



WOBURN SANDS
TOWN COUNCIL

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WINTER NEWSLETTER 2022

www.woburnsands.org.uk
(see privacy policy)

BEST WISHES FOR A WONDERFUL 2022 CHRISTMAS

Many thanks to all the volunteers who have made the High Street such a joy this year. The erectors of the large Christmas tree at The Methodist Church; the small tree decorators; the mince pie makers; the lighting technicians; the men up ladders; everyone who is hosting a Christmas tree; the Christmas Fayre Committee; the raffle sellers; the traffic diverters; the Woburn Sands Band; the window displays in the shops and so many more. Without these wonderful volunteers there would be no spirit of Christmas in Woburn Sands High Street.



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NEIGHBOURHOOD FUTURES GROUP

Over the last ten years or so there have been very significant changes in Woburn Sands – the population has increased by about 50% with the development of Parklands and the number and range of community facilities have expanded considerably. We now have a flourishing Partnership Library in a refurbished building; the Summerlin Centre; an extended Old Fire Station and a Community Room in Greens; the Recreation Ground is being upgraded and the Sports Hall has just come into use.

Most of the funding has come from Section 106 grants generated by the various developments in the town. As a result of these developments the number and range of active community groups has grown significantly, and we can be justified in regarding ourselves



as a truly dynamic community.

In the next ten years Woburn Sands will face further significant challenges. The development of South East Milton Keynes (SEMK), most of which will be within the parish of Woburn Sands, and the possible development of East West Rail, will present both challenges and opportunities. The Town Council has therefore agreed to set up a Neighbourhood Futures Group, the



membership of which will be drawn from residents and organisations in Woburn Sands. The aim of the Group is to advise the Town Council (and other relevant bodies) on priorities and policies to ensure the cohesive and sustainable development of the Woburn Sands community. In particular, we need to ensure that the facilities to be provided in SEMK complement

the existing facilities and enhance the lives of the current residents as well as providing an attractive location for new residents.

This initiative will be launched at a public meeting to be held in February; further details will be published shortly.

THEYDON AVENUE COMMUNITY SPEED WATCH GROUP

A group of Theydon Avenue residents, having secured a 20mph speed limit for the road, have now embarked on setting up a Community Speed Watch Group.

One of the key points that came out of the WSTC community survey was that '81% were in favour of having a uniform 20mph speed limit throughout the town' and the group are keen to encourage compliance with the existing speed limits, at least, as a first step towards that aim.

What this involves is jointly working with Thames Valley Police, liaising with the local Police co-ordinator and being trained up to monitor the speed limit to help ensure drivers adhere to it. They are all volunteers who are giving



up their own time. There has been interest from residents on The Leys to get involved and it would be great if this could be expanded to other roads throughout the village. This would also support progress towards the aim to introduce the uniform 20mph limit throughout the town too.

Anyone who would like to get involved please email the WSTC Clerk a.jordan@wstc.org.uk who will pass your details onto the local co-ordinator.



CLIMATE CHANGE SURVEY UPDATE

The Town Clerk met with MKCC Highways to discuss the results of our Climate Change Survey. The aim, to find out what Highways can permit now, which are not appropriate for our town, and what can we plan and budget to do in the future.

There are some positive actions we can take as a council and, of course, as individuals.

1. WSTC have requested a Road Safety Assessment for the High Street zebra crossing outside the library. This will allow Highways to work on some road safety improvements in this area

2. Residents who want a 20mph speed limit on their street can present a petition to MKCC. We are assisting some streets to do this

3. Our older streets are not suitable to plant street trees due to narrow pavements. However, WSTC can install more **planters** on the High Street, where the width of the pavements permits,



and plant some **flowering trees to support insect life**. We are also looking at planting in some of the existing planters

4. MKCC street lights already dim over night by 30% to save energy, this amount is not clearly visible to the human eye so we probably did not know this was happening. MKCC are going to help us to replace our old fashioned lighting in the Russell Street car park with modern LED lights that dim overnight and have a softer, orange glow which is bat and insect friendly.

Some other points raised by the survey are not suitable or affordable for Woburn Sands, but we can all help



with small actions such as turning off car engines when not moving, especially near schools and nurseries where young children are particularly vulnerable to air pollution. WSTC are looking for ways to discourage engine idling but ultimately it is up to drivers to take responsibility. If your journey is short, and you are able to walk please do so. It is better for your own health and the health of others.

The Recreation Ground is central to the hearts of Woburn Sands residents. It is owned by The Gravel Pit Charity, managed and insured by the Town Council with equipment provided, maintained and insured by Milton Keynes Council. At present the equipment is being updated following a poll of residents by WSTC.

Orders have now been placed for the construction of a **MUGA** (Multi Use

Games Area) next to the skate board park, which will be upgraded, and a climbing frame (to be sited next to the current play area), and we hope that these will be in place shortly.

The Rec is used extensively by individuals and groups. Earlier in the year the annual Fun Fair took place there to the enjoyment of many, then the Summer Music Festival was widely attended for two days over the August Bank Holiday, and more recently, a charity fun day for Shay's Smiles.

Unfortunately, we do have to report that there has been some antisocial behaviour and graffiti in the park. Please respect what is a vital and enjoyable asset for the residents of Woburn Sands and encourage others to do the same.



LIBRARY

As another busy year draws to a close it is encouraging to review some highlights.

2022 has seen higher than usual numbers of new starters to the library. New housing has obviously impacted on our customer base but also more awareness of all that the library has to offer. As well as a warm space to choose your next read, you might sit at the PC to read your emails, print postage labels, connect to Wi-Fi, scan documents, download digital books and photocopy. You can bring your youngsters to the **Tuesday morning Storytime** or to the **Duplo/Toy club** on a Friday afternoon, and why not also sit and have a **knit and natter**.

New for 2023 will be a smart set of windows to match the back of the building which will replace the old flaking wood frames. For this to take place, the library will need to close at the end of the day on Tuesday 13th and will reopen Tuesday 20th December. Don't forget we have our **special Christmas Storytime** that day at 11.15am led by Community Police Support Officer



Amy Ryan. Then on Wednesday 21st December, 2-4pm we have our social event where we feed and thank all our volunteers. There are plans afoot for a new Friday Lego Group for the school-aged children and led by a local pro – perhaps with some planned school holiday workshops in 2023. This would run alongside our existing Duplo/Toy club for pre-schoolers.



Best wishes to everyone for a peaceful and restful Christmas time and we look forward to serving all our customers again at the library in 2023.



DEVELOPMENT OF SOUTH EAST MILTON KEYNES

The principles governing the development of the land between Woburn Sands and Bow Brickhill (SEMK) were published as the Supplementary Planning Document in January 2022. The overall shape of SEMK (ie road layout, location of community facilities, housing density etc) has been set out in principle in the SPD: and it is essential that the plans of the individual developers comply with this framework.

The first application covering part of SEMK to the immediate west of Woodleys Farm was submitted earlier this year by L&Q. The application was subsequently withdrawn following a storm of protests. L&Q have now redesigned their plans to comply with the SPD: eg the location of schools; and will resubmit their plans in the New Year.

A second application, from O&H Properties, was submitted in October and covers an area to the rear of the Groves and Parklands, including the fishing lakes, running up to Woodleys Farm. It does not extend north of the railway line. This application is now the

subject of public consultation before formal consideration by Milton Keynes City Council later in 2023. The Town Council, along with other parishes, had objected to it, primarily because it is impossible to make any judgements without knowing the plans of the other sites in SEMK, nor plans for EWR.

The development of SEMK is complicated because of the number of owners and developers involved. To try to overcome this problem MKCC established a Stakeholder Group of local parishes; this group invited all the developers to attend a meeting at the end of November to try and ensure coherence between the various parties. They met on 28th November when a useful discussion took place at which the developers appeared to consider community wishes and demonstrated they were beginning to work towards a more coordinated approach.

The Town Council will keep residents informed as the situation evolves.



ST. MICHAEL'S CHURCH

Thank you very much to everyone from the community who supported our Gift Day Fair and Appeal in September. We really value your support, especially in these uncertain times. The church is open during daylight hours every day of the week, and you are welcome to come in and enjoy the quiet. We are still supporting the Milton Keynes Food Bank. There is a box inside the church near the back where you can leave your donations of non-perishable food.

Our **toddler group** on Thursday mornings has re-started. It's free, and we meet from 9.30 – 11.00 a.m. in the church for play, music and singing and a quick prayer before refreshments. The church is warm. It's a lovely supportive group, and we have space for more grown ups and children. No need to book, just come along and try us.

We are also looking forward to Christmas at St Michaels. We have already celebrated our Christmas Tree Festival: the proceeds of which will go to our Building Project and the Love Woburn Sands Community Taxi. On Sunday 4 December at 4.00 p.m. we welcomed children and families to our Christingle Service amongst the Christmas Trees.

Our **traditional Carol Service** will be held on Sunday 18 December at 6p.m. and our Crib Service on Christmas Eve at 4p.m. Details of our other Christmas services can be found on our website www.stmichaelsws.org.uk or our **Facebook Page** – St Michael's Church Woburn Sands. Do come and join us if you can.

With my prayers for all of our community as we celebrate Christmas and begin a New Year.

Revd Diana Young



Other Church services in Woburn Sands over the Christmas period.

Methodist Church:

Saturday 24th December at 8.00pm:

Christmas Eve Communion

Sunday 25th December at 9.30am

Christmas Morning Service

St Mary's Catholic Church:

Please ring 01908 221228 for details.



LETTER FROM IAIN STEWART

- MP FOR WOBURN SANDS -



I hope this piece finds you well. I would like to take this opportunity to wish you a merry Christmas and a happy New Year.

I am delighted that on 16 November, Members of Parliament elected me as their new Chair of the Transport Select Committee: a role I have a real passion for and experience in.

I am continuing to work with colleagues in Government, East West Rail and Milton Keynes City Council to fight for a more joined-up approach and aligned planning in South-East Milton Keynes (SEMK). Therefore, in Parliament, I am in the process of securing a debate to raise awareness of the current situation in SEMK and will be calling on stakeholders to come together and have a co-operative approach.

Recently, I met with the Community Of Woburn Sands (COWS) to discuss a range of local issues and to allow them to air concerns with me. At this meeting, we discussed the lack of consideration from Milton Keynes City Council with their plans, ignoring the SPD and not waiting for East West Rail.

I recommended that COWS be prepared for the next stage of the East West Rail to ensure that their voices are heard when decisions are made for the route of the line towards Cambridge.

I will continue to look out for the residents of Woburn Sands whilst Milton Keynes City Council continues to not consider the impact of SEMK on the community.

If I can be of any help, please do get in touch with my office at **iaain.stewart.mp@parliament.uk** or **01908 686830**.



SNIPPETS

Remembrance Sunday

After a Service of Remembrance at St Michael's Church, many community groups and the Town Councillors paraded down Church Road to Memorial Green lead by the Woburn Sands Band. The record crowds listened in the sunshine to commemorations and prayers from church leaders and the Mayor of Woburn Sand, and witnessed wreaths being laid. A two-minute silence was observed by all before singing The National Anthem. Thanks to all the volunteers and organisers who made this possible.



Woburn Sands Sports Hall

We are delighted to report the ownership of the long-awaited Sport's Hall has been transferred to the Town Council and block bookings are now being taken, with priority given to those benefitting people who live in Woburn Sands.

The Hall is marked out with three badminton courts, a netball court, and a five-a-side football pitch. Rates will be £37.50 per hour for whole hall hire; individuals badminton courts for £12.50 per court per hour. This charge will be reviewed in April 2023.

The Town Council is confident that the Sports Hall will prove to be an extremely valuable addition to the community facilities in the town; it was identified as a priority in the discussions leading up to the creation of the Neighbourhood Plan in 2014.

*For bookings contact s.townend@wstc.org.uk or the TC office on **01908 585368**.*

Route 450 Britannia Buses Good News:

The bus route to Kingston and Milton Keynes centre from Woburn Sands, which



operates from The Memorial Hall on Mon-Fri at 11am, is likely to be continued and maybe even extended, partly due to the support for such by the hundreds who signed the petition in support of a regular bus service from Woburn Sands. Thanks go to our Ward Councillor, David Hopkins, for his support and ongoing work on this.

EWR Update November 2022

The chancellor's Autumn Statement outlined that EWR will go ahead. Councillors from both the Town Council and Danesborough Ward attended an on-line consultation with EWR in mid-November when they asked for a face-to-face meeting between residents of Woburn Sands and EWR, but nothing has come of this at present. They will continue to press for this as well as a full traffic survey along Station and Newport Roads to demonstrate the consequent problem of increased level crossing closures.

The Town Council asked for the issue of the level crossing at Woburn Sands to be a topic for discussion at the next on-line meeting in the spring. The TC will keep residents informed. *To find details of EWR plans: Contact@eastwestrail.co.uk or phone **0330 1340***

Another field bites the dust!

The last open space between Woburn Sands and Frosts Garden Centre (known locally as Swan Hill) has received outline planning permission for housing, despite protestations from The Town Council, our Ward Councillor and a resident. The TC will endeavour to get the best outcome when the detailed planning application is made.

Winner of the Christmas 2022 best dressed shop window display is The Flower Boutique judged on behalf of the Christmas Fayre Committee.





**Christmas Waste
Collections for
Woburn Sands are
as follows:**



Collections due on **Wed 28th Dec** will be on **Fri 30th Dec 2022**

Collections due on **Wed 4th Jan** will be on **Fri 6th Jan 2023**

Collections due on **Wed 11th Jan** will be on **Thurs 12th Jan 2023**

Collections as normal from **Wed 18th Jan 2023**

**Our library is free for all residents to visit during opening hours,
it's warm, there's free Wi-Fi and plenty of reading material
to read of course.**

*If there are volunteers on duty you
might even get a cup of tea or coffee!*



If you can spare a few hours a week to help at the library
and even make hot drinks, please contact the Clerk –

01908 585368 or
a.jordan@wstc.org.uk

