on official maps of public rights of way and in turn, listed on Ordnance Survey Explorer and Landranger maps. These paths are for walking, running, mobility scooters or powered wheelchairs. Horse riding and bicycles are only permitted on bridleways.

Please keep to these waymarked footpaths. If conditions prevent you from doing so, you can report problems with public footpaths to the local council, or the landowner.

On Permissive Footpaths: These footpaths take you over private land and are not rights of way. The landowner has granted permission for the route to be used by the public, but they also have the right to withdraw that permission if they choose. They are often waymarked with white arrows and additional signage.

Again, please keep to these waymarked footpaths and do not assume you can use any track, field edge or grass margin.

Walking Etiquette

The following points should always be adhered to:

- Walking should be on designated footpaths only, public and permissive. Please keep to the waymarked paths.
- Walkers should not use field headlands or grass margins. Please keep to the waymarked paths. Grass margins can provide valuable nest sites for ground-nesting birds, boost numbers of beneficial insects and spiders on arable farmland and provide habitat for small mammals¹. This is aside from the fact that they are not publicly accessible and are part of private farmland.
- Dogs should be kept under close control and not be allowed to roam freely through crops or across fields and woodland.
- Dog walkers should wherever possible clear up dog mess. However, do not bag up mess and then leave it lying around or hanging in trees or hedges.



Footpaths running through Polehanger Farm



We have 3 public footpaths running across Polehanger Farm that link Meppershall with Shefford and Campton. In addition, over the years, we have added various permissive paths that extend this footpath network and link these walking routes together as well as providing additional access in to the village.

All the footpaths, public and permissive, are extremely popular and enjoyed by many walkers in the local area. I wanted to take the opportunity to remind people of both the available path network here at Polehanger Farm so that everyone can benefit as Spring approaches (see the map included later in this issue of The Meppershall Messenger). The footpaths available through Polehanger Farm are as follows:

- Public footpath (FP5) that includes part of the Bunyan Trail. This runs from Shefford under the A507 and diagonally across the farm towards Meppershall.
- Public footpath (FP10) running alongside the River Hit between Shefford and Campton.
- Public footpath (FP4) running from the River Hit past Woodhall Farm and up our farm track to the Village Hall and The Orchard in Meppershall.
- Permissive footpaths running through the Polehanger Farm River Woodland (FP15) linking FP5, FP10 and FP4.
- Permissive footpaths running across our farm tracks through woodland and up past Nunswood towards the Shefford Road entrance of Meppershall. These also link FP4 and FP5.
- Permissive footpaths running from the entrance of Meppershall on the Shefford Road, crossing Shefford Road and continuing field side down a prepared path towards the Esso roundabout on the A507.

Path maintenance

Here at Polehanger along with the Public footpaths, all permissive paths are officially logged with the council. We are always looking to update signage and repair waymarking posts in conjunction with Central Bedfordshire Council to make it as clear as possible where the paths run on the ground.

Maintenance also takes place throughout the year to ensure that footpaths are clear of obstructions and remain an enjoyment to all. Public footpaths are the responsibility of the council, whereas permissive paths are our responsibility to maintain.



As users of the footpaths, we remind everyone to ensure they take any litter home with them. A bin was installed on the path that runs alongside Shefford Road that the council regularly empty. Disappointingly, the amount of litter along this permissive path up to the village, on the field edges and by the side of the road does not seem to diminish. We welcome any suggestions on how to minimise the issue.

If you think any routes are unclear, have potential health and safety issues or are obstructed, or indeed if you have any general questions regarding the footpath network, please either contact me or the council.

Andrew Foster, Director

Polehanger Farms Ltd.

andrew@polehanger.co.uk

Further Information

Central Bedfordshire Rights of Way team:

<http://www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/leisure/countryside/rights-of-way/public.aspx>

Rights of way in our area via the My Maps feature on My Central Bedfordshire at:

<http://my.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/>

References:

1 Arable Field Margins. RSPB. Available online at:

<https://www.rspb.org.uk/our-work/conservation/conservation-and-sustainability/farming/advice/managing-habitats/arable-field-margins/>

Editors comment: We are very fortunate in Meppershall to have farmers and landowners as part of our community who have respected and assisted appropriate public access to the countryside for generations. Let's all do everything we can to maintain their trust. As spring and summer arrive, their livelihoods begin to grow out of the soil so let's make sure that we – and our dogs – leave crops undamaged and fields and paths unspoiled.

The Polehanger Farm River Woodland by Andrew Foster

An Introduction

I am sure that regular walkers in the village have been through the Polehanger Farm River Woodland at some point, but even if you have yet to pass through, or are new to the area, I want to share with you the plans we have for the woodland over the coming months.

But first, a little history: situated at the North Western end of Polehanger Farm between the A507 and the River Hit, The Polehanger Farm River Woodland is a former grassland river meadow used by the Polehanger dairy herd until 1991.

The woodland was created in the year 2000 and covers 8.1 hectares - roughly the size of ten football pitches. Approximately 14,000 trees were planted with the predominant species being Oak and Ash, in addition to a mix of Sycamore, Field Maple, Wild Cherry, Hazel and Hawthorn.

The long-term goal is to provide a sustainable community asset. Access is provided by a series of permissive paths throughout the woodland, linking the existing public and permissive footpath network running through Polehanger Farm (more on these in a later article).

Woodland Management Works in Progress

This is an actively managed woodland, based on a Forestry Commission approved plan. Work may be carried out at various points within the year, including path grass-cutting, tree-trimming, tree-thinning and felling.

Improvement works starting in November 2018 and running through to the end of 2019 will see the following taking place:

- **Siding up the ride** - The ride is the main route through the woodland and it is important to control the growth of the trees along this ride to allow light to access the ground through the canopy, provide a more visually appealing walk and also to increase the biodiversity of the ground level flora and fauna that would otherwise be blocked out by overhanging branches and leaf canopy.
- **Chipping waste on to the paths** – Rather than removing waste from any tree works, any suitable trimmings are chipped on site and spread across the paths to try and improve the walking surface. The paths can become wet and muddy during the winter months.
- **Using logs to line the path** – To define the walking route, rather than extract cut timber, any suitable trunks are being cut to size and used to line the permissive paths. This will also provide additional habitats for insects and more.
- **Leaving deadwood habitats** – Additional piles of deadwood or logs will be left within the trees themselves to allow for further habitats to be created over time.
- **Thinning of trees to improve competition and strength of trees** – Currently still a relatively young woodland, tree thinning is required to allow stronger trees to

mature and thicken and provide better quality trees going forward long term. Selected trees will be felled at regularly spaced intervals, with most trunks again used for lining of the paths and waste to be chipped for the paths.

- **Providing signage boards and a nature trail** – Improved information boards will be placed at the main entrances to the woodland providing maps, history, flora and fauna details. In addition, a mini nature trail will be installed along the path routes to introduce people to some of the plant and animal species that can be spotted in and around the woodland.
- **Improving access points** – Over time, the access points to the woodland will be improved to prevent the excessive build-up of water and mud.



View these photos and the map below in colour by finding this issue in the Messenger section of www.meppershall.org.



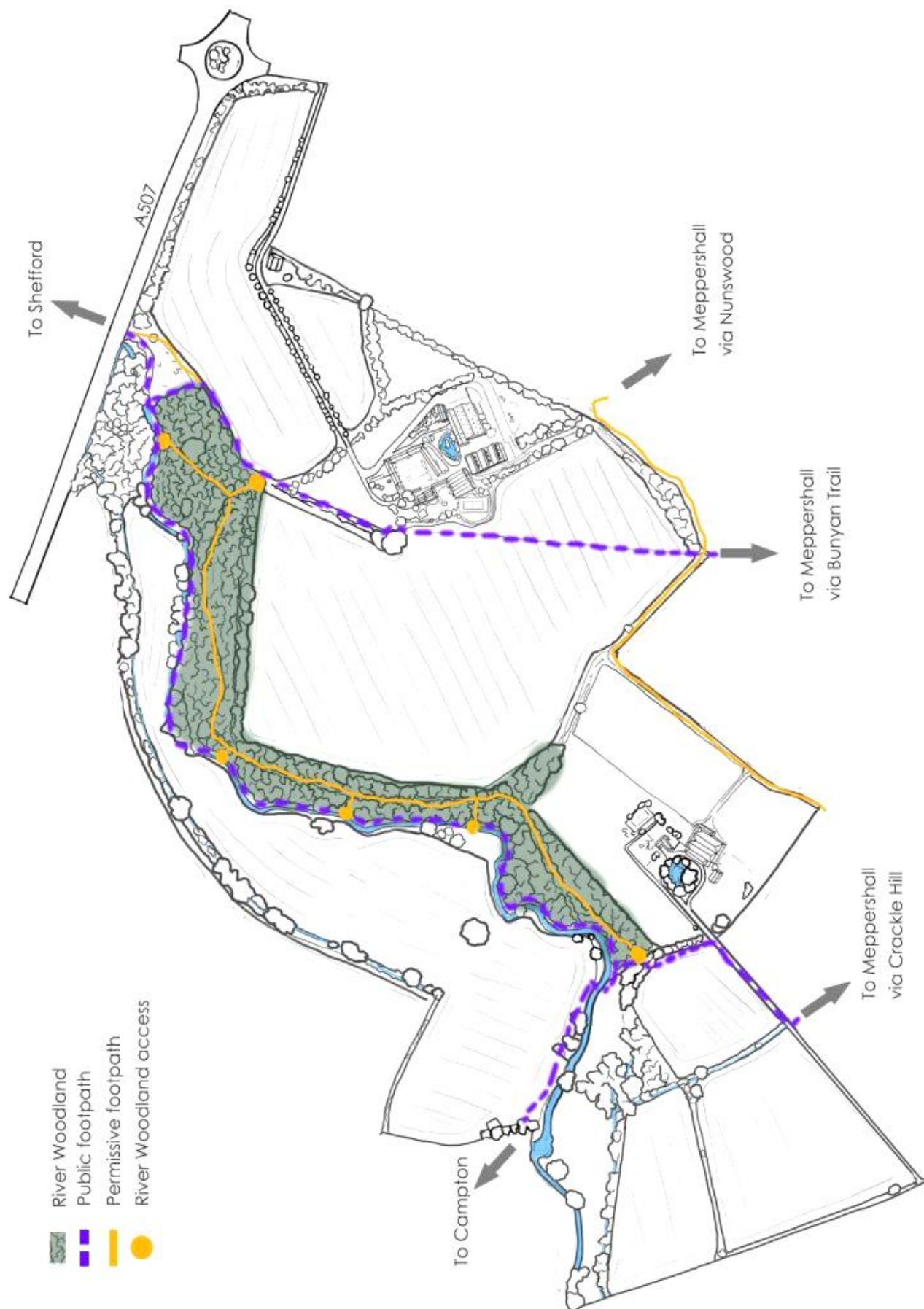
Nature Haven

The Polehanger Farm River Woodland, River Hit and surroundings provide valuable habitats for a wide range of species. Amongst others mentioned in local records, you may spot Buzzards, Red Kites, Sparrowhawks, Goldfinches, Greenfinches, Cuckoos, Woodpeckers, Grey Herons, Kingfishers; plus bees, Butterflies, Moths, Badgers and Hedgehogs. Please visit the woodland over the coming months to enjoy the seasonal change into Spring, and see how the works progress and improve what is already enjoyed by so many local people.

Woodland Care

When in the River Woodland, please ensure that you and your dogs keep to the marked paths – protecting plants and animals and ensuring important habitats are not disturbed. Leave the woodland in a state that you would expect to find it, so everyone can enjoy it as it is intended. If you spot anything in the area that does not seem right, or if you have any questions, please email us along with any photographs at: woodland@polehanger.co.uk

Notes: Andrew Foster is Director, Polehanger Farms Ltd. The nature trail is kindly supported by Meppershall Parish Council. Polehanger Farms Ltd as the landowner has agreed to allow the public to use these permissive paths through the River Woodland. There is no intention to dedicate this path as a right of way. Please keep to the waymarked paths.



Polehanger Farm River Woodland and Surroundings

By kind permission of Polehanger Farms Ltd

View this map in colour by finding this issue in the Messenger section of www.meppershall.org.

New Craft Club - Meppershall.

Starting **Wednesday 20th February**

The Walnut Tree Cafe, Meppershall Village Hall.

10 am to 12 noon weekly.



Let's get together with a cuppa & a cake to share our love of all things crafty.



Bring along **any craft** that you are doing, or plan to do and haven't yet started.

From that button needing to be sewn on, to your current knitting project, whatever it is, bring it along.

It's your chance to meet like-minded crafters, share skills, and tell us what you would like to do in this new group.

Crafting not for you?

We do hope to offer more activities as time goes on, so do let us know what you would like to do in your new Village Hall.

If you would be willing to help organise a group or activity, or perhaps share a skill or hobby with others, please let us know.

Kim Tyler 0795 255 7203 Email – kim@randall-tyler.org.uk

Lorraine Jarvis 07811 865 259 Email - lorraine@familyjarvis.co.uk

‘Trugs & Trowels’ Campton Gardening Club

Our next meeting will be on: -

Monday, 4th March 2019

Johanna (Baldock Flower Farm)

A talk on ‘How it all Works’

Campton Village Hall, 7.30-9.00pm

Everyone Welcome - Admission £3



For more information, please contact... Maryika 01462 851729

What's coming up during the rest of 2019 (subject to possible changes)

- | | |
|------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1st April | Rob Macleod: Pruning |
| 13th May | Pops Plants 2: Auriculas, history and care. |
| 10th June | Sir John Tinder: Bedfordshire Bonsai Society, history and care.
Plus a 'Raffle' on the night |
| 1st July | Colin Carpenter: Managing trees and shrubs in your garden. |
| 14th July | Open Gardens |
| 5th August | An evening of garden verse; Competition of verse / poems? |
| 2nd Sept | J P Carter: Flitwick (Seedbox) Gardeners Association;
'Produce Shows, judging & what exhibitors should do to prepare'. |
| 7th Oct | Anne-Marie O'Keeffe: Talk on 'Garden Design'. |
| 4th Nov | Roger & Penny Grey: Talk on 'Plants of China'. |
| 2nd Dec | Quiz? |

Macmillan Cancer Support – Meppershall Village Support Group



COMING SOON!

Meppershall Village Support Group

An informal cancer group for patients, families, friends & carers in the local area who would like to meet others for peer support or information

Dates & venue to be confirmed soon. Please feel free to talk to us - we would love to hear from you:

Daksha & Phil Trivedi

Email: daksha.trivedi@btconnect.com
Tel: 07961 377526

MACMILLAN
CANCER SUPPORT

Financial Matters by Paul Savuto

Tax tips – getting ready for April!

There are several important and valuable tax-planning opportunities that will be lost after 5 April 2019. With only a month to go until the end of the tax year, there is plenty of time to take advantage of various tax-planning ideas that can make the most of your money and help provide financial security for you and your family.

Boost your ISA savings

The ISA allowance of £20,000 in this tax year remains one of the simplest and most popular ways to shelter money from any further liability to Income Tax or Capital Gains Tax. It's important not to overlook it. While Cash ISA rates have inched up over the last few months, the very best no-notice account is still only paying 1.35%¹. Individuals yet to use their ISA allowance, or with accumulated ISA savings, need to carefully consider their options to ensure that they are maximising this valuable opportunity.

By maximising allowances in this and the next tax year, a couple could potentially shelter up to £80,000, building a significant tax-efficient fund for the future. Remember that there is no tax to pay on the transfer of assets between spouses and civil partners, making it easier to ensure both allowances are used.

Top up your pension pot while the current allowances remain

Speculation continues over whether the government will cut back on allowances and reliefs provided to pension savers. Therefore, you should think about boosting your pension savings now by making the most of available allowances in this tax year, so that you can potentially benefit from higher rates of tax relief on your contributions.

Reduce your taxable estate

Inheritance Tax (IHT) is widely viewed as unfair, and even the chancellor agrees it's complex, but only effective and early planning can minimise its impact on your estate. Lifetime gifting is one of the most underused and useful ways to help reduce your IHT bill. You can make gifts worth up to £3,000 in each tax year (£6,000 if you use the previous year's allowance as well); money that will be immediately outside your estate. So, a couple could potentially remove £12,000 from their joint estate before 5 April but remember that last year's allowance will be lost after that date.

And of course, you can also make gifts out of income, so if you do have excess income that can be gifted too. (Don't forget to keep proper records of any gifts made).

Give younger generations a head start

You can make contributions of up to £4,260 per child into a Junior ISA this tax year; an allowance that will be lost after 5 April. Making an early start with Junior ISA savings means that money will be locked away for a decade or more, so investing it wisely with a long-term view should help build up a more significant sum to help them with the future financial challenges they'll face.

And for longer term planners you can make contributions to children or grandchildren's pensions.

Don't waste your annual Capital Gains Tax (CGT) exemption

CGT bills are expected to surge by 50% over the next five years. The annual tax-free allowance of £11,700 remains one of the most valuable, yet underused, opportunity to minimise the impact of the tax on your wealth. Gains above this figure are taxed at up to 20% (for 2018/19) on assets such as shares, and up to 28% from the sale of residential investment properties. By crystallising gains each year up to the limit of your allowance, you can reduce the risk of a larger CGT bill in the future. Better still, reinvesting the proceeds into tax-exempt wrappers such as ISAs and pensions can avoid any future CGT liability all together.

Don't forget that assets can be transferred tax-free between spouses to utilise both allowances.

Review your taxable income

High earners could take steps to bring their taxable income down by making pension contributions or charitable donations. These can help individuals to:

- Bring their income to below the additional rate tax band, which starts at £150,000.
- Regain their Personal Allowance, which starts to be withdrawn for incomes over £100,000.
- Avoid losing Child Benefit, which is gradually removed if one person in the household earns more than £50,000.

Take income from savings tax-efficiently

If you're thinking of making a large pension withdrawal, it could make sense to spread the withdrawal over two or more tax years to minimise your Income Tax liability. Alternatively, if you expect the amount you draw from your pension pot to tip you into a higher tax bracket, you could use ISA savings instead. ISAs don't attract Income Tax no matter how much you take.

The value of an investment will be directly linked to the performance of the funds you select, and the value can therefore go down as well as up. You may get back less than you invested.

An investment in a Stocks & Shares ISA will not provide the same security of capital associated with a Cash ISA.

The favourable tax treatment of ISAs may be subject to changes in legislation in the future.

The levels and bases of taxation, and reliefs from taxation, can change at any time. The value of any tax relief depends on individual circumstances.

¹ Moneyfacts, March 2018

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'll be happy to talk to you.

LIVE MUSIC DATES & FUTURE INFO	THE OLD TRANSPORTER  ALE HOUSE	LIVE MUSIC DATES & FUTURE INFO
Live music events for March Katie Plus Juan – March 2 nd & Acoustic Mice – March 23 rd Music starts at 8.30, free entry.		
300 HITCHIN ROAD, HENLOW, BEDS SG16 6DP www.theoldtransporter.co.uk – 07445 682754		Live music every month plus other events. You can follow us on Facebook as well.

GNOMES (Meppershall Good Neighbour Group)

All are cordially invited to join us at our coffee morning on Thursday 14th March in Village Hall cafe between 10:30 and 11:30 for general socialising and a chat.

Also, advance notification that our AGM will be on Saturday 18th May in the village hall at 10:00. The Gnomes are always seeking volunteers and especially committee members.

Do we have a budding Treasurer out there? If you think you could help and want more information please call 07760 793921

Birthday Greetings for March 2019

Joan Kimber will be 90

Ron Mitchell will be 86

Richard Ivory will be 85

Barbara Horwood will be 83

In Memoriam

With great sadness, we announce that Peter Longland passed away in Oxfordshire on the 24th January this year.

We send our condolences to Shireen and sons Patrick and Jerry and family.

Also, "Poppy" Ashton passed away peacefully on the 25th January. Condolences to nieces and nephew.

Summerfield Miniature Railway
Bedford Model Engineering Society
Off the A600 just past Haynes Turn
Public Running Days in 2019 from 10.30 AM to 4 PM

MARCH	Sunday 31 st	AUGUST	Wednesday 7 th *	
APRIL	Wednesday 10 th (half term) *		Wednesday 14 th *	
	Sunday 21 st		Sunday 25 th	
	Monday 22 nd		Monday 26 th (Bank Holiday)	
	Sunday 5 th	SEPTEMBER	Sunday 1 st	
MAY	Monday 6 th (Bank Holiday)		Sunday 22 nd	
	Sunday 26 th	OCTOBER	Sunday 13 th	
	Monday 27 th (Bank Holiday)		Wednesday 23 rd (half term) *	
	Wednesday 29 th (half term) *		Sunday 27 th	
JUNE	Sunday 9 th	DECEMBER	SANTA SPECIALS	
	Sunday 23 rd		PRE-BOOKING ESSENTIAL:	
JULY	Sunday 7 th		NB	Saturday & Sunday 7 th & 8 th
	Sunday 21 st	Booking for Santa Specials opens on Sept 1 st and places sell out very quickly		
	Wednesday 24 th *			For further information on any event, see our website: www.bedfordmes.co.uk
	Wednesday 31 st *			
*On our Wednesday openings, only limited catering will be available.				

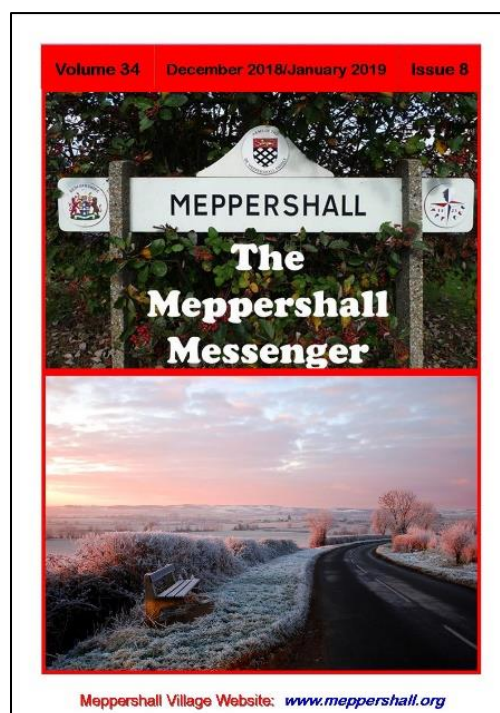
Advertising in The Meppershall Messenger, 2019-2020



The Messenger runs on the amazing energy and commitment of its volunteers – from the printing and collating team, to the people who walk in rain and shine to put it through your letterbox, our committee, contributors and so many others. Thank you to all of them – and thank you for reading!

Our **advertisers** are also a much-appreciated part of the team. Thank you to everyone who **advertised** with us in the past year. Your involvement covers our printing costs and makes the whole thing possible. As the village grows, we are reaching more people than ever. And Facebook has added a whole new dimension to the reach of this ever-popular publication, produced by the village for the village.

Be part of it. We are now taking advertising orders for the year, 2019-2020. Contact Andrew Pain to learn more. andrewgpain@hotmail.com 07875 580069



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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Collating Dates - 2019			
April Issue	April 1	July Issue	July 1
May Issue	April 29	Aug/Sept Issue	July 29
June Issue	May 28 (Tues)		

Please note that dates in the above table show when collating will take place, at 2.30 pm in the Sugar Loaf, for the corresponding month, displayed to the left. The issue being collated usually relates to the following month.