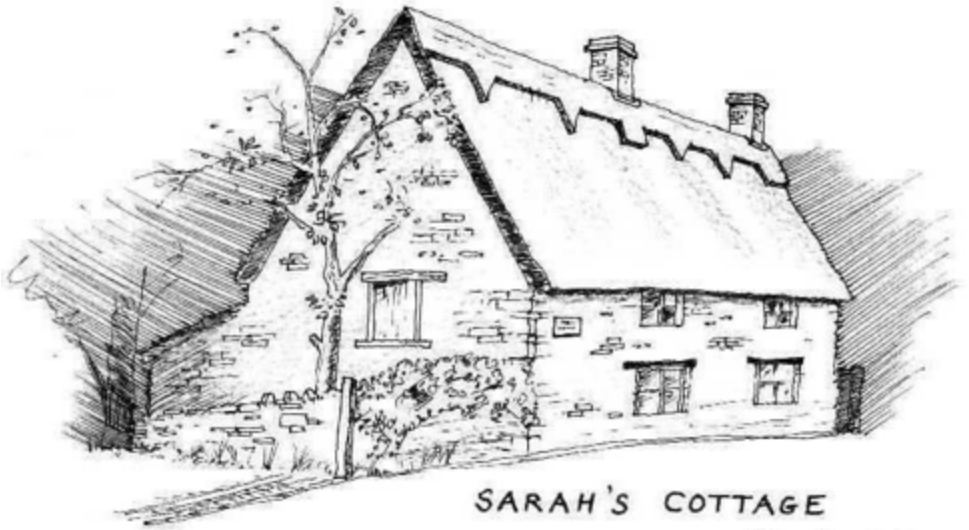


STEVINGTON MAGAZINE



SARAH'S COTTAGE

NOVEMBER 2007
MJEK

JUNE 2021
Number 197

VILLAGE DIARY

As Covid-19 pandemic restrictions continue to be gradually lifted we are please to start to get back to normal by listing some events taking place in the village over the coming months. We hope that the September edition will be jam packed with events as everything returns to normal.

JUNE

- 11 Consultation closes. Local bus services. (see page 12)
- 10 WI The Body Shop. Zoom 7.30pm
- 12 FOSM Plant Sale. Church Room. 10.00am-1.00pm. (see page 27)
- 12 FOSM Virtual Open Gardens goes live. (page 35)
- 21 Villager Minibus restarts (see page 22)
- 27 Farewell to Chris Boniface. The Royal George

JULY

- 3 Church Grounds Volunteers. St. Mary's. 10.00am-12 noon. (page 49)
- 5 Consultation closes. Boundary changes. (see page 26)
- 11 Guitar workshop. Church Room. (see page 16)
- 14 Friends of Stevington Windmill. Village Hall 7.30pm (see page 28)
- 15 WI Summer Barbecue

AUGUST

- 7 Church Grounds Volunteers. St. Mary's. 10.00am-12 noon. (page 49)
- 22 Magazine Copy Date (Sunday)

SEPTEMBER

- 4 Church Grounds Volunteers. St. Mary's. 10.00am-12 noon. (page 49)

In the meantime, please keep an eye out for posters round the village and check the Stevington Support Facebook group and the websites and Facebook pages of the pubs, village organisations and the churches to keep up to date with what is happening:



Photographs as credited. Cover drawing by Mike Robinson

Opinions expressed in the Stevington Magazine are those of the contributors and are not necessarily shared by the Editor. Some features may be kept for future issues.

HELLO STEVINGTON!

Many people have found that they have been able to spend more time in their gardens during the last year or so and Stevington is looking wonderful. Friends of St. Mary's have organised 'Virtual' Open Gardens which goes live on 12 June. See page 35. We are sure that the gardens will be beautiful. Don't forget the FOSM Plant sale on the same day. See page 27.

Bedford Borough Council is consulting on the future of local bus services. Now is the chance for the village to have its say about the services we need. The consultation closes on **Friday 11 June** so we need to be quick. There is another consultation regarding changes to council wards which will see us leave Oakley Ward and join with Bromham. The Parish Council has concerns, including that our voice won't be heard if we combine with a larger village. See page 26.

The Village Hall will soon be fully open again. The committee is keen to understand what villagers want from the Village Hall and have prepared a questionnaire which appears as the centre pages of this magazine. See page 18. The Church Room Working Group also want to hear from villagers with their ideas. See page 23.

The inaugural meeting of The Friends of Stevington Windmill takes place on 14 July (see page 28) and The Stevington Community Environmental Consultancy Group has been formed (see page 21). It feels like things are starting to happen around here again!

Stay safe everyone and let's hope that we will be able to meet all of our friends and neighbours in person and that the village can get back to some kind of 'normal' very soon.

Heather and Keith

**NEXT MAGAZINE**

The next edition of the Stevington Magazine should be delivered sometime around 4-5 September 2021. The last day for receipt of copy for that Magazine is Sunday 22 August 2021. Articles should reach Heather and Keith Parkinson (Old Paddock, Church Road, Tel. 826677, email stevington.magazine@googlemail.com) on or before that day.



FAREWELL, CHRIS BONIFACE

It's over a year since our brother Chris died and at last we feel we can plan his send-off. We hope to see everyone at The Royal George on Sunday 27 June, to raise a glass and say farewell. A buffet lunch will be served from 1pm. This will be an opportunity to gather and greet old friends. Chris would love that.

Anne and Clare



NOISY RESIDENTS

Last year we had a few issues in the village with noisy neighbours, which we would prefer not to have to contend with this year.

With the weather getting warmer and lockdown restrictions easing people are naturally wanting to spend more time outdoors and in their gardens.

It would be thoughtful and appreciated if residents could be more considerate when it comes to antisocial noise levels though. Everyone wants to enjoy being out in their gardens, but no one wants to hear every word of your conversations. So please, if you have neighbours, be more respectful, especially at weekends when most people want to enjoy their surroundings in relative peace and quiet after a week at work, without the intrusion and selfishness of continual antisocial noise.

Thank you

Stevington Residents

STEVINGTON COMMUNITY SHOP

Hello once again to you all. We hope you are all keeping well and bearing up under this continuous strain we are going through.

The shop is continuing to run smoothly in spite of it all. Many thanks to our volunteers who are determined to keep us running. As you know we have just been opening in the mornings, but after the next phase of the roadmap in June we may be able to open again in the afternoons. In order to do this though we will have to recruit more volunteers. If you feel you can spare two hours a month we would be delighted to hear from you.



June is selling eggs from her home at 19 Church Road. All profits go towards the Community Shop so we would very much appreciate more sales.

We have just ordered more of our bone china Stevington mugs. They make lovely presents, next time you're down at the shop have a look at them.

That's all for now peeps. Stay safe.

Jackie Ward

PRESCRIPTION COLLECTION FROM HARROLD MEDICAL PRACTICE

There are no longer any restrictions on collecting prescriptions from the Practice however we will continue to collect prescriptions every **THURSDAY** for anyone who has mobility problems and is unable to get to Harrold.

Please leave a message with one of us if you need to have a prescription collected and make sure you are home for us to deliver them to you.

Carol Jackson 07949 262424

Jane King 07595 513234

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STEVINGTON PARISH COUNCIL ANNUAL REPORT MAY 2019 - MAY 2021



Parish Councillors:

Pete Fisher (Chair)
Andrew Lockwood (Vice Chair)
Janet Day
Aaron Keep
James Lockwood
John Strutt

Tricia Lennie (Clerk)

This report is in some ways unique as, unlike previous reports, it covers a two-year period from May 2019 to May 2021. This is due to the coronavirus pandemic and the exemption granted to parish councils for annual reports and general meetings in 2020. Hopefully we are coming out of the worst now and things will be returning to 'normal' at least with regard to Parish Council matters.

Whilst many things were put on hold in 2020 your Parish Council has continued to meet virtually and liaise with the Borough Council and other parties via telephone and email on your behalf.

Governance

The Parish Council has seen a change in Councillors over two years as follows:

- Paul O'Flynn resigned in July 2020 and Pete Fisher was appointed as Chair in September 2020.
- Lucy Norton resigned following maternity leave in November 2020.
- Aaron Keep was co-opted in October 2020 and is our link to the Borough for highway related matters.
- John Strutt was co-opted in January 2021 and will take on a newly created role looking at matters concerning the environment and biodiversity in and around Stevington parish.
- Jane Thomas resigned in April 2021.

Stevington Parish Council would like to thank all Councillors (past and present) for their time and efforts working in support of our parish, which is given on a purely voluntary basis.

Council Meetings

The Council met in person 7 times in the period prior to having to revert to 6 virtual meetings up to and including April 2021 this year for routine meetings. Members of the public are welcome to attend meetings and should contact Tricia Lennie (Parish Clerk) for meeting details.

New legislation regarding accessibility prompted the previous host of the shared 'bedsparishes' website to withdraw their service, but there remains a legal obligation for each Parish Council to have a website. Parish clerks worked together to formulate a strategy before the shutdown on 31 March 2020. The new website was designed by Eyelid Productions at a cost of £420 for Year 1. Payments were also made to CloudNext for a hosting service £40 and £90 for registration of a .gov.uk email. All parish meeting minutes, accounts and procedures can now be accessed through the web site, which is managed by our Parish Clerk.

Outgoings

In 2019-20 a grant was given to and subsequently repaid by the Stevington Historical Trust to support the publication of historical books. In addition, grant payments were made by the Parish Council as follows:

- £500 Stevington Social Centre Charity for the Family Fun Day.
- £250 to Bromham Scouts.
- £250 to the Villager Minibus.
- £500 to support the Covid-19 community support team; now repaid; and
- £18.50 to British Legion for a poppy wreath.

In 2020-21 there have been restricted activities and only a small number of grants were awarded as follows:

- £100 to the football club towards the cost of grass cutting on the playing field.
- £20 to British Legion for a poppy wreath laid at the War Memorial by our Chair during the Remembrance Day Service; and
- £500 from the Anne Stileman Bursary Award.

Maintenance costs for the village have inevitably risen during 2019-2021; we have used funds to maintain the children's play area, including annual ROSPA inspections and to carry out a safety survey of trees in the playing field. This survey identified some immediate work and longer-term work for which we have put in place a three-year

programme. We have an ongoing programme of work to maintain village notice boards and street furniture plus a new contract for grass cutting at both St. Mary's churchyard and the Village Hall, which includes the playing field hedges.

Other costs to the Parish Council were a new computer and printer as the previous one was more than 5 years old plus a Microsoft software licence.

We are well aware of the issues relating to the increased flow and speed of traffic through our village and are in regular communication with the Borough Highways Department. We have allocated £7,000 in our annual budget to traffic management priorities in 2021-2022, including the provision of additional funding to the Borough Highways Department for the costs of installing a 7.5 tonne weight limit in Silver Street.

Planning

In the last two years the Parish Council has been occupied with a wide range of planning applications. The Council has taken its responsibilities seriously and each application has been considered on its own merits and in the wider context of the area in which it is situated.

We continually monitor and respond to all the planning applications in writing or appearing virtually at Bedford Borough Planning Committee meetings. In determining all planning applications, the Parish Council take account of the Stevington Neighbourhood Plan and the views of the residents of Stevington.

Neighbourhood Development Plan

The Regulation 16 consultation of the Stevington Neighbourhood Development Plan was completed on 24 August 2020 and the Parish Council received the independent inspector's report on 1 October 2020. The Parish Council voted to accept and apply the minor amendment recommendations highlighted by the inspector and submitted the revised plan to Bedford Borough Council (BBC) for Regulation 18 approval.

BBC Executive provided a positive decision statement on 3 December 2020 when the Neighbourhood Development Plan became the final 'Referendum' version and carried weight in planning decisions until the official referendum. The referendum took place on the 6 May 2021, there was a 51% turnout, and the plan was formally adopted by a vote of 227 for with 19 against.

Windmill

Following the extensive renovations completed on the Windmill in 2018, further remedial work was identified by the Bedford Borough's contractors Dorothea, that required the complete replacement of all four of the Mill's sail stocks; work which was completed in July 2020. As part of the Parish Council engagement with BBC over the repair and future maintenance of the Mill the creation of a 'Friends Of' group has been proposed and with Parish Council support the inaugural meeting of the new group should take place in early summer, current restrictions permitting. It is hoped that the group will support the Mill initially by conducting regular maintenance checks, but in the long term be involved in simple maintenance tasks, publicity, guided tours, open days and possibly fundraising.

Restoration of public access continues to be reviewed by the Borough, mainly regarding health and safety aspects and we hope to be able to share further news on this soon.

Highways

The Parish Council has been working with our Ward Councillor and Bedford Borough Highways with regard to village roads and footpaths. Repairs have been carried out by Highways over the past two years, some road markings have been re-instated and street signage throughout village is due to be cleaned.

Two items are still high on our agenda:

- The issue of heavy goods vehicles coming down Silver Street and causing damage to the verges and Cross appears to be getting worse and we are worried about residents' properties. We have requested new signage and a 7.5 tonne weight restriction.
- Talks are ongoing about traffic calming and speed controls; we hope to have a new speed indication sign available soon which we will be able to move and set up in different locations.

Also, Councillors have met with various Borough Officials to express villagers' concerns regarding flood water in Court Lane and other areas of the parish.

Environment

With increasing concerns over global warming and climate change, this year the Parish Council is supporting the establishment of a Stevington Community Environmental Consultation Group. The consultation group will provide a forum for the Parish community to come

together to learn about, discuss and debate actions that can be taken to reduce carbon emissions and increase biodiversity of the Parish as well as supporting neighbouring parishes and environmental charities working to protect and build up the biodiversity of the Great Ouse Valley in our local area.

Village Hall and Playing Field

Our representative on the Village Hall Executive Committee has worked closely with the committee over the past two years to enable the hall to function successfully and put on a number of events prior to lockdown.

The Parish Council has continued to monitor play equipment at the playing field, which is checked weekly. Minor repairs have been undertaken as required to keep items serviceable, however, we are aware that the equipment may need more extensive repair or replacement in the long term.

Village Support during the Covid-19 Pandemic

At the meeting on 11 March 2020, it was agreed that the Parish Council would coordinate a group of volunteers to support any residents who may require assistance with shopping, collecting medication etc. during lockdown. A group of 20 plus volunteers came together and has undertaken a variety of tasks for residents, including the regular collection of prescriptions from Harrold Medical Practice.

The Parish Council is very proud and appreciative of the manner in which our community has worked together and provided mutual support during the pandemic.

Financial Report

The Parish Council started the 2019 financial year with funds of £23,647.36 and 2020 with funds of £20,852.73. Our funding is primarily made up of the Annual Precept which was £22,702.50 in 2019-20 and £15,513.00 in 2020-21. It should be noted that the precept in 2019-2020 included an overpayment of £7,567.50 from Bedford Borough Council, in error, which was subsequently repaid.

We have also received annual grants of approximately £2,000 from the Ward fund which have been allocated to a movable speed warning sign (we are still waiting delivery) plus a grant to setting up 'The Friends of Stevington Windmill' group and the 250-year celebration, which was put on hold due to the pandemic. The money was allocated in our meetings, but we are still waiting for the funds to be transferred to the Parish Council account.

The major items of expenditure over the two-year period (excluding Vat) have been £12,540.79 on grounds and equipment maintenance, £8,964.03 on salaries for our Clerk, £5,545.99 on the Neighbourhood Development Plan and £2,144.93 on insurance.

The annual accounts have been approved and can be seen on our website; all approved financial documents are available by request from our Clerk who can be contacted at clerk@stevington-pc.gov.uk.

Stevington Parish Council

Email: clerk@stevington-pc.gov.uk

Website: www.stevington-pc.gov.uk

Windmill photo courtesy of John O'Reilly



BEDFORD
BOROUGH COUNCIL

HAVE YOUR SAY ON LOCAL BUS SERVICES?

Bedford Borough Council wants to hear your views on local bus services.

Your responses will help the Council establish its priorities and what the most important things are for residents, when it invites bids to run the rural bus services across Bedford Borough later this year.

The Council is looking to understand how residents of the Borough currently use transport, if this has changed during Covid-19, and how the public transport offer could be improved in the future.

Cllr Charles Royden, Portfolio Holder for Transport said 'Buses are a safe, clean and greener way to travel. We want to know how we can make our bus services even better and we need your help. Whether you are a bus user, never used a bus, have done in the past but not recently - please let us know your views.'



Residents and interested parties can have their say via the quick and easy form on the Council website at www.bedford.gov.uk/bustravel or by calling 01234 718005. The deadline for responses is **FRIDAY 11 JUNE.**

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BEDFORD BOROUGH NEWS

Unfortunately, we are currently seeing the rise of a potential third wave of Covid-19 as I write this. This is happening at a time when the lockdown is at last being eased. I felt it was timely to remind people not to become complacent as a new normal returns.

Anyone showing symptoms of Covid-19 must self-isolate immediately and book a PCR test by calling 119 or visiting www.gov.uk/get-coronavirus-test.

Do you have symptoms?

A high temperature, a new persistent cough, a change in sense of taste or smell.

GET TESTED!

Free tests are available in Bedford. Book your test at nhs.uk/coronavirus or by calling 119 now.

If you have any of the symptoms of coronavirus you must self-isolate and get tested.

No one in your household should leave home if anyone has symptoms.

If you test positive for coronavirus, you must share information about where you have been and who you have met, with the NHS Test and Trace service, helping us all to stop the virus spreading and save lives.

#StayHomeSaveLives #ProtectBedfordBorough #ProtectTheNHS

Boundary Commission

You will have seen that the Local Government Boundary Commission for England has opened a public consultation on its new draft recommendations for new electoral arrangements for Bedford Borough Council. The consultation closes on 5 July 2021.

The new draft recommendations propose that 46 borough councillors should be elected to Bedford Borough Council in future. The recommendations also propose new electoral ward boundaries across the borough.

This means that the current Oakley Ward would be broken up and the parish of Oakley will join with the parish of Clapham in a new Oakley/Clapham ward. It is proposed that Pavenham would join Sharnbrook ward and Stevington would become part of a new Bromham Ward.

Responses to the consultation can be made directly through the specialist consultation portal: <https://consultation.lgbce.org.uk>.

Bedford High Street

Bedford Borough Council has been awarded an £80,000 grant from Historic England as part of the Bedford High Streets Heritage Action Zone (HSHAZ) Cultural Programme, which is being delivered by the HAZ Cultural Consortium and supported by Bedford BID and SEMLEP.

The grant will help to create and deliver community-led cultural activities on Bedford High Street and make the area a more attractive, engaging and vibrant place for people to live, work and spend time. Bedford's programme will reflect on the past and present lives of people and places in the town and how their stories interweave with experiences of the High Street and its buildings, businesses and public spaces.

The Cultural Programme aims to transform visitors' experience of the local High Street and draw attention to the hidden treasures of Bedford's heritage.

The programme will start with a pilot scheme - The Vault, which aims to tell the story of a hidden bank vault beneath the Bank site at the junction of High Street and the Embankment. The pilot scheme was revealed on the Spring Bank Holiday.

The Higgins Bedford

The Higgins Bedford reopened its doors and welcomed visitors back on 18 May, following the easing of national restrictions. The museum has returned to its usual opening hours of Tuesday to Saturday 11am-5pm and Sunday 2pm-5pm.

Visitors once again are able to enjoy displays telling the story of the local area, alongside nationally significant collections of art and design.

Measures are in place for the safety of visitors, volunteers and staff, and to help ensure an enjoyable experience for all. This includes reducing the capacity of the museum to ensure that people can socially distance. Visitors will need to book a free timed entry ticket online in advance by visiting www.thehigginsbedford.org.uk or by calling 01234 718044 (line open 11am-3pm Monday to Friday).

Everyone visiting The Higgins Bedford must wear a face covering, except for children under 11 or for the legitimate reasons set out in Government guidance. Visitors must only visit in groups of up to six people or two households.

Councillor Jon Abbott

Telephone 07784 549180

Email jonathan.abbott71@icloud.com

Stevington Guitar Concerts

We are planning to hold a series of guitar workshops to give guitarists the opportunity to study with some of the very best tutors in a friendly relaxed Stevington atmosphere. This workshop is suitable for guitarists of all standards.

Max Milligan

Guitar Workshop

Max has over 30 years of teaching experience in private tuition, schools and The Guitar Institute London.

Here you will have a chance to improve your scale and chord knowledge as you work through arrangements of tunes at various levels. Learning how to use:

- Triads
- Chord substitutions
- Dynamics
- Pentatonic scales
- Aspects of improvisation.

This is also a good chance to assess your own playing skills with a senior examiner for London College of Music.



The relaxed workshop will be held at Stevington Church Room, Church Road, Stevington MK43 7QB on Sunday 11 July, 10.30am - 3.30pm.

Book online www.stevingtonguitarconcerts.co.uk. Places are strictly limited.



Catfish Keith

Saturday 13 November

An evening of bottleneck blues in the Stevington Delta.

Cutting-edge blues singer, songwriter and bottleneck slide guitarist Catfish Keith has established himself as one of the most exciting country blues performers of our time. Catfish's innovative style of foot-stomping, deep delta blues and American roots music has spellbound audiences the world over.

He's been nominated for Grammys and Blues Music Awards on a number of occasions, has headlined major music festivals, and appeared with legendary artists like John Lee Hooker, Ray Charles, Robert Cray, Koko Taylor, Taj Mahal, Jessie Mae Hemphill, and Johnny Shines.

If you like bottleneck blues Catfish Keith is the real deal, this is his first trip to the UK since the Covid-19 Pandemic and we are delighted he is coming to Stevington.

Tickets will go on Sale on Thursday 1 July from www.stevingtonguitarconcerts.co.uk.

Regrettably the number of tickets available will be significantly reduced to provide social distancing, consequently this could be a record breaking sell out.

John Duffield

WASTE COLLECTIONS

Month	Rubbish	Recycling	Green
June	1, 15, 29	8, 22	8, 22
July	13, 27	6, 20	6, 20
August	10, 24	3, 17, 31	3, 17, 31
September	7, 21	14, 28	14, 28

STEVINGTON VILLAGE HALL

As we move along the Covid-19 Roadmap, the Village Hall is able to be used again, observing the current Stage 3 rules. The Hall is Covid-19 safe, with a Covid-19 risk assessment in place and procedures and policies to keep users safe. In planning for reopening, we have been reviewing the Hall's use - **we would like your views to help us bring life back to this key community hub so please complete the pull-out questionnaire in the middle of the magazine and return.**

You may well have noticed the youth and adult football teams training and playing on the field; many people have commented how much they enjoy seeing and hearing the children's teams, in particular. Indoor activities are resuming slowly. Numbers allowed in the Hall are limited but we hope that the ever-popular Cinema Club will start live streamings as soon as the theatres are able to provide plays, music and ballet performances for broadcast. These, and other activities will be advertised in the magazine, on the Cross, at the Hall and the Community Shop as well as on the website: www.stevingtoncinemaclub.uk.

The Hall has effectively been closed since March 2020, but we have taken the opportunity to decorate and refurbish the entrance lobby and the toilets, including the home changing room. Grateful thanks are due to the several volunteers who completed the work. The Hall has been thoroughly cleaned and the floor in the main hall has been stripped and resealed. When funds allow, further improvements will be undertaken. As always, the roof and some of the exterior woodwork requires work. All these are expensive and, with no regular income in over a year (apart from the much appreciated 100 Club), careful planning is needed.

Please support your Hall by coming along to events when advertised and, if you are not already a member, join the 100 Club (see details elsewhere in the magazine - page 48).

Linda Penney
Stevington Village Hall



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STEVINGTON HISTORICAL TRUST

Registered Charity Number: 1086669
www.stevingtonhistoricaltrust.org.uk

Our new publication *Stevington: The Village History Revisited* to be published in October is an update and rewrite of the first edition of 2001. It is the result of much new research and contains a number of historic photographs which have come to light over the last twenty years.

This new work of 368 pages with 346 photographs and illustrations has been designed as a companion volume to the *Natural History of Stevington* which we published in 2016.

This will be a high quality, large format section sewn hardback with a limited print run of 150. The price of £30.00 per copy has been set to cover the high costs of production for a short run.

Specimen pages can be viewed in the Church Room and on our website.

We are now taking advance orders against a part payment of £10.00. Please use the order form enclosed with the Magazine.

We still have left a few copies of *St Mary's: History and Architecture* at £20.00 and the *Stevington Enclosure Award 1807* at the same price.

Peter Hart

Hon Secretary

01234 823586

peter2hart@btinternet.com



Boulogne



Quency



Wake



Holland



Stanley



Alston



Anne Stileman Bursary Fund

Are you a resident of Stevington, studying art, photography, graphic design or visual arts?

Would a grant help you with equipment, travel or research costs?

**Applications for support are open all year round.
For information about how to apply email the Clerk at
clerk@stevington-pc.gov.uk**

STEVINGTON COMMUNITY ENVIRONMENTAL CONSULTANCY GROUP

Would you like to do more to protect the natural landscape and river valley in Stevington?

Have you been thinking for a while - I really need to learn more about the environment or I really should do more to help the environment?



Then now is your chance.

At a recent Parish Council meeting it was agreed to form a Community Environment Consultation Group (ECG) whose aim is to support local actions to combat climate change and loss of biodiversity and enable delivery of the Stevington parish environmental objectives, part of the Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP). The scope of the ECG is to address any environmental issue of local concern, including for example, community actions to reduce our carbon footprint or to address the increasing pressures that will be placed on our parish environment arising from economic growth and housing developments in our area.

To kick this off, my first task is to invite interested local residents, landowners and farmers to take part in an initial meeting to canvas opinions and identify suggestions for community activities and projects that address the parish environment. This would be an active two-way partnership with the ECG providing opportunities for you to learn about particular topics and you inputting your time and skills to support local community actions. Examples of possible topics for discussion and future activities/projects might include:

- Local biodiversity observations/data collection to update the extensive natural history data Stevington already has
- Monitoring and assessment of village air quality, noise and tranquillity
- Local biodiversity enhancements in gardens, meadows, hedgerows and woodland
- Reducing carbon emissions and carbon capture by planting trees
- Access to the river, green spaces, bridleways and walks.

The River Great Ouse defines the NE boundary of Stevington parish and is regarded by many of us as critically important to our environment. We are not the only 'river parish' facing environmental challenges so a new Bedfordshire Great Ouse Valley Charity is currently being established to achieve Protected Natural Landscape designation for the whole Great Ouse Valley in Bedfordshire. This charity will link with all parishes along the river valley and the Stevington ECG will be our local link.

If you have a passion for our local village, our land, air and river environment and you would be interested in suggesting and discussing ideas or even just listening to learn more about what is going on, then please get in touch by email so I can invite you to the first Stevington Community ECG Zoom meeting. Remember that everyone is welcome to attend so please talk to your friends and neighbours about it.

You can email me at Johnstrutt34@gmail.com or call me on 07921 213180.

Thank you.

John Strutt

Photo courtesy of Roger Day

VILLAGER MINIBUS TO RESTART ON 21 JUNE

At the time of going to press we understand that the Villager Community Minibus will resume full operational services with effect from Monday 21 June.



Full details of all services are detailed on the Villager website www.sharnbrookvillagerminibus.co.uk and are also available via the Bedford Borough website. You can contact the Minibus management team via the website or ring 01234 781920 and leave a message.

The only change in service from 21 June is on the Wellingborough route which will now only go as far as Rushden town centre and Rushden Lakes.

CHURCH ROOM WORKING GROUP

As residents know, planning permission was gained for improvements to the Church Room in November 2020 with generous support from The Friends of St. Mary's Church using charitable donations raised and saved over many years. Running, improving and funding a community building is never easy - but in a pandemic it is MUCH harder. The PCC set up a working group to fund the improvement project. The working group comprises the original working party of Robert Eadie (Churchwarden), Jane O'Connor (ex-Churchwarden) and Tricia Lennie (PCC & FOSM Trustee), who have been joined in 2021 by Tony Pyner (Treasurer of The Friends of St. Mary's) and John Strutt (Parish Councillor and new Trustee of FOSM). The group has met weekly since February 2021.

The Aims of the working party are to:

- Increase the viability of the Church Room as a community resource.
- Establish residents' wishes for the Church Room.
- Support groups using or wishing to use a community hub.
- Raise funds for improved access and storage as part of meeting these aims.

Research undertaken so far:

- Meet with current user groups such as The Community Shop and Wavelength.
- Meet with prospective groups such as a new Parent and Toddler group and arrange a launch as soon as possible.
- Generate ideas of other groups and activities that could be supported.
- Commission quantity surveying to establish costs for building work.
- Attend webinars and training with grant providers.
- Compile a data-base of potential grant funders.
- Establish an application file with all relevant evidence (ongoing).



How can you help?

Let us count the ways! There are so many ways in which we need your help. If you want to get involved, we can find you a role.

- Get in touch if you have ideas of which services YOU would like to see in a community hub.
- Get in touch to ask questions.
- Get in touch to pass on ideas.
- Get in touch if you would like to help, either to organise a group or to help fundraise.



Contact any member of the working party:

robert@eadies.org.uk
tricia.lennie21@gmail.com
johnstrutt34@gmail.com

jojo2.oconnor@gmail.com
tonypyner@talktalk.net

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Starters

For 2 - Baked Camembert, garlic, rosemary, Parma ham, cranberries, treacle toast (GF)* - **£18**

For 2 - Crisp Fish Board: Salt & pepper squid, Doom Bar © battered prawns, sole goujons, whitebait, aioli (E) (D) (F) (G) - **£20**

Parfait of Foie Gras & chicken livers, treacle toast, chutney (D) (GF)* - **£10**

Chapel & Swann © smoked salmon, steamed asparagus, hollandaise (F) (D) (G) - **£10**

Salad of figs, mozzarella, artichokes, tomato, smoked aubergine houmous, crisp polenta (V) (D) (VE)* (GF) - **£12**

Crisp duck spring roll, kimchi prawns, ponzu (F) (GF) - **£10**

Mains

Seared Cornish scallops, squid ink risotto, tenderstem, chimichurri (F) (D) - **£20**

Boz Woburn fillet steak, pomme frites, mushrooms, beef tomato, onion rings, pepper sauce (D) (GF) - **£28**

Gnocchi Provençale, goats cheese, basil, olives, pine nuts (V) (VE)* (G) - **£17**

Braised pigs cheeks in black bean sauce, prawn tempura, Asian greens, coconut rice - **£18**

Singapore style Cornish monkfish & shellfish, vegetable noodle stir fry, coriander (F) (GF) - **£21**

Roast rack of new season lamb, shoulder pastille, gnocchi, peas, Parma ham, spinach, rosemary, garlic - **£24**

Burger of the week, brioche pretzel bun, cheddar, fries, salsa, slaw, fried egg (D) (E) (GF)* (V)* - **£14**

Doom Bar © battered Cornish lemon sole, Koffman © fries, minted mushy peas, lemon, tartare sauce (F) (D) - **£16**

Caesar salad with choice of buttermilk spiced chicken or seared tuna, fries (F) (D) (E) (GF)* - **£15**

Pie of the week, fondue of leeks, peas, mushrooms, new potatoes, red wine (D) (G) - **£15**

Puddings - £7

Peach and almond tart, raspberry sorbet (D) (N) (G)

Sticky toffee pudding, caramel sauce, vanilla ice cream (D) (G)

White chocolate and raspberry crème brulee, dark chocolate ice cream, gingerbread (D) (GF)*

Selection of ice creams and sorbet - **£1.20** per scoop

Selection of English cheese (D)

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PROPOSED WARD BOUNDARIES CHANGE PUBLIC CONSULTATION

A consultation on the new draft recommendations for ward boundaries in Bedford has been opened with comments being accepted until **5 July 2021**. The Local Government Boundary Commission for England has been tasked with reviewing the current boundaries in Bedford Borough and has made recommendations to increase the number of councillors from 40 to 46.

The impact on Stevington is that we will leave Oakley Ward and join a larger ward made up of Bromham, Turvey and Stagsden and will have two ward councillors instead of one.

Stevington Parish Council has submitted an objection to the commission's proposal due to concerns that the new ward will contain one village that is disproportionately larger than the other three and that this could potentially marginalise the smaller villages in terms of influence, resource and priority.

Please take a moment to review the changes and submit any comments that you may have, the consultation document is on the Parish Council website (<https://stevington-pc.gov.uk/>), comments can be submitted directly at <https://consultation.lgbce.org.uk/> or via email to reviews@lgbce.org.uk.

Some areas you may wish to consider:

- Are the changes likely to give Stevington a fair representation in the new ward?
- Are the villages aligned in terms of future growth and needs?

Andy Lockwood
Stevington Parish Council

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PLANT SALE

A physical event at last!

Friends of St. Mary's is holding our popular open gardens Plant Sale on Saturday June 12 from 10am at the Church Room, current distancing rules will be observed.

Anyone wishing to donate plants (seedlings, bedding, flowers, climbers, shrubs, vegetables, fruit bushes) can drop them off any time before Friday June 11 at the Community Shop where they'll be cared for until the event on Saturday. (If you require assistance with transporting your donated plants, please leave a message at the Community Shop).



Please label your plants for identification purposes.

All proceeds of the plant sale will go towards funding the improved access for the Church Room.

SAALA ALLOTMENTS

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Full Plot £57 Half Plot £31
Qtr Plot £20

FRIENDS OF STEVINGTON WINDMILL YOUR CHANCE TO GET INVOLVED!

Stevington is rightly proud of its windmill, it's a striking feature of our landscape and very popular with local photographers! When the sails had to be removed it left a hole in the fabric of our village and we were delighted when they were restored last year. The windmill is owned and managed by Bedford Borough Council, but a group of village residents have been working with the borough and parish councils to make sure that the regular maintenance and restoration work is completed so that the windmill is preserved for future generations in working condition.



We are now looking to establish a 'Friends of Stevington Windmill' group and open up membership to anyone who shares our aims - to help ensure that the windmill is a well-maintained and safe public site, which can enhance the quality of life for local people by improving our physical and mental health and act as a focus for bringing the community together. The first objective for the group will be to work with the borough council to organise an event this autumn to demonstrate the turning of the sails.

If you are interested then you are welcome to attend our first meeting, where members can join the group and a committee will be elected.

This meeting will be held in **Stevington Village Hall** on **Wednesday 14 July at 7.30pm.**



If you are interested in finding out more and to join our mailing list then contact Daniel Norton on 07880 791403 or dmn21@hotmail.com.

Andy Lockwood

*Drawing by Bernard West
Photo by Heather Eadie*

Stevington Village Hall Questionnaire



The Village Hall has been shut for most of the time since March 2020. It has always been a popular social hub, so not being able to run community activities has meant a real lack of opportunities for people to get together. As we prepare for reopening and starting activities again, it seems a good time to review how we can develop what the Hall offers to the village. In particular, the new members of our community who have moved into Stevington during Covid have missed out on joining in village activities and meeting the wider community. They are also likely to have fresh ideas and suggestions. To help the Hall Committee with future planning, and to help us offer something for everyone, please complete this short questionnaire.

1. How long have you lived in Stevington?

Less than 2 years	
More than 2 years	

2. Tell us how many people live in your household in each of the following age groups.

0-11	12-18	19-25	26-35	36-50	51-65	66-74	75+

3. Under normal circumstances how often do you use the Village Hall?

Weekly		Twice a year	
Monthly		Once a year	
Quarterly		Never use	

4. In the last two years have you hired the Hall or attended an organised event? *(Please tick all applicable)*

Live streaming		Guitar concert	
Film		Private party	
Bowls Club		Wedding reception	
Pilates		Hostess supper	
Christmas Concert		Burns Night	
Stevington 12K		Other	

Stevington Village Hall Questionnaire

5. Would you miss the Hall if it wasn't there? *Please explain answer.*

Yes		No

6. What do you like/dislike about the current facilities?

	Inadequate	Poor	Satisfactory	Good	Excellent	No opinion
Accessibility						
Parking						
Main Hall						
Seating						
Kitchen						
Bar						
Toilets						
Playing Field						
Children's play area						
<i>Any comments:</i>						

Stevington Village Hall Questionnaire

7. Which activities would your household attend if these were offered? (Please tick all applicable)

Social events/Clubs (<i>specify below</i>)		Summer fete	
Exercise/fitness classes (<i>specify below</i>)		Ladies' Evening	
Health & Wellbeing (<i>specify below</i>)		Quizzes	
Exhibitions/shows (<i>e.g. arts & crafts, plants</i>)		Walking Group	
Gardening Club		Running Group	
Table Tennis Club		Mums & Toddlers group	
Arts & Crafts Group		Children's film shows	
Youth Club		Other children's events (<i>specify below</i>)	
<i>Details and further suggestions:</i>			

**8. What interests/hobbies/activities does your household go to outside the village?
Please list these and venue attended.**

9. If these activities were available at the Village Hall, would you attend these?

Yes		No		Maybe	
-----	--	----	--	-------	--

10. Thinking about activities in the Hall, what days and times are best for you?

	Monday-Friday	Saturday	Sunday
Mornings			
Afternoons			
Evenings			

Stevington Village Hall Questionnaire

11. If you run a local business or work for a local organisation or group, would you be interested in hiring the Hall for any of the following? (Please tick all applicable)

Meetings		Training Sessions	
Workshops		Educational purposes	
Conferences			

12. Could you offer help with running the Hall?

Lead and organise an activity or event		Create and/or maintain website and social media presence	
Join Hall Committee		Publicity/Marketing	
Assist with Community events		Building maintenance	
Assist with environmental awareness and climate change agenda, e.g. reducing Hall carbon emissions			

If you are able to offer help regularly or on an 'ad hoc' basis or wish further information without commitment, please provide contact details:

Name:

Address:

.....

Email:

Phone number:

Please return to the labelled box in the Community Shop or Village Hall, post in the post box outside the Hall main entrance or letterbox at 30 Court Lane.





WaveLength

Stevington



Department for
Digital, Culture,
Media & Sport

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We are delighted that Stevington Wavelength has been awarded a grant to provide a tablet that anyone

can use at home. It is completely self-contained and doesn't need any other paraphernalia. The idea is that anyone in the village who doesn't get online can borrow the tablet to use at home, at their own pace, to make video calls to their friends and family or access services.

Easy to follow instructions and Wavelength volunteers will be on hand to help. It is actually very easy to make a video call so don't for one moment think you couldn't do it. If you don't use the internet or you know someone who would like to be able to make a video call to their friends or family, they are welcome to borrow the tablet and access all the help they need. Ring John Duffield 01234 822617 or ask a friend to email duffieldjc@aol.com.

Internet Café at the Church Room

Wavelength has been able to set up a tablet for free public use in the Church Room. Anyone can hop online when the community shop is open to browse the web or access services.

Stevington Wavelength is not about experts helping novices, it's really about people in the village helping each other and sharing knowledge. To Join our WhatsApp group contact Bob Collins, Robert Eadie, Roger Day or John Duffield.

Team Wavelength

PARISH COUNCIL EMAIL NEWSLETTER

Do you ever feel there is too much information but still wish you knew what was going on? Why not sign up on the Parish Council website www.stevington-pc.gov.uk to receive a free weekly email newsletter. Agendas, minutes and the latest local notices will be sent straight to your inbox each Wednesday.

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The Friends of ST MARY'S CHURCH

Our fundraising this year has been solely dependent on membership subscriptions and kind donations. As Covid-19 restrictions are slowly being lifted we are beginning to plan fundraising activities that involve some social interaction.

We aim to support the Church Room project which will provide inclusive access and improved facilities. To this end we need to raise larger amounts than we have in the past. We hope that we can access grants to help bring about these improvements, but we will also have to raise local contributions. If you have ideas about ways FOSM can begin fund raising as we exit from Covid-19 restrictions, or would like to make a donation, please get in touch fosmteam@gmail.com.

Plant Sale - Church Room Saturday 12 June 10.00am-1.00pm

We are holding a plant sale at the Church Room. Anyone wishing to donate plants, seedlings, flowers, climbers, vegetables or fruit bushes can drop them off at the Community Shop in the days before the event where they will be cared for until the sale starts.

Please label your plants for identification purposes.

The plant sale table will remain open for two weeks after the launch for people to donate or buy plants.

Open Gardens

We are planning to hold this year's open gardens online. This year we are looking to collect photographs of your gardens through the seasons so feel free to submit photographs of your garden taken at any time in the year. The event will go live on 12 June. Contact Robert Eadie via robert@eadies.org.uk for details.

If you are not a member of FOSM please visit our website for more information about the charity and details of how to join. Donations are always welcome.

Thank you for your ongoing support.

John Duffield



STEVINGTON BAPTIST CHURCH

Different perspectives on the pandemic

We have all gone through different emotions and experiences since the start of the pandemic - but one thing we can be thankful for is those people who have worked so tirelessly to reduce the threat, especially those who have given up so much of their own time.

What words would you choose to course the past 15 months?

Choice Options Vaccination Isolation Dull

Cramped Once Venom Insular Downcast

Church or Chapel Outward Volunteer Interaction Dancing

Closed Odd Village Imprisoned Dead

Christ Open Vision Inspire Deliverance

Computer On/Off Video I-pad Desperate

Champion Outlook Victory Inoculate Different.

I'm sure you have plenty of your own thoughts but the heavy clouds are beginning to lift so let's all pray that Covid-19 is finally nearing its end.

Prayers

On the subject of prayers, we have continued to meet weekly to pray for many things - such as the church community in illness and bereavement, international crises, hostage situations, Her Majesty the Queen and of course the pandemic. These meetings have also given us an opportunity to praise and thank our God, especially as we have moved from Good Friday to Easter and on to Pentecost. If you would like prayers for any person or situation please email us, in confidence, at office@stevingtonbaptistchurch.org.

Peter Evans

STEVINGTON WOMEN'S INSTITUTE
TODAY'S WOMEN WORKING FOR TOMORROWS WORLD



Our monthly meetings continue on Zoom which now feels the norm.

Nick Cooke joined us at our April meeting and gave a very informative talk on Bletchley Park. He explained why Bletchley Park had been chosen to become the home of the codebreakers in WWII and went into great detail explaining how the Enigma cipher machine was encrypted. I think for those that have not yet explored the Park he whetted our appetites to pay a visit to discover much more of the history behind the story.

Our annual meeting was held in May. Reports were given by our Treasurer and President but unfortunately due to a technical hitch our Secretary was unable to deliver her Report. Later Pat forwarded this on by email. Jacky informed us that the numbers attending this year's meetings were on average the same as when we met in person. We all seem to be becoming quite computer proficient! We ended our meeting with a game of Boggle. This involved making as many three or more lettered words from a selection of letters provided in a specified time. It was amazing how many different words we managed to come up with.

In June we have arranged for a talk on the Body Shop to be given by Jennie Jordan, the daughter of one of our members.

Hopefully, Covid-19 restrictions and weather permitting we intend to hold a BBQ in my garden on 15 July. This will be the first time many of us have met face to face.

Some of our members have attended online County meetings. Through the WEye magazine and newsletter from our President members are being kept up to date with information about what is happening at local, county and national level.

We have managed some local walks. One in particular was very enjoyable when we walked over to Salem Thrift, Bromham where the bluebells, primroses and wood anemones were in full bloom.

By the time you receive this edition of the magazine we will have held a plant and produce stall on the 22 May. Hopefully you will have learnt of this via our posters on display in the village.

Please stay safe and well everyone.

Marilyn Billett



BEDFORD
BOROUGH COUNCIL

COUNCIL PLANS IMPROVEMENT WORKS AT PRIORY COUNTRY PARK

Bedford Borough Council has announced plans to deliver a number of improvement works around the award winning Priory Country Park, which will encourage visitors to continue to take part in outdoor physical exercise.

Phase one of these works will see the Council upgrade the deteriorating path around the lake area of Priory Country Park to an all-weather tarmac pathway, making the lakeside walk more accessible for people who use buggies and wheelchairs. In addition, the Council is also installing new signage around the Country Park that highlights the various walking routes and their distances.

The second phase of these improvements will see an outdoor gym installed where the labyrinth currently is, which has deteriorated and suffered severe vandalism over the past two years.

The Council has reported that outdoor gyms are becoming increasingly popular with residents. As such, they have identified Priory Country Park as an ideal location for a flagship outdoor gym, due to the high level of footfall and volume of physical exercise already taking place around the park.

Dave Hodgson, Mayor of Bedford Borough, said, 'Over the past year, we've seen how important it is to invest in our parks and open spaces. Not only to encourage people to get out and exercise but for their mental wellbeing as well. That is why we're making the walk around the lake at Priory Country Park more accessible and ensuring that it is usable all year round. We've also seen a sharp increase in the number of people using our outdoor gyms for exercise and we want to make sure they have access to a high-quality space that is free to use and available to everyone.'

The first phase of these works was scheduled to start on Monday 17 May 2021 and is anticipated to take up to six weeks. Although minor disruption is expected, this will be limited to ensure that visitors can still use the park while the works are ongoing. Phase two works will begin later this year.



ST MARY'S MATTERS

Services have been gradually getting back to a more regular pattern, with Covid-19 safety precautions of course. We have had a small congregation of regulars, though understandably there are some who are being more cautious and are attending the weekly Zoom service at 11am from the comfort and safety of their own home.

We have continued to open St Mary's daily for private prayer or just quiet contemplation thanks to a team of 8 volunteers, now from 10am till 4pm, and it is clear that the facility is appreciated by a steady trickle of visitors.

Tower and other repair works

A skilled stonemason who has done work on St Mary's in the past has been appointed, and we hope that he should start in late summer. It will involve some major scaffolding around the tower, but we hope this will not prevent access, though details will have to be worked out, and access may be restricted for short periods.

Church Room

The Church Room working party continues to strive towards applying for grants to help with the finance for the access lift (not just for disabled, but also for pushchairs, and perhaps even caterers' trolleys in the future?) and link building. Inevitably, fundraising events have been suspended for over a year now, so do please generously support forthcoming events including the Virtual Gardens 2021 and the FOSM Plant Sale.

Churchyard Maintenance

The churchyard looks particularly wonderful at this time of year, in no short measure down to the many families who visit regularly to put flowers on memorials, and also to mow or trim. Many visitors to the church comment on how lovely it looks. The contractor is mowing and trimming the whole site regularly, and we now have an arrangement where certain sections are left unmown to allow the spring, and then summer, wildflowers to flourish. The working party continues to do sterling service, and several are visiting more regularly than just once a month.

From the Register:

Internment of Ashes

26/02/2021

Roy Keech

05/05/2021

Enid Wooding

Robert Eadie, Churchwarden

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STEVINGTON FOOTBALL CLUB

Unfortunately shortly after the publication of the last edition of the magazine the local football governing authorities announced that all the 2020/21 league and cup competitions would be 'null and void' due to the on-going Covid-19 lockdown requirements.



As restrictions were gradually eased the Bedfordshire County Football League consulted with their membership and agreed to hold 'Supplementary Cup Competitions' to enable clubs to get back playing some football.

The Cups were structured in a mini-league format with groups of four local clubs playing home and away ties and then the winners progressing to knock out stages up to a final that was to be played behind closed doors.

Stevington were in the group with local rivals AFC Oakley Firsts, Riseley Sports and AFC Kempston Town & Bedford College Firsts.

Unfortunately there were simply too many games in a short period, playing at least 2 or 3 times in 7 days (evenings and weekends) and even more for those also playing in the Sunday league.

Considering the lengthy lay off Stevington performed well but lost against the run of play to AFC Kempston & Bedford College Firsts and then had to forfeit a game as we were unable to field a side to play Riseley due to the unavailability of players.

However we were finally able to play against AFC Oakley (one of two clubs who voted against Stevington being crowned 'unbeaten Premier League Champions' the previous season), beating them 2-1 at home and drawing 1-1 away. The other team that vetoed the award were Cranfield FC (who we had beaten twice in the league). The team played exceptionally well in these games and showed Oakley they would have been deserved and worthy champions the previous season.

At this stage we assume the 2021/22 season will commence in late August as normal and look forward to playing regular competitive matches again.

The last 10 years have been a very successful and enjoyable period for the club, probably one of the most successful periods in its history. During this period we have managed to climb out of the Third Division all the way up to the Premier Division, winning many Shields,

League and Cup Doubles, a League and Cup Treble and becoming the first Junior Bedford League team to win the Bedfordshire Football Association FA Senior Trophy along the way. As well as being unbeaten in the Premier Division last season year when the league was cancelled in March 2020.

The club's manager through this tremendously successful period has been Aaron Coker and we are sad to report that Aaron has decided that he will now be stepping down from the role. He wants to be able to focus more time on his business, spend more time with his family and simply have time to watch some football on a Saturday without the pressure of running a side.

Everyone associated with the club is extremely grateful of his work with the club and would like to thank him for the success that it has given us and the development of our players over this period through is tremendous coaching abilities. His role will be taken on by fellow club members Tommy McGirl and Ian Collins next season and we are confident that the club will keep progressing and remain a force in the local leagues and cup competitions.

Thanks to everyone that comes along and supports the team, whether it be at the matches or for the after game de-brief and special thanks to Nigel and the Royal George team for their continued support and sponsorship after all our matches.

So in the meantime remain sensible as restrictions ease, follow advice and guidelines so that we can all collectively beat this Covid-19 problem - it's a bigger challenge than any football competition!

Shane King

VILLAGE DEFIBRILLATORS

To access these in an emergency situation, **please dial 999 immediately**. The call handler will provide you with the code for the cabinet lock.

The defibrillators are located in:

- Red telephone box near the cross in Church Road
- Yellow cabinet on front of Village Hall
- Yellow cabinet on front of Baptist Chapel Hall, West End.



BEDFORD SAILING CLUB

Back to normal-ish!

Following major flooding on Christmas Day and again late January, the clubhouse has now dried out and re-decoration is well under way. The kitchen was beyond salvation and another kitchen (kindly donated by Shane and Ali) has already been installed. A new lino floor is being fitted shortly.



Club member Heather from Oakley kindly volunteered husband Rade and sons to repair and service the drowned mower and outboard engine which got done in double quick time and we are very grateful for their generous offer.

In spite of the flooding, no equipment was lost and the sailing club has remained active throughout with a number of members getting out on the water thanks to carefully managed access procedures during lockdown.

The club is again offering free canoe, kayak and rowing tuition.

The wild swimmers too are making a return on Saturday mornings.

So, almost back to normal! Members are able to book an allocated time slot to allow for social distancing and can use a selection of club equipment for canoeing and kayaking to explore the river Great Ouse or just relax in our idyllic riverside spot.

Villagers wanting to join the membership of this fantastic local facility or to book a time slot can contact:

Dave on daveabrear@aol.com or

Hugo on hugovankempen0@gmail.com.

Hugo van Kempen

Footnote:

Readers will be pleased to learn that the mole, rescued and evacuated to higher ground during the flood, has returned to his old digs.

Mr. Mole is currently in discussion with his local MP regards improved flood defences on the river to ensure he is not inconvenienced by rising water levels in future.

FARMING NEWS

The fact that this month's (June) issue is so brief is a pretty good indicator that it's busy so, in no particular order:

The winter cereals will be getting their final fungicide this week to prevent mycotoxin contamination in cereals destined for human and livestock consumption - these fungi can result in serious health threats in direct human consumption and a serious lack of performance if used in livestock rations. The last of the nitrogen applications will also be going on to increase protein levels in milling wheat for bread.

Anyone with sheep and cattle is pretty worried about the lack of grass due to the unseasonably cold and dry April. Things have started to green up which looks nice from the road but if you get into the fields you will see there is no bottom to the swards and little sustenance from what's there.

Rape will be coming off flower by now and by the time you are reading the next Farming News report in the September issue we will have the winter barley and oilseed rape in the shed.

Please could we ask you to keep your dogs on short leads when walking along perimeter or cross-field footpaths in **all** arable crops - the ripening crops are particularly vulnerable to shatter as they senesce and dry out.

At least Damien has got the rain for his sunflowers, which should be a real sight later - you read it here first - I've got 20 quid on a photograph showing the windmill **and** the sunflowers making the national press or TV. Just see if there isn't.

The Farmers

Stevington: The Village History Revisited

Missing order form?

If the loose order form was missing from your copy of the Stevington Magazine and you want one, please contact Peter Hart (see p20) or the Editors (see p3).

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MOBILE LIBRARY

Hello Stevington Readers!

Firstly, we hope you are all safe and keeping well during these difficult times.

The Mobile Library is now back on the road and visiting Stevington.

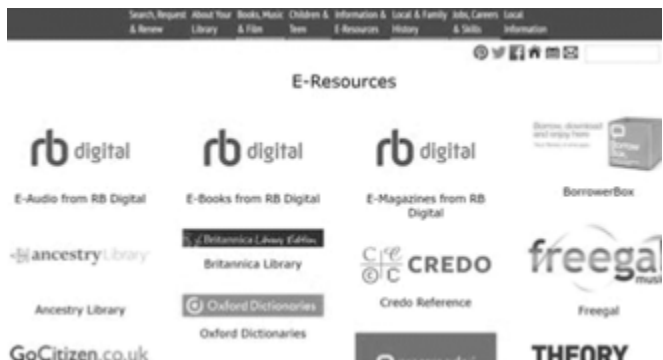
Currently, we are having to run a reduced service where customers pick up requested items from the door of the van. You can request specific titles, or a bundle request from our select and collect service, where Library staff will pick items for you from your wishes. Whilst we are operating this temporary timetable we'll be visiting the Cross on **alternate Wednesdays, between 11:30am and 11:50am**. For further information on this, and to request your items, you can visit us at www.bedford.gov.uk/libraries.

For when we restart the service fully, the time for stops in Stevington will be as follows:

The Cross - 1.35 to 1.55pm

For those of you who are able to drive, all Bedford Borough Libraries are open for our select and collect service.

We know a number of you have been using our digital resources through lockdown. We have a fantastic range of online material available via the Virtual Library. Using



either your Mobile Library or static branch card, you can register for thousands of free audio books, ebooks, digital magazines and daily newspapers, from our suppliers at Libby, Borrowbox and Press Reader. For further information on these, visit www.bedford.gov.uk/libraries and browse the eResources section of the virtual library.

Stay safe, and we look forward to you borrowing from us soon!

The Kempston Mobile Library team.

STEVINGTON CARPET BOWLS CLUB

Just a little more to say this quarter - but not much.

Hopefully by the time this edition hits the doormats we'll be back at the hall on Monday nights. It remains to be seen if we've still got any 'skill' left!

We have paid our share of the hall rental for every week since lockdown started ensuring we could go straight in when allowed. Although a relatively small sum we hope that it has helped in some way.

All members will be contacted as soon as we are allowed in. New members always welcome, just turn up on a Monday evening at 7.00pm, no need to contact us first.

Looking forward to seeing you all. No bank holiday club nights - otherwise every Monday.

Barbara Collins



WHAT'S ON

Sunday Strolls (6 June, 4 July, 1 August)

A gentle Sunday walk. Meet at reception at 10.30am. Walk lasts approx. 2 hours. Free but donations welcome. No need to book. Call 01234 767037 for details.

Become a Volunteer

If you are interested go to www.marstonvale.org/volunteer-tasks.

Become a Friend

For £5/month you can become a Friend of the Forest. For how to apply and the benefits go to www.marstonvale.org/friends.



Special Events:

For information about what's on including Learning Lunchtime, Wildlife and Bird Walks and the Bedford Run Fest 2021 visit www.marstonvale.org and click on "what's going on".

STEVINGTON SOCIAL CENTRE 100 CLUB YOUR VILLAGE HALL STILL NEEDS YOU!

For only £5 per month you can help raise valuable funds to keep your fantastic village hall in good order whilst helping yourself to the chance of winning £100!

The 100 Club still has a few numbers available, so try your luck and help maintain your village hall. Although the Covid-19 restrictions are gradually being eased, the 100 Club remains an important means of guaranteed revenue so your continued support is crucial.

A dedicated team of volunteers help keep the building in good order throughout the year and with your help we can secure the future of the building until we can again start our customary programme of concerts, films, theatre, ballet, opera, carpet bowls, table tennis, yoga, Pilates and private functions.

EVERY MONTH four lucky winners receive a cash prize.

To join contact Hugo at hugovan Kempen0@gmail.com or on 01234 824894.

These are the most recent lucky winners:

Mar	£100	No 72	James Pease
	£50	No 47	Fiona Hart-Ives
	£25	No 69	John Hirst
	£15	No 52	Janet Day
Apr	£100	No 89	Sandra Sample
	£50	No 22	Linda Penney
	£25	No 68	Frances Newman
	£15	No 17	Ged Puckett
May	£100	No 68	Frances Newman
	£50	No 42	Malcolm MacDonald
	£25	No 44	John Harlington
	£15	No 45	Albert Markham



Hugo van Kempen



VIEW FROM OUR WINDOW

It has been an awful year - over a year now - but the view from our window remains the same, wide and beautiful - but changing with the seasons.

With the arrival of Spring the many trees change brown and yellow to green, some with blossom on. The grass grows longer and greener, to receive the cows, who arrive about April. The river turns from brown and grey to sparkling silver with patches of blue where the sun catches the water between the banks on the bends.

Later on the sheep arrive, dots of white fluff on the grass between the mainly brown cows. There will be some calves, but not small lambs, and during the late afternoons they behave like children let out of school, chasing each other all over the fields.

Later on the colour changes again, the animals leave for their winter quarters and all becomes still until the arrival of the winter wind and rain. Obviously this creates awful havoc for those who live near our beautiful Great Ouse, with flooding and evacuations and loss of homes and possessions, but the almost instant arrival of a great lake as far as the eye can see is wonder in itself. Then, like a plug is pulled and just as quickly, the water disappears as though it had never been. Then Spring will return and once again we shall have the pleasure of seeing foxes stalking the meadows and rabbits hopping in and out of the hedgerow burrows before the next cycle begins again.

Every part of Stevington is blessed with amazing views, but this one is ours, from our own window.

A shy Stevington resident

CHURCH GROUNDS VOLUNTEERS

A small team of volunteers meet at 10am every first Saturday of the month to spend a few pleasant hours removing ivy and weeds, clearing bushes, cleaning and righting gravestones and generally keeping the place looking tidy.

If you can spare a few hours to help out, please just turn up on the day, you'd be most welcome!

Hugo van Kempen



EXPLORE GREENSAND COUNTRY

Greensand Country is an area of distinct beautiful countryside stretching from Gamlingay to Leighton Buzzard. Its 40 miles of scenic landscape follows the Greensand Ridge. Greensand Country is rich in wildlife and cultural heritage and is the ideal location for a weekend walk, a rural run or an exhilarating cycle. Its historic parks and open spaces are perfect for family days out, from sculpture trails in Rushmere Country Park, bug hunts at Amptill Great Park to the Swiss Garden at Shuttleworth.

Start your exploration by visiting the Greensand Country website www.greensandcountry.com, where you will find lots of new local walking, running and cycling routes. More walks and cycle routes will be added over the next six months.

Walking

A self-guided walk follows the River Flit through its quiet valley rich in history and wildlife. This route introduces you to some of the wonder to be found along the Flit, from peat bogs and ancient woodland to the stories told by historic buildings and archaeological finds.



You will soon be able to experience the extended and improved 40-mile-long Greensand Ridge walk with new leaflets and signage. Gateway features will soon appear in Leighton Buzzard and in Gamlingay and mark the new beginning and end of this well-known trail.

Cycling

There are plenty of level stretches for leisurely rides, as well as challenging climbs for seasoned cyclists and a network of off-road routes that remain passable year-round, thanks to the area's sandy soil.

In partnership with Sustrans and Central Bedfordshire Council, seven new circular cycling routes have been created to help you to explore more of Greensand Country by bike. The Greensand cycle ride



will now extend for more than 40 miles from Leighton Buzzard to Gamlingay and has new signage and downloadable leaflets to help you find your way and learn about the natural and cultural heritage of the landscape.

Stevington Baptist Church



Here to serve, support and encourage our community: seeking to bring fun and joy to church life

In light of the ongoing concern about the Coronavirus pandemic , we regret to announce that public worship at Stevington Baptist Church is suspended until further notice.

Please check our Facebook page for further updates. We will put posters up in the village when our services and events are able to resume.

Keep us, good Lord, under the shadow of your mercy, in this time of uncertainty and distress. Sustain and support the anxious and fearful, and lift up all who are brought low; that we may rejoice in your comfort knowing that nothing can separate us from your love in Christ Jesus our Lord.

www.stevingtonbaptistchurch.org

www.facebook.com/stevingtonbaptistchapel

office@stevingtonbaptistchurch.org



THAT WAS THE NEWS THAT WAS

The Bedfordshire Mercury - 14/02/1902

FOOTBALL - On Saturday, in Mr. Turney's field, Stevington scored one goal and Queen's Works Juniors, Bedford three goals.

ACCIDENTS - A lad named Goldsmith has had the fingers on one of his hands injured through getting them into a machine at The Manor (Mr Norman's), and a young man named Bowyer had part of one leg shot off whilst out with a shooting party at Colworth (Mr W. Clarence Watson's).

PRIMITIVE METHODISTS - held anniversary services at their Chapel, Park End, last Sunday, on behalf of Home and Foreign Missions. Mr Cowley did duty in the afternoon, and the Rev. T. Sadler in the evening. The deputation to a public meeting on Tuesday evening was the Rev. F. H. Clark.

TOTAL ABSTINENCE - On Monday, at the Baptist Chapel, there was a room filled with members and friends at the Band of Hope meeting, under the presidency of the Rev. H. C. Field, supported by Mrs Field with a reading. Miss Clara Hulett, Mrs Alfred Mackness and Miss Nellie Warwick gave a dialogue on "Curing a drunken husband"; Harry Field, Walter Rowney and Alfred Warwick also recited; and George Bowyer played a violin solo to harmonium accompaniment by Mr George Field (of The Cross), who also contributed a reading. Four signed the pledge at the close of the proceedings, and so now the membership of the society consists of 65 children and adults.

The Bedfordshire Mercury - 20/07/1906 - Bedford Division Police Court – Absconding Reformatory Boys.

Ernest Plummer and Samuel Ford, Reformatory boys, who had been in custody since Monday, were placed in the dock on a charge of stealing a waistcoat and watch. They had been remanded from Tuesday. They both pleaded guilty, and expressed a desire to go on a training ship.

Oliver Bowyer, labourer, Stevington, said he was working in a field at Stevington, on the 9th inst. His waistcoat with a watch in the pocket was laid in the field, but at 11.30am he found it gone. The two lads were brought to him, and the waistcoat and watch produced were his property.

Alfred Wm. White, Insurance Agent, Turvey, said he went after the lads on the day in question and found them walking in the direction of

Bedford. He caught them up and found Ford wearing the stolen waistcoat. He had two waistcoats on.

They were ordered one day's imprisonment, and then to be returned to the Reformatory from which they had absconded. The Magistrates elicited from the Governor of the Reformatory that the lads would be birched on their return.

The Bedfordshire Times And Independent - 12/11/1909

FREEHOLD & COPYHOLD PROPERTY

STEVINGTON, BEDFORDSHIRE

SALE OF VALUABLE HOUSE AND COTTAGE

PROPERTY & ACCOMODATION GRASS LAND

J. C. H. ROBINSON

Has received instructions from the Executors of the late Mr. William Lord Hulatt, to Sell by Auction on Tuesday, November 23, 1909, as follows : -

LOT 1 - TWO COPYHOLD COTTAGES, Stone Built and Slated, situated in Church Street, with Gardens, let to Walter Cox and Mrs. Mackness at the Annual Rental of £10 8s.

LOT 2 - TWO COPYHOLD COTTAGES, Stone Built and Slated, situated in Church Street, with Gardens, let to Mrs. Hyde and Mrs. Towns, at the Annual Rental of £10 8s.

LOT 3 - TWO COPYHOLD COTTAGES, Stone Built and Slated, with Gardens, let to Walter Bowyer and Harry Corby, at the Annual Rental of £10 10s.

LOT 4 - TWO COPYHOLD COTTAGES, Brick Built and Slated, with Gardens, let to George Lacey and Harry Cox, at the Annual Rental of £9 12s.

LOT 5 - TWO STONE BUILT COPYHOLD COTTAGES, with Gardens, let to Lewis Towns and Herbert Lacey, at the Annual Rental of £8 8s.

LOT 6 - COPYHOLD HOUSE, Built of Brick and Slated, with Gardens, and CARPENTER'S SHOP, with Timber Yard, lately in the occupation. of Mr Wm. Lord Hulatt.

LOT 7 - RICH GRASS FIELD, "Scott's Close," 3 acres and 27 poles, of which 3 acres are Freehold and the rest Copyhold, in the occupation of Mr. John Short, at the Annual Rental of £10.

The above will be Sold at the "Red Lion" Hotel, Stevington, at Four o'clock in the afternoon. The OUT-DOOR EFFECTS, consisting of the usual Stock-in-Trade of a Carpenter, Carpenter's Tools and Effects, Chestnut Pony, Four Wheeled Pony Carriage, Pony Harness, Two Spring Carts, New Cart Bodice, Paint, Ash and other Timber with numerous other Effects will be sold on the Premises at 12.30.

Further Particulars of The Auctioneer, Marsh Leys, Kempston, Bedford or of Messrs. Sharman and Trethewy, Solicitors, Bedford.

The Bedfordshire Mercury - 26/11/1909 - STEVINGTON PROPERTY

The usual success attending sales by Mr J. C. H. Robinson (of Marsh Leys, Kempston) was again evidenced last Tuesday, when property and effects of the late Mr Wm Lord Hulatt were disposed of, in the presence of numerous spectators. Mr J. C. Evitt Robinson sold the stock-in-trade, for which good prices were realised. Mr J. C. H. Robinson offered buildings and land, and, after brisk competitions, these prices were secured: Two cottages in Church-street were bought at £115, and two at £130, by the Foresters' F.S.; two cottages in Court-lane, £145, Mr Alfred Raban; two others, £137 10s., Mr Geo. Bowyer; two more, £70, also house, carpenter's shop, etc, Court-lane, £115, Miss Hulatt; Scott's Close, £170, Mr Amos Turney.

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Mark Jackson



HAVE YOUR SAY ON LOCAL BUS SERVICES?

Bedford Borough Council wants to hear your views on local bus services.

Have your say via the quick and easy form on the Council website at www.bedford.gov.uk/bustravel or by calling 01234 718005.

The deadline for responses is **FRIDAY 11 JUNE.**

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HARROLD ODELL COUNTRY PARK NEWS



We are now well into spring and the birds are breeding like crazy. The first Greylag Goose goslings are out in the lakes and a pair of Black Swans appeared suddenly on 28 April. Goodness knows where they came from! They are native to Australia! The suspicion is that they've come from an estate lake somewhere but they certainly caused a stir amongst our visitors. Sadly, they departed again after a couple of days.

Our regular visitors have been keeping us informed about the wildlife they've spotted during their early morning or late evening walks. As well as the usual Muntjac Deer, Foxes, Badgers and Rabbits, we've been sent photos of a dog Otter at the edge of the river, Grass Snakes have been reported near the duck feed area and the first Cuckoo was heard at the end of April.

Volunteer Steve Hamlett is working on constructing three tern rafts. One has been moored at the back end of Kingfisher Lake and the other two are destined to be placed either side of Heron Island within view of the bird hides. These are anchored floating platforms with clear Perspex anti-Mink side panels topped with a layer of gravel for birds like the Common Terns and Oystercatchers to nest on. The provision of this equipment has been funded by the Friends Group out of parking donations.

Other species now in the park include House Martins, Blackcaps, Willow and Reed Warblers, Chiffchaffs and Goldcrests. The first Swallows have also arrived. We are beginning to see a variety of wildflowers emerging too.

On 29 April this year's herd of cows arrived on site. They are such a valuable tool in managing the river meadow. Harrold is a County Wildlife Site. We have had a grazing regime in place as part of the Management Plan for about 26 years and they help to keep the bramble, scrub and weeds at bay so open access is maintained.

Organisations like the National Trust and the Wildlife Trust also make use of grazing on their reserves but they don't just use cattle. Depending on the habitat, they use sheep, goats and horses to get the desired results. The trouble with having sheep is their vulnerability to dog attacks. Local farmers reported a sharp increase in incidents during lockdown involving uncontrolled dogs. People just need to keep their

distance when using the meadow. It is still open to visitors but grazing signs have been put on all the entrance gates to give people fair warning.

Since my last news bulletin, the volunteers have been amazing. What a team we have! Here is a list of the main things they have helped us achieve in the last 3 months and this is just the tip of the iceberg.

- Cleared lakeside viewpoints and created new hurdle fences next to the duck feed area and in gaps in the hedges along the bridleway broken down over the winter.
- Repainted and cleaned faded signage and fitted the new wooden signposts paid for out of parking donations.
- Cleared and repaired the river meadow fence line and the stile at the far end of the river meadow.
- Cleared debris from the main path through the nature reserve and cut back regrowth obscuring the viewpoints.
- Completed restoring and upgrading the flood damaged boat launch ramp essential for the launching the park boat when work is needed on Heron Island.
- Removed an old brick pile and re-sculpted the overgrown bank next to the wood compound to create a dozen extra parking spaces in the overflow car park.
- Filled numerous winter potholes along the bridleway.
- Erected new bird boxes and started carrying out butterfly surveys.
- Helped to cut up and clear fallen trees and flood debris.
- Planted and kept watered numerous new trees in the park and in the community orchard.
- Moved timber from the winter thinning works into the wood compound and stacked it all to season ready to turn into this winter's firewood.



- Produced information sheets and put them in the notice-boards for people to read.

Going forward there are plans to repair the roof on the main bird hide and the platform on the little bridge over the dyke into Otter Holt Wood. After the floods, the Odell Village community came together and formed a work party to help clear and dig out a bramble covered outlet stream on our boundary. We will now be able to keep on top of any regrowth so we can monitor for any blockages in the stream that might cause excess water to back up during periods of heavy rain.



Cutting round the furniture

As well as these essential tasks, the Friends Group has commissioned a new carved bench to go in the main picnic area. It is a replacement for an old one that has begun to rot.

We are keen to provide an artistic element within the park in the form of a new carved bench. It is going to be made of cedar in the shape of a carp with lily pad seats. We are using the same chainsaw artist, Peter Schwartz who created the carved bench at the far end of the park last year. These additions are being funded by your generous car park donations. We would like to thank the person/s who have recently been putting £5 notes in the tins and indeed everyone who puts a donation in the tins. We really appreciate your support and ensure that the money is ploughed back into maintaining the park during these times of austerity.

There are plans afoot to repair the large pothole in the main car park and the drainage gullies that have become broken and blocked over time. Bedford Borough Council will be carrying out these works very soon and consequently, there will be a single lane entry and exit operating in the main entrance for a couple of days so please take care. I would like them to replace the entrance gates at the Odell end as well. The posts are rotting at the bottom making the gate very difficult to open these days.

Fishing will recommence on 16 June. A season permit is available to purchase via the Bedford Borough website www.bedford.gov.uk

search fishing. Please note that there are no day tickets for Council fisheries. Permits are available at a cost of £73.75 for day & night and £47.75 for dawn to dusk. Have your EA rod license to hand at the time of purchase as you will be asked to put in the number. Please note that the fishing at the park is extremely difficult as there are comparatively few fish in the lakes but the ones we do have are really big. We have carp, pike, perch, bream and silver fish in both lakes plus fishing in the river within the park boundary. You will also be entitled to fish at Priory Country Park, Barkers Lane, Bedford which is also owned by the Council. We have a Bailiff, Luke Clarke who patrols after hours.

Dates for your Diary

Health Walks (June 3 & 17, July 1, 15 & 29, August 12 & 26)

At long last, we have been able to restart our Health Walk programme. They occur on a Thursday every fortnight from 10.30am and last one hour. We meet outside the woodland entrance to the café for registration. The walks are free but participants must complete a health questionnaire when coming for the first time for insurance purposes. Contact Janet Munro janet.munro@bedford.gov.uk.

Janet Munro - Country Park Warden

Photos courtesy of HOCP



VILLAGE DEFIBRILLATORS

To access these in an emergency situation, **please dial 999 immediately**. The call handler will provide you with the code for the cabinet lock.

The defibrillators are located in:

- Red telephone box near the cross in Church Road
- Yellow cabinet on front of Village Hall
- Yellow cabinet on front of Baptist Chapel Hall, West End.





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