



The Lidlington Advertiser



SHOWTIME!

This year the annual allotment show was held in the Church Hall on Saturday 11th September. The decision to change the venue from the allotment field was due to the inclement weather early on in the morning. Needless to say the rain ceased and the sun shone just as all the exhibits had been put on display.

The fabulous display of produce was judged by Geoff & Davina Barrett from Flaxbourne Farm, Aspley Guise. Each year the number of entries increases and, according to the judges, the quality of the exhibits, especially their presentation, is improving.



The children's competitions were judged by Jackie Warren along with the entries for best scarecrow, most unusual vegetable & the biggest weed.

Tim Mason officiated at the prize giving in his usual amusing style. The photograph shows Shawn Haddaway receiving his prize for the best potatoes.

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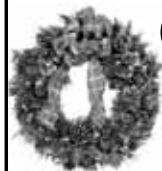
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LETTER FROM THE EDITORIAL TEAM



We can hardly believe that Christmas has come round again. No sooner are we sighing with relief as we push the Advertiser through the doors, but we have to start planning and writing the next one!

Our plea for advertising support has been answered as we were inundated with advertisers for this issue. Fantastic. Thank you to all our supporters and we hope that you get a good response.

We haven't been so inundated with letters, comments and offers of help. If you would like to contribute or just push a few copies through the letterboxes on your street don't hesitate to get in touch.

It looks like the Advertiser will continue into 2011 hale and hearty!

2011 also promises to be an exciting time for the village, as headway starts to be made on Lidlington's own little piece of Millennium Park. More details can be found in this issue on the planned developments at Top Farm.

Contact us on;

Beki on 402361 bekigaskin@me.com

Jean on 405730 jean.peall@gmail.com

The Advertiser would like to take this opportunity to wish everyone a Happy Christmas and a Prosperous New Year.

Addendum from the last edition - Paul Garrett is a striker for Bedford Town FC, and Mr Hinde's pilot's licence was obtained in 1981.

All views and opinions expressed in the Lidlington Advertiser are those of the respective authors and contributors. The Advertiser is not responsible for these views and publication in the newsletter does not confirm endorsement or the accuracy of any statements.



TRIBUTE TO MARIA BORROMEO

It is with great sadness that the village heard of the sudden death of Maria on 17th November. With Mim, she ran M & M stores for over 15 years and always had a smile and a cheerful word for everyone. The funeral was held on Wednesday 1st December at the St. Francesca Cabrini church in Bedford. She was well-loved throughout the village and will be sadly missed by all.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Yet again my husband has had the unpleasant task of clearing up dog mess from the path at the front of our property. I know there have been other letters making the same point about dog mess on the paths and verges around the village and that unfortunately some dog owners have chosen to ignore the request to clear up after their pet.

So why am I writing this letter? Well we live on Church Street close to the shops on the side which is mostly used by pedestrians, especially school children going to and from the bus stop. It is obvious from the mess that it is sometimes stood in and more than likely by a child going for the bus. So imagine being on the bus and smelling a smell then realising it is something unsavoury on your shoe. Then there are the mothers with buggies and toddlers. It doesn't bear thinking about. As for the car drivers who inadvertently stand in it before getting back into their car and spread it over pedals and car mats they must love it.

The following is from the Central Bedfordshire website.

Dog and animal fouling

Allowing dogs to foul and not clean up after them is illegal as well as being anti-social. Offenders can expect a Fixed Penalty Notice of £50 or prosecution in some cases.

Estimates put the British dog population at around 6.8 million, producing 900 tonnes of excrement per day.

If you spot someone who hasn't cleaned up after their dog then you should note what happened as soon as possible. Where known, include the name and address of the person in charge of the dog, a description of the dog plus details of the date, time and place of the offence.

What should dog owners do?

Responsible owners do not allow their dogs to foul public places. Ideally, dogs should be trained from an early age to 'go at home' in their own garden before or after a walk, rather than during. If dog fouling does occur away from home the responsible owner will clean up after the dog. Any suitable plastic bag can be used, or special poop-scoop bags can be purchased from pet shops, veterinary surgeries or stores. Dispose of faeces in a poop-scoop bin or take the bag home. The reality is that there are some extremely selfish pet owners who wouldn't dream of going the wrong way down a one way street or shoplift or any other act which is against the law but have no problem in illegally allowing their dog to foul public areas.

Sue Furlong

LIDLINGTON PARISH COUNCIL

As always the Parish Council have continued to be busy, over the past months the Council have been working hard on a number of local matters. These include meeting with Network Rail to discuss the excessive barrier down times often experienced in the village, carrying out repairs to the play equipment at the Recreation Ground, and overseeing the work of dedicated volunteers who have been clearing the green triangle at the junction of Church Street and Lombard Street ready for flower planting. As well as undertaking improvements to the entrance and security of the Village Hall car park and working with the local authority to ensure highways issues in the village are resolved swiftly.

Planning matters

The Council has been actively responding to some important planning consultations recently which will impact on the village: proposed wind turbine at Marston Vale Forest Centre, Covanta proposals at Rookery South as well as the Center Parcs application at Warren Wood in Millbrook. The Council wishes to thank residents who took the time themselves to also respond on these important matters, it is very important that residents express their opinions and comments so that they can be taken into consideration.

Donations and Funding secured for improvements to the village

The Council continues to support local organisations and make donations; recently £50 has been donated to the Royal British Legion and Victim Support Group, and £100 to Mid Bedfordshire Link-a-Ride Community Transport. Funding secured through the Parish Council has paid for the recently newly installed tennis court at the Sport Field and shortly work will commence on the installation of a spiders web climbing frame at the Recreation Ground.

Best Kept Garden Competition

The winner of the best kept small garden this year was 57 Church Street, the runner up was 21 Kerrison Close. The winner of the best kept large garden this year was 38 Lombard Street, the runner up Clay Hill, High Street. The judge had a difficult task in reaching a decision and commented on several stunning gardens and how much she enjoyed the lovely display of plants in the village.

Highways Issues

If you spot a highways problem, such as a pothole, broken surfacing of a footpath or road, a damaged road sign, or a faulty streetlight then please report the fault to Central Bedfordshire Council's Highways Helpdesk on 0300 300 8049 or email highways@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk, please feel free to copy the Parish Clerk in to any correspondence.

The Helpdesk is the most effective way of ensuring any highway fault in the village is dealt with as soon as possible.

Parish Council Precept and Budget

The Parish Council will be considering and discussing their budget shortly which will aid them to set the precept, the Council is mindful of the current financial climate and welcome any resident comments on this, so please contact the Clerk if you have any comments.

Contacting the Parish Council

If you would like to contact the Council and have any questions or other matters you would like to raise then please feel free to contact our Clerk, Lizzie Barnicoat on (01234) 841835 or via email at lidlingtonnpc@googlemail.com.

PARISH PLAN

At last the Parish Plan is going to press. The Plan has been worked on by village volunteers with the assistance of the Parish Council. Many of you will remember doing a survey and this is the results of it. It should help to bring attention to the things which are most important to the village. A few things have already been achieved; some are realistically achievable over a given period of time, while a few other items are not. (Some youngsters hoped for a Chocolate factory!) The document can be used as benchmark for what the village wants and help to highlight to various agencies the importance of certain issues and requirements.

If not delivered with the Advertiser, it will be coming very soon!!

THOMAS JOHNSON SCHOOL GOVERNING BODY

What's been happening at Thomas Johnson

If you walk past the school entrance you will see our fantastic new classroom extension, which was completed in the summer holidays. Mrs Piper, the nursery manager, has been very clever and chosen a bright and vibrant pink for the extension passage walls. On a gloomy, grey and wet day this gives a welcome cheer to anyone approaching the school and brightens up the environment for the children. Mrs Hounam and the pupils in Class 2 are delighted with the new classroom; it's a large and airy space with lots of storage cupboards. This extension has also enabled the nursery to be linked up to the main school (and also means that staff don't get wet on rainy days when going over to the nursery!) Another benefit of the extension is a new meeting room which is available for parents to use at any time. This new learning environment will surely enhance the pupils learning and their enjoyment of the school. Next term we will be offering parents the chance to come and have a look round the new classroom.



Our next aim is to build a new kitchen. The school and governors have wanted for some time to do this and it would enable all school meals to be cooked on site as well as providing additional learning opportunities to the pupils. We have received a government grant which is about 50% of the total cost. We need to use this grant by the end of August 2011 or we will lose it. We are trying to match the other 50% (which is about £10,000) and would be grateful for any ideas of where grants may be available. As school budgets are cut this may be our last opportunity for some time. The school was recently in receipt of a School Travel Grant. We have used this money to build a new cycle and scooter rack just inside the school gates. This has been a huge success and seen many more children using bicycles and scooters to get to school. We hope this will be an increasing trend and help to encourage children to walk, cycle or scoot rather than drive to school.

The school recently undertook a parent and community survey. The results of this questionnaire revealed parental concerns about parking and the safety of children outside the school gates. In response to this, the governors requested that parents did not park or turn outside the school gates. We ask parents that they be courteous to residents who live on Hurst Grove and Station Crescent. We understand that on a few occasions cars have been parked across residents' driveways causing unnecessary distress and inconvenience. The governors would like apologise to those residents whom this has happened to. Governors have also been in touch with the Local Community Police Officers to monitor and assess the situation.

We are currently updating and designing a new school website. We have surveyed pupils, staff and parents as to what information they would like to see on the website. We have had a lot feedback particularly from parents and are very grateful for this. We hope to launch our website in the early part of next year.

With Christmas fast approaching it will soon be time for staff and pupils to start preparing for their Christmas concerts which take place on 7th and 8th December. The senior citizen's concert will take place on Monday 13th December at 2pm. So I'd like to take this opportunity to wish all the residents of Lidlington, parents, staff and pupils of the school, a very Happy Christmas and New Year.

Lulu Stanier-Martin
Chair of the Governing Body, Thomas Johnson Lower School

VILLAGE HALL UPDATE

As reported in the last issue of The Lidlington Advertiser, having secured grants from WREN (Waste Recycling Group), Grass Roots and Central Beds, significant improvements have been made to your Village Hall over the summer months! We now have a brand new boiler, a new cooker, and an induction loop to assist the hearing impaired.

Your Hall is used for a variety of activities in the evenings during the week, but is available for hire at weekends, and during the day. Lidlington residents are entitled to a discounted hire of £11.00 per hour at weekends, or £7.50 during the week. Why not hold your children's party or celebrate a birthday with friends at the Hall? Take a look at our website for full details www.lidlingtonvillagehall.org

We always welcome new members to our Management Committee - we meet once a month for about an hour and a half to discuss the running of the hall, and what improvements can be made. Our meetings are in the main lighthearted, as we all believe it is important to enjoy what we do, especially as we are all volunteers. And giving something back to your local community makes you feel good :-)

The original Management Committee deed awarded a place on the Committee for each Lidlington society, and it would be very exciting to have more representation on our Committee from all of the groups that operate within the village.

After three years at the helm, I am stepping down as Chairman at the end of our financial year in April, so would particularly like to hear from anyone who would be willing to join the Committee with a view to take on this role in the future. Please call me on 01525 840131 or email me at lidlington@mac.com

Rik Batsman, Chairman

MARSTON VALE COMMUNITY RAIL PARTNERSHIP

The Marston Vale Community Rail Partnership (MVCRP) acts as a bridge between the local communities and their railway. MVCRP is one of a growing number of Community Rail Partnerships across the country.

The aim of the MVCRP is to improve facilities for existing users and to generate new business for rail, increasing the number of people using the line for work and leisure, thereby ensuring that the line has a long and financially sustainable future.

MVCRP has a regular programme of activities throughout the year. The next major event is the **Santa Special on Saturday 11th December** extended to 6 journeys this year due to popular demand! Santa will be in his residence in his grotto on the following trains:

- 10:55, 12:55, 2:55 from Bedford arriving Lidlington at 11:15, 1:15 & 3:15
- 10:01 and 12:01, 2:01 from Bletchley arriving Lidlington at 10:22, 12:22 & 2:22

A Christmas gift will be distributed to each child. A face painter and balloon modeler will also be on board and refreshments will be on sale.

Please note the Santa Special takes place on the normal scheduled train service on which seat reservations are not available. There is no need to book, just turn up!

The Line is also the ideal way of travelling to a number of other Christmas events;

Bletchley Christmas Lights 2010 – Saturday 27th November

A great event for all the family, Santa will be switching the lights on at 4:30 p.m. followed by a Lantern Parade at 5 p.m. There will also be craft stalls and musical entertainment, including Bletchley's very own 'Xmas Factor'! Contact Karen at West Bletchley & Fenny Stratford Town Council on 01908 633783 for more information or visit www.bfstc.co.uk.

I Love Leighton Buzzard Christmas Weekend – Friday 26th (4:00 – 8:00 p.m.) & Saturday 27th November (10:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.)

A fantastic Christmas Market in the High Street complete with live music, funfair, street entertainment, barbeque, mulled wine and other events. Christmas lights switch on and fireworks at 7:00 p.m. on the Friday. Contact the I Love Leighton Buzzard office on 0845 838 8718 or e-mail info@iloveleightonbuzzard.com for further information.

Leighton Buzzard is easily accessible from the Marston Vale Line with one change at Bletchley.

Bedford Victorian Christmas Fair - Friday 10th - Saturday 11th December

The perfect place to experience the sights, smells and sounds of a true Victorian Christmas with stalls, craft fair, fairground rides and ice rink. This year's event will be the largest yet with the Bedford High Street closed to traffic for the first time. Contact Bedford Events on 01234 221955 or e-mail events@bedford.gov.uk for further information.

Fares

Bedfordshire concessionary travel pass holders travel at half price! The Marston Vale Line is also great value for groups or families with a GroupSave ticket through which up to four adults can travel for the price of two on off-peak services with up to four children traveling with the group for just £1 each – under 5s go free. All tickets can be purchased from the conductor on the train.

For further information on any aspect of MVCRP please contact Stephen Sleight on 01234 832645, e-mail stephens@bedscc.org.uk or visit www.marstonvalecommunityrail.org.uk.

Please do get in touch; we would be pleased to hear from you!



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Thank you for your ongoing support - Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!



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NEWS FROM THE CHURCH

Remember.....CHRISTmas began with CHRIST.....

Dear All,

Well here we are again, hurtling towards Christmas at a rate of knots, and all that entails.

The church calendar is filling up, and our evenings are spent planning things such as Carol Singing, Kids' Christmas party, Chocolate Sunday, Christingle, Carols by Candlelight, Christmas Lunch Club, Operation Christmas Child, (Shoebox Appeal), Christmas Storytellers and the Midnight Eucharist!
Hard work...yes! Great Fun...Yes!

A privilege...of Course, as it involves YOU....our great Lidlington Community.

Since my last article, I have been a busy bee visiting many people in their homes, some ill, some lonely, and some just needing someone to listen and share a cuppa with...and I am always up for a cuppa!

The Fun Weekend at TJLS was a great success. We have a very dedicated team, this year 28 people, all willing to give up the whole weekend to give the children a time of fun, worship, drama, craft stories, and a chance to share God's love. We had more children than ever before this year too, with 60 children from the age of 5 up to teens registered.

It was a brilliant time, and a real honour to serve God in this way. The children were great to work with and we also managed to hand the school back to Mr. Nolan and staff undamaged...phew! Thanks again to him and all the staff for putting up with us all, and being so supportive throughout all the preparations...and there were lots of preparations!

I have recently started up an after school club for the children from year 2 upwards. This has been fun and challenging as I have ever done anything like this before... so thanks Kids for your patience and for sticking with me while I find my feet. Thanks too to Pat Hammond, my ever faithful "Personal Assistant".....!

It was also a great privilege to be invited to TJLS Harvest Assembly. The children performed some very touching songs and poems, which really brought to the front of our minds that we should always be grateful to God for His generosity to us and the abundance we experience. But we always need to remember those who have much less than we do. Those people do not only live in countries far away, many live very close to us.

Christmas is SOOO exciting. For me and my family it is a time of celebrating the birth of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ; a time to be thankful that God kept his promise to send someone special to save the world. A time to thank Him for making such a difference in my life, and the lives of my family.. And of course a time of enjoying friends and family, good company and the odd pressie or two (slippers please if you're reading, kids!)

I believe that if God wants me to continue serving Him in this community, then He will provide the funds for that to happen. I sincerely hope that I am able to continue in this role into the New Year.

If I do not see you at any of the up and coming events, then you can seek me out on a Saturday morning between 10am and 12 noon in the Chapel, where I am available for a chat or personal prayer.

Here's wishing you a blessed and peaceful Christmas,

Sian Hiscocks. Lidlington Church Pastoral Worker

The Christingle Service will be at 4pm in the Village Hall on Christmas Eve.

This is a service for all the family, with carols, Christingle candles and a chance to experience the excitement of Christmas Eve. There will only be one service this year.



FREE tickets will be available from November 29th from Sian (405952) or Jean (405730) Please do not take more tickets than you need, as last year many tickets were not used.

A small number of seats will be held back for last minute arrivals but seating numbers are limited.

The collection will be donated once again this year to The Childrens Society. The funds are needed more this year as, due to the current economic climate, charitable giving has dropped dramatically.

LIDLINGTON CHURCH

www.lidlingtonchurch.org.uk

Local contacts:

Rev. Graham Miles Tel. 01234 851987

Linda Bulled and Jeff Bulled Tel. 402647

Sian Hiscocks Tel. 405952

Hall bookings – Jean Peall Tel 405730 or

lidlingtonchurch@gmail.com

If you would like to receive weekly & monthly notices by e-mail please visit the website or contact - newsletter@lidlingtonchurch.org.uk

The monthly Newsletter can also be delivered. Please contact Jean 405730

There is now a Prayer Box attached to the front wall of the Chapel.

Please leave any prayer requests in the box which will be checked regularly.

The prayers can be anonymous, personal, or about someone you know in need.



ALL SAINTS CHURCHYARD & GRAVEYARD

The maintenance of the above has continued through out the Summer & Autumn with two gardeners carrying out the work. It has been necessary to buy a large strimmer with a blade as the brambles and other weeds are best handled by such a machine. As we move more towards the 'left hand or old side' of the Yard the progress has been slow but the 'right hand or new side' is, we feel, under control, with further clearance at the top of the Hill to take place to make more space available up to the 'Top' Tree. Since this process commenced 3 new graves have been reserved and a fourth is awaiting approval by the Diocese. During the winter we will prune the lower branches and suckers from the trees on the Lime Walk.

We have recently had visits from two families who were investigating their family tree, both commented favourably on the condition of the Yard. The family from North Yorkshire were able to identify their family grave dated in the late 1790's. As the hobby of genealogy becomes increasingly popular we expect more of these visitors and thus need to clear as much of the 'left hand or old side' brambles as possible.

The repainting of the gates after being stripped of all of the old paint and rust revealed that at some time in the past they could have had a 'gold' covering on the ornamental topping.

The Army cadet platoon visited the two military graves and placed Poppies on them on Remembrance Sunday after they had first attended the Ceremony in Marston. In addition they placed wreaths at the gates. As a result of the visit of the first party of genealogists we have now received copies of the lengthy reports from the Bedfordshire newspaper of the time of the funerals. Contact me if you wish to have a copy of these reports.

All of the work to date has been jointly funded by the Parish Council and the diminishing Graveyard funds of St. Margaret's Church. Whilst we are hoping that the subsidy from the Parish Council will continue at the same level and we know that we will be able to maintain our own level of financial support during 2011, we are now looking for volunteers to assist us in the lighter aspects of maintenance. We can find tasks that meet with your skills that are not too onerous and can be carried out at times convenient to you. Please call me on 404 170.

Jim Nockels
Graveyard Steward

ST MARGARET'S CHURCH DEVELOPMENT

The diocese of St Albans has decided that it isn't willing for the vicarage site to be developed into a care home for the elderly. We had suggested that the vicarage be replaced by converting the majority of the nave area into a new vicarage, leaving two-thirds of the space available for public worship, weddings, funerals etc. This proposal was rejected on the grounds that it would be unsuitable as a vicarage. Fuller details of our discussions can be found on the church website www.lidlingtonchurch.org.uk and following the link to St Margaret's Development. We do not regard this decision as the end of our proposals and are requesting further discussions with the various committees.

Jonathan Peall (LCC) and Jim Nockels (PCC)

THE TRIANGLE

You may have seen that the Triangle on Lombard Street has been cleared by the Parish Council. The church has agreed, along with some interested locals, to help maintain it. The plan is to lay grass on the front half, with some spring bulbs, and to plant new manageable shrubs to the rear including herbs, which could be used for culinary purposes by locals. The tree is remaining for the birds! Thank you to whoever took the bags of rubbish which were ready to go to the tip. The Lidlington village sign has been restored by the Parish Council and is ready to be re-mounted. Also, the brass plaque associated with the silver birch just up from the triangle is being restored. Owing to the season, we might not get much done now before spring, but if you would like to help please let us know - Jean Peall 405730

HARVEST AT THOMAS JOHNSON

The annual harvest assembly took place again this year at Thomas Johnson Lower School. Years 1 and 2 sang some harvest songs beautifully. Year 3 read some thoughts on Harvest and year 4 read a poem about Harvest. Produce brought by the children was then sold for the charity chosen by the school councillors, Children in Need.



ARMY CADETS

Tales from the brown hut, pt.3.

Well it has been some time since we wrote an article for the Advertiser, most of the older Cadets have now moved on and are either working or pursuing further studies, whilst we are always sad to see them leave it means increased opportunities for the newer and younger cadets. Our parade strength is at a steady 15 Cadets, and although we have a large number of Lidlington Cadets, we also have Cadets from Marston and further afield in Bedfordshire.

We are a MOD sponsored youth group, and are always looking for anyone between the ages of 12 1/2 and 18. But you must have a sense of humour! We are a self supporting group which allows us to forego subs, even the uniform is free, just a pair of boots is required.

So In Cadet Stacey's words:

"At the Lidlington Detachment we learn the 1 star and work our way up, The main things we learn are drill, we do a bit of first aid, rifles (taking it apart, cleaning and rebuilding it), map and compass and badges of rank.

We have a laugh with the staff but all in all we work hard at our achievements. With the Corporals and Lance Corporals gone everyone wants to be moved up.

At the moment we have about 8 recruits and compared to other years we want more.

At the end of the evening for about 15 minutes we have a NAAFI, which is like a break if we have deserved it."

So if you are interested in anything we do at the brown hut next to the village hall, then feel free to pop in any Monday evening around 19:30.

Lt. Sharratt
Beds. and Herts. ACF

DOWN ON THE ALLOTMENTS

Keats described Autumn as the 'Season of mists and mellow fruitfulness' and I think it fair to say that down on the allotments, despite the very dry summer, there is much evidence of allotmenters reaping the fruits of their labour. This was highlighted at the Allotment Show, held in September, where the vegetables, fruits and flowers exhibited were wonderful to see. The category for most unusual vegetable was very entertaining, with tomatoes having noses, carrots with legs and some very odd potatoes. The tallest weed was distinctly tall at over a metre. (Definition of a weed. A plant that has mastered every survival skill except how to grow in rows.) As for the scarecrows? Some were very scary indeed.

At this time of year the allotment holders are preparing their plots for the winter months. It is possible that there maybe some bonfires but everyone has been reminded about the need to be considerate when having a fire.



On behalf of the allotmenters I would like to thank Mike Phillips, the allotment manager, for all his hard work on the site, preparing plots for new holders, clearing overgrown areas and mowing the grass areas. Plus looking to improve the track and ensure that everyone is reasonably near to the water supply. If you would like to find out more about the allotments, Mike (01252 404452), would be happy to answer any queries.

And finally do you want to hear a gruesome story?
A gardener planted a pumpkin seed. He watered it and cared for it very well and soon it grew some and grew some and grew some.....

Sue Furlong

THE BEAUTY SPOT

By Jennie Humphrey



The festive season is just around the corner, a time to meet up with friends and family, time to look our best!

Our hands are always on show. An indication of being well groomed is beautifully manicured nails, they complete the best of outfits for any occasion.

The natural nail needs care and attention on a regular basis, to achieve the best results an application of vitamin oil is beneficial to the nail itself while massage with a cuticle cream and regular push back of the cuticle aids growth. File the nails gently to remove sharp edges to prevent tearing and obtain the desired length, using a nail brush not only cleans the nail but also acts as a buffer to increase circulation to the nail bed. A nutritious hand cream is a must to revitalise fingers, knuckles and back of hands, occasional paraffin wax treatment at a salon can be a luxurious treat and beneficial to joints especially in the cold, damp weather.

There are so many products available to enhance the nails;

Regular varnish (polish) applied firstly as a base coat (to prevent discolouration) followed by 2 coats of colour and a top coat for extra shine and durability. This can last up to 4 or 5 days.

Gel polishes are new to the high street this year, they are applied from a bottle similar to regular varnish but cured under an Ultra violet (UV) unit to set, giving longer wearing time.

Gel overlays are available in french (clear or pale pink with a white tip) or in a variety of colours. These are applied in several layers and each set under UV light. The results are immediate and can look amazing for 2 to 3 weeks with minimal care. They must be soaked off using gentle solvents, usually in the salon. Gel is good for repairs to the natural nail and for extending length.

The acrylic system of nail extensions applied in many salons and nail bars, usually are the most hardwearing and popular due to durability, but they can weaken the natural nail with continual use.

Nail art can be applied to gel or acrylic and can be very decorative and fun using sparkles and gems to enhance the nail.

Whichever way you choose to decorate your nails, follow the guide lines to prevent infections or damage and keep up regular maintenance to get the best from your chosen product.

For treatments or advice contact Jennie on 01525 405325 and book an appointment at The Courtyard at Upper Great Farm (on the top of the hill.)

Gift vouchers are available for treatments or Dermalogica products. An Ideal Christmas gift!



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ROOTS AND SHOOTS

By Maggie Haworth



Frooty Stories!

Well, sadly the 'Roots, Shoots, Flowers & Fruits' herbal walks at the Millennium Country Park came to an end on Sunday September 12th – but what an end! Far more people turned up for the walk than were allowed, but all were squeezed in and I think everyone enjoyed themselves. It was a beautiful day (strangely on these walks, it always seems to be), and the Park was a riot of red berries: Hawthorn, cramp bark (I'll let you guess what that can be used for), blackberry, elder and on and on. As well as medicinal advice, a feature of the walks has always been to tell some of the stories of the plants, and grouped together in one of the Park's secret locations amidst living willow huts made by the volunteers, we discussed how blackberry arches have been used through centuries to cure ailments; anything from hernias to boils! As always though, we looked at the up to date uses of the plants and of course the day wouldn't be complete without the statutory recipe, which for the Fruits walk focused on keeping colds at bay through the winter months. Why not give it a try; it makes a fabulous yuletide present.

Elderberry, cinnamon & rosehip glycerite

Kilner jar
Chopping board
Large plastic bag
Pestle (or rolling pin for crushing)
Brandy
Elderberries (fresh or dried)
Cinnamon sticks
Rosehips (fresh or dried)
Glycerine
Squares of muslin
Bottle for storing



Method

- Crush the elderberries (this can be done in a food processor) and ½ fill the kilner jar
- Add a handful of fresh or dried crushed rose hips
- Add 2 large cinnamon sticks crushed as small as possible
- Add brandy to just cover
- Label with date
- Shake jar each day for 4 weeks
- Strain off through 4 layers of muslin
- Add an equal quantity of glycerine & bottle

Dose – as required – lovely as a hot toddy!

Contraindications – pregnancy

My warm thanks to all those who supported both the Country Park and me in 2010, the money collected has planted a lot of trees! So thank you, and I look forward to 2011 when there will be a walk on the 2nd Sunday of every month starting on April 10th. Until then, happy solstice to one and all!

Maggie Haworth practises as a Herbalist, Counsellor and Healer. Further information can be found on www.emotional-therapy.co.uk and www.medical-herbalism.co.uk. In addition she offers Healing free of charge every Monday between 3 and 7pm at 11 The Grove. Phone 01525 405254 for an appointment.

DIG FOR HISTORY - FAMILY RESEARCH**By Jean Peall**

I began to put a family tree together some years ago when my grandmother was still alive. She was Victorian, born in 1897, so could remember quite a way back and, since families lived closer together, she could give me a fair amount of detail. I didn't have the resources to go trawling off to records offices around the country so I left it for a while. Nowadays, you can do a lot of research sitting at home with the computer. If you don't have on-line access at home, many libraries have free access to family history web-sites (you usually need to book computer use). If your family is local, then you can visit the Archives in person. It's free to research but you may need to reserve a desk and require ID.

These days, of course, many families have moved well away from their original roots and so research is very difficult without a computer unless you wish to travel a lot. If you can research at home, many web-sites give free basic use – www.ancestry.co.uk , www.findmypast.co.uk , www.genereunited.co.uk , www.lostcousins.com , www.1911census.co.uk , www.thegenealogist.co.uk , are some of the sites available to help you research and find relatives you didn't know you had. The IGI (International Genealogy Index available from The Church of Latter Day Saints) www.familysearch.org gives many parish records totally free. As with all the old records, very often the originals are hard to read, damaged or incorrect, perhaps because the writer was given poor information. Search methods differ with all these sites but this can help to narrow down those harder to find records. Also, bear in mind that many people used their middle name, may not have known exactly where they were born or their age, or indeed how to spell their own name. Some used abbreviations e.g. Chas for Charles. Be aware that all information is open to errors as it is only as good as the interpreter. It's always a good idea to back up your find with another record.

Take advantage of free trials available on several of the popular sites; you may be required to put in payment details but as long as you cancel at the end of the trial, you will not be charged. If you think you might get more serious, avoid using the voucher or points system as it will probably cost you more in the long run. Ancestry has a monthly subscription (again you will need to cancel unless you wish to continue). Others have 6 months or 1 year subscription, but there is still much you can find out for free. The 1881 census has free access for transcriptions (the typed version of the written record). Some local archives have been digitised, or transcribed, and are available free on-line; for example, Medway and Lincolnshire are two which I have used but there are others. Censuses are available from 1841 to 1911 but subscriptions vary so shop around for what you are after.

To start a family tree, first ask your known relatives as much detail as you can. Be prepared for errors as some information can lead you down the wrong track, and go back to them again once you have started to verify what you have found. Once started, you will need some way of storing your information. There are various packages and you will have to expect costs if you get serious. If you can work on-line then some of the sites I have mentioned give you free access to build your family tree. Once on a subscription, then you can interact with other family tree owners and share information. We have discovered cousins we never knew before, even a third cousin living in Lidlington! We have been sent photos of distant relatives we would never have seen. One lovely connection I made was with a cousin in Canada whose line of the family had completely lost touch with the rest, her grandmother being one of nine siblings. I was able to send her lots of photos and information about the family she didn't know, some of which came from my granddad's cousin who I discovered only lives half an hour away. She happened to have a wonderful 'ambrotype' photograph of my great, great, grandfather which I have had reproduced.

On the subject of photographs, if your relatives have photos which are un-named, try to ask them who they are and label them. We have any number of unidentified people. Some we have been able to guess but for others there is no clue and no-one left to ask.

Be aware of spending a lot of money obtaining certificates. It may be necessary in certain cases but they will be quite expensive, even direct from the General Records Office (GRO). If your family is local, then visit the local records offices or consider going for a days visit to the Kew Archives. A large number of the London Archives have been scanned and are available on-line. In many cases, you will be able to see whether your relative was literate, if they signed their marriage record.

A number of the sites give you the option of receiving a newsletter or up-dates. One of the best I have discovered is with Lost Cousins which has a free basic subscription. If you are interested to get started on a family tree and need a little help to know where to start I would be happy to help.

Jean Peall 01525 405730 jean.peall@googlemail.com

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UP FRONT AND PERSONAL WITH VILLAGE PEOPLE

No, not the outrageous 1970's pop band but interesting people from our village...

No 4 - Dr Robina Chatham

Dr Robina Chatham lives in a converted barn dating back to 1849 on the edge of the village. The barn is simply stunning and Robina told me that she and her husband John have recently completed its refurbishment, fifteen years after moving in! The renovation has been a labour of love that included John painstakingly removing layers of pitch black paint from the acres of roof beams and rafters by hand.

Robina and John share their home with six alpacas, three llamas, two cats, one Icelandic pony and a pond full of rare great crested newts that were discovered when their garden pond was surveyed as part of the works taking place on the A421.

Robina works all over the world as a renowned guru in organizational and Management Development; running her own training company and speaking at International Events, she is also a Visiting Fellow at Cranfield School of Management. Consequently Robina spends only about 20% of her time in Lidlington these days and had just returned from a three week tour in Europe and Asia when the Advertiser caught up with her.

We asked her what had attracted her to Lidlington and were amazed to find that initially she was looking for a house halfway between husband John's company in Northampton and Robina's then place of work – Romford in Essex! Although all wrong geographically, Lidlington offered attractive countryside, easy proximity to London and plenty of space for all those animals!

Robina has recently published her second book "Changing the IT leader's mindset" and you can find out more about her at www.chatham.uk.com



STONDON TRANSPORT MUSEUM

I don't know if you are the same and tend not to visit places which are on the doorstep. The Stondon Transport Museum near Henlow, has been established since 1994 but we just discovered it recently. We thoroughly enjoyed our visit and at £6 an adult we felt it was very good value (family ticket available). For another £1 you can also visit a replica of the H. M. Bark Endeavour which Captain James Cook sailed (you need to check tour times and it is unsuitable for pre-school children). Did you know there was a full-scale ship in Bedfordshire?

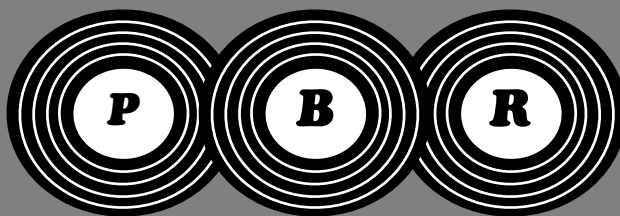
The museum is crammed with dozens and dozens of cars and other vehicles, of all ages dating back to over 100 years, of all shapes and sizes including several Rolls Royce and some imported vehicles. Among various items of transport are a 100 year old Romany caravan, a missile launcher, numerous motor bikes and a double-decker bus on which school parties are allowed to eat their lunch. This is the hobby of a family man, who has now turned 80, and which he shares with the public. We were very impressed with such a comprehensive collection. All under cover, a visit is suitable for all weathers and is mostly wheel-chair accessible. The collection is being expanded all the time; they hope to have some model aircraft on display in the near future.

There is a refreshment area where tea and coffee is available, and lunches can be arranged for group bookings. Open 6 days a week 10am – 4pm (closed Fridays, open Bank Holidays except Christmas week). Station Road, Lower Stondon 01462 850339 www.transportmuseum.co.uk

J Peall

If you know of any good local attractions to visit, please let us know - editors





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Thanks to everyone for the help and support we have received.

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year,

Geordie & staff

Lidlington Welcome Pack

If you are new to the village, or you know of a new neighbour, we offer a useful Welcome Pack with lots of local information. Please call 405952 or email newsletter@lidlingtonchurch.org.uk

Lidlington Helping Hands



Helping Hands is an initiative run by villagers for villagers offering voluntary help to all who need a 'Good Neighbour'.

Call - 07817 258279

Volunteers are available from 8am – 8pm any day.

Messages may be left at anytime.

Help offered includes –

Transport for Drs, prescriptions etc. (mileage rate is charged), errands, shopping, dog walking, form filling, minor household repairs etc.

Much more is offered – please ask us.

Volunteer day-time drivers urgently required for doctors appointments etc. Just once a month is a great help.

Wootton 'Late' Bus service resumed

This bus service will resume after half-term, on Tuesday 2nd November.

The bus will operate Mondays to Thursdays.

Grant Palmer Buses will operate the service on a trial basis until the end of term. It will only continue if sufficient numbers use it.

USE IT OR LOSE IT!

Departs : Wootton Upper School at 4.50 pm

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Useful contacts

Churches

Methodist Minister, Rev. Graham Miles 01234 851987
St. Margaret's Churchwarden, Linda Bulled 01525 402647
www.lidlingtonchurch.org.uk

Doctors

Dr. Aylward & Partners, Houghton Close, Ampthill 08448 151055
Drs. Lockley & Haque, Oliver Street, Ampthill 01525 631395 / 6
Drs. Rowe & Shortland, Greensand Ridge surgery 01525 631390
Drs. Reddy & Thomas, High St. Cranfield 01234 750234
" " Marston Surgery 01234 766551
Flitwick Clinic, High Street 01525 717771

Dentist

K. R. Gadre, Flitwick 01525 713136

Hospitals

Bedford 01234 355122
Milton Keynes 01908-660033

Schools

Thomas Johnson Lower School, Hurst Grove, Lidlington 01525 402377
Marston Vale Middle School, Stewartby MK43 9NH 01234 768224
Wootton Upper School, Wootton MK43 9HT 01234 767123

Local

Lidlington Website www.lidlington.org
Lidlington Parish Council Clerk 01234 841835
Village hall bookings 01525 840131
lidlington@mac.com
Methodist Hall bookings 01525 405730
Lidlington Church Website www.lidlingtonchurch.org.uk
Robinson Dairy, Lidlington 01525 404628
Lidlington General Stores 01525 402896
Lemon Larder, delicatessen 01525 402923

General

Central Bedfordshire Council The Old Court House 0300 300 8000
Woburn Street, Ampthill, Beds MK45 2HX
www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk
Bedford Borough Council, Borough Hall, Cauldwell Street, 01234 267422
Highways Agency, Bedford 0845 955 6575
Police Station, Woburn St., Ampthill 01234 841212
Local bobby - Police HQ, Kempston 01234 841212
Ridgeway Veterinary Centre, Flitwick 01525 714892
Bedford to Bletchley Rail Users Association 01234 351771
Ampthill Tidy Tip, Abbey Lane, Ampthill 01525 403611
Citizens' Advice Bureau, Woburn St. Ampthill 01525 402742

Flitwick Library, Coniston Road, Flitwick 01525 715268
Mobile library stops in Station Road & Church Street on alternate weeks. For dates and times see the Parish notice board on the corner of Bye Road or call Flitwick Library (01525 715268)

Villagers - advertise on this page from as little as £5!

L-Tunes (Lidlington Band) has been going since March 2010, with musicians of varying ages playing different instruments and two singers. We have performed three times in public to date. Presently, we play 'middle of the road' music, but are open to all types of music. We are interested in both new instrumentalists and vocalists of all ages. We rehearse on the 1st Thursday of each month. For details please call either Sophia Clapham on 405654 or e-mail Sophia.clapham@gmail.com or Sonia Nockels on 404170.

**Groups held in Lidlington Church Hall,
Church Street, Lidlington**

Sure Start
Children's Centres

Baby Group Drop-In Sessions
Breast feeding support, advice on weaning, healthy eating, baby weighing etc.
Every Thursday 10.00-11.00 am at Lidlington Church Hall, Church Street, Lidlington

Come and Play
Play and activity session for the under 5s
Wednesdays 10.00 am to 11.30am (except first Wednesday of every month)

Marston Vale Children's Centre
Church End Lower School, Church Walk,
Marston Moretaine MK45 0NE
tel 01234 767269
email marstonvalecc@spurgeons.org




Working in partnership with the local authority and other organisations

Monday	Toddler Group	0 to pre-school	9.30 - 11.30 am term time	Village Hall	Cathy 01234 767456
	Shell Club	7 - 12 years	6.45 - 8.00 pm term time	Church Hall	Jackie 280478
	Dog Training (ARAS)	Classes from puppy to advanced	6.30 - 9.30 pm	Village Hall	01525 840508
	Army Cadets		7.30 pm	Cadet Hut	01234 353291
	Home Group	Adults	8.00 - 10.00 pm	Call for venue	Tess 404938
Tuesday	Coffee Morning (breakfast every 3rd Tuesday)	All welcome	10.00 - 12.00 noon		
	Line Dancing		7.30 - 9.30 pm	Village Hall	Lorraine 01525 280086
Wednesday	Come and Play	Under 5s activity	10.00 - 11.30 am (except 1st Weds of month)	Church Hall	01234 767269
	Line Dancing		7.00 - 10.00 pm	Village Hall	Lorraine 01525 280086
	Home Group	Adults	8.00 - 10.00 pm	Call for venue	Jeff 402647
Thursday	Baby Group drop-in session		10.00 - 11.00 am	Church Hall	01234 767269
	Line Dancing		10.30 - 12.30 pm	Village Hall	Lorraine 01525 280086
	Prayer & Bible Group		1.30 - 3.00 pm fortnightly	Church Hall	Jackie 280478
	Youth Group	Years 5 - 8	6.45 - 8.15 pm term time	Church Hall	Tess 404938
	Youth Group	Years 9 - 10	8.15 - 9.30 pm term time	Church Hall	Tess 404938
Friday	Brownies	7 - 10 year olds	6.00 - 7.30 pm term time	Sports Pavillion	
	Guides	10 - 14 year olds	7.45 - 9.15 pm term time	Sports Pavillion	
	Karate	6 + years	7.00 - 8.00 pm	Village Hall	Karen 01234 311839
Sunday	Morning worship	All welcome	10.45 - 12.00 noon	Chapel (or see notices)	
	Evening Communion	All welcome	7.00 pm (4th Sundays)	Chapel/Church Hall	
	Rock Children's Church	5 - teens	10.45 - 11.45 am (during most Sunday services)	Church Hall	
	Youth Fellowship	Yrs 9 +	7.15 - 8.45 pm	Venue/dates vary	Tess 404938
Monthly	Lunch Club		12.30 - 2.30 pm (1st Wednesday)	Church Hall	Jackie 280478
	Ladies Club		8.00 - 10.30 pm (2nd Tuesday)	Church Hall	Linda 402647

DIARY DATES

Dates for December

Saturday 4th	Connect Christmas Party (see below)	3.30 pm	Chuch Hall
Tuesday 7th	Thomas Johnson Christmas Concert	9.30 am	School
Wednesday 8th	Thomas Johnson Christmas Concert	6.30 pm	School
Friday 10th	Nursery/Reception Christmas Concert	9.30 am	School
Saturday 11th	Santa Special Train (see article for times)		Marston Vale Line
	Sports Club dinner and cabaret	7.00 pm	Village Hall
Sunday 12th	Concert with Woburn Sands Band (see below)	2.30 pm	Village Hall
Monday 13th	Senior citizens' Christmas concert	2.00 pm	School
Friday 17th	End of term		
Sunday 19th	Carols by Candlelight	7.00 pm	Chapel
Wednesday 22nd	Carol singing around the village	6.00 pm	From Church Hall
Thursday 23rd	Christingle preparation	2.00 pm	Church Hall
Friday 24th	Christingle service	4.00 pm	Village Hall
	Midnight Eucharist	11.30 pm	Chapel
Saturday 25th	Morning Celebration	10.00 am	Chapel

WHAT'S ON IN LIDLINGTON**Lunch club**

On the **1st Wednesday of the month** (except Jan & Aug) lunch is served at 12.30pm in the Methodist Hall. We charge £3 per person for a two course meal followed by tea or coffee. Vegetarians can be catered for. Booking required each month – call Jackie on 280478. Open to all.

Breakfast at coffee morning

On every **3rd Tuesday of the month** we serve cooked breakfast at coffee morning. Proceeds from the breakfast go to various charities.

Coffee Mornings are held every Tuesday from 10am – midday in the Methodist Hall.

ALL WELCOME



Lidlington Connect Christmas Tea Party will take place at the Methodist Hall on **Saturday 4th December**.

Join us for tea, cakes, light refreshment and carols by L-Tunes Band. For information please call Lynn Worrall 01525 406168, Sonia Nockels 01525 404170. All welcome.

'**Lidlington Toddler Group and Woburn Sands Band**' would like to invite you to an afternoon of music and carols on **Sunday 12th December** at The Village Hall from 2.30pm. We will also have a raffle and refreshments. Tickets £3, children £1 from Paula 01234 767345.



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CHURCH MUSIC

By Margaret Chatham (with thanks to Robina Chatham)

The peal of the Church bells call invitingly
As I walk up the steep tree clad hill.
Entering the wide porch, I pause – lingering quietly
In the steps of thousands long gone.
The organ music rises in the ancient building
And then the lift of voices begins
Soaring to the great high rafters;
While the sun sends filaments of rainbow light
Through the stained glass windows,
And the scent of stone, flowers and prayer books
Fill the air, removing mundane thoughts.
The solemn entrance of the Clergymen in their robes
And the fresh young faces of the choir
Lead music, thoughts and words heavenwards.
Sometimes – one can rise from rationality
Let stillness and peace enter
Be everywhere and no-where:
Alone – and yet together with the congregation.
A pulse inside, unhusking, revealing the goodness in all.
Truth, imagination and hope contained in the air –
Always, there is power, rest and release in the music.



LIDLINGTON SPORTS CLUB

Christmas Dinner and Tote draw

This year our prestigious Tote £1000 Grand Draw Dinner and Cabaret takes place on Saturday 11th December 2010 in the Village Hall, with entertainment from AJAY a stand-up Comedienne and Vocalist, plus Chub's Disco. In the unlikely event that there are any spare tickets at £20 each, contact Brian Shepherd on 01525 403616 or e mail lidlington.united@btinternet.com

Widows' and Pensioners' Christmas Bonus

Much of the club's fundraising comes from the weekly tote collection which so many villagers contribute to. The sports club are very grateful to all who subscribe to the Tote. As we have done for many years, we are offering all widows and pensioners in the village the chance to use a £10 voucher to be spent in the village shops. You needed to apply for a voucher before 27 November to take advantage of the scheme.

Sports Club Quiz Nights

Twice a year we hold fun quizzes in the Village Hall. Our last one was on 9 October when we raised over £250 for club funds. We hope to run another early in 2011 – look out for publicity and come along and enjoy the fun!

Football Season 2010-11

At the time of writing, the footballers are having a mixed season. After 11 games they have won 4, drawn 3 and lost 4 and sit mid table. If you want to follow their fortunes, why not come and watch a game at the sports field? Fixture lists and results can be found on the Beds F.A. website - <http://full-time.thefa.com/ListPublicFixture.do?divisionseas on=6335211&league=7195521>

Cricket Season 2010

Yes, last summer does seem a long way off now that we're in the bleak midwinter, but our cricketers will look back on a fairly good 2010 season. The team played 16, Won 7, Drew 4 and lost 5, finishing 4th in Division 1 - overall a good performance with a limited number of players and results badly affected by the weather (4 matches abandoned). Rob Draper top scored with 120 against Smiths Arms, the eventual league winners, and still ended up on the losing side. Other season best scores were 67 from Ali Gould, 60 not out from I Temple and 50 not out by Steve Swann. Leading wicket takers were Neil Hiscocks and Ricky Dobbs with 17 wickets each, and Ali Gould with 15.

Players of all abilities are welcome, so if anyone is interested in joining for the 2011 season please contact the Club captain Mike Eames on 07834 209526. The Club is also looking for a shirt sponsor for the 2011 season, so if anyone is interested in advertising their company or business please contact Mick Eames on 07912 755160

Netball

Netball is played every Monday - all year round (weather permitting) at the Pavilion. We are not in a league but play for the exercise and to socialise. Players enjoy a family BBQ in the summer and a bit of a do at Xmas. If you are over 16 and would like to join us come along on any Monday, 7.30pm. The Pavilion is at the bottom of Hurst Grove, beyond Thomas Johnson School. Wishing a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year to all participants - past, present and future.

Maintaining and improving the Sports Facilities

The Sports Club works in partnership with the Parish Council to fund and provide sports facilities for the village. This year has seen the opening of our new tennis courts which we hope to see put to full use next summer. Maintaining and improving the facilities is an expensive and time consuming business. We seem to be relying on an ever smaller group of volunteers to keep things going. We urgently need some fresh volunteers to fill committee posts, to collect Tote contributions and to run a tennis section next year.

To keep the funds coming in, we also need to get more villagers paying into the Tote. Look out for a note through your door over the Christmas period giving out more details, and listen out for a knock at the door as we come seeking a warm welcome and new contributors.

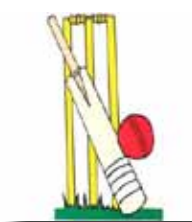
Our main projects for 2011 which we need to spend money on, include new carpet tiles and ceiling re-plastering in the pavilion; repair and refurbishment of the flagstone access to the pavilion; significant internal and external electrical and plumbing work; landscaping and improving the car park and field access. This is all in addition to regular running costs and paying out after acts of mindless vandalism.

And finally...A Quiz for Idiots

This quiz is aimed at just a few of the visitors to the sports field. Just answer these questions for a chance to win our idiots' quiz;

- Do you exercise your dog on the field despite the LARGE notices asking you not too?
- Do you then allow your dog to foul the field having no regard for others?
- Do you like to rip the doors off the gas and electricity meters at the pavilion?
- Do you throw mud and stones at the exposed meters?
- Do you throw stones, mud and other rubbish on to the tennis and MUGA pitches?
- Do you like to break off drainpipes and guttering?
- Do you write graffiti on the pavilion?
- Do you throw stones on to the roof to try and break roof tiles?

If you have answered yes to any of these questions you are in line for a prize. Just send your name address and phone number to Bedfordshire Police at Ampthill Police Station Woburn Street, Ampthill MK45 2HX or telephone 01234 841212. Prizes include fines, and custodial sentences.



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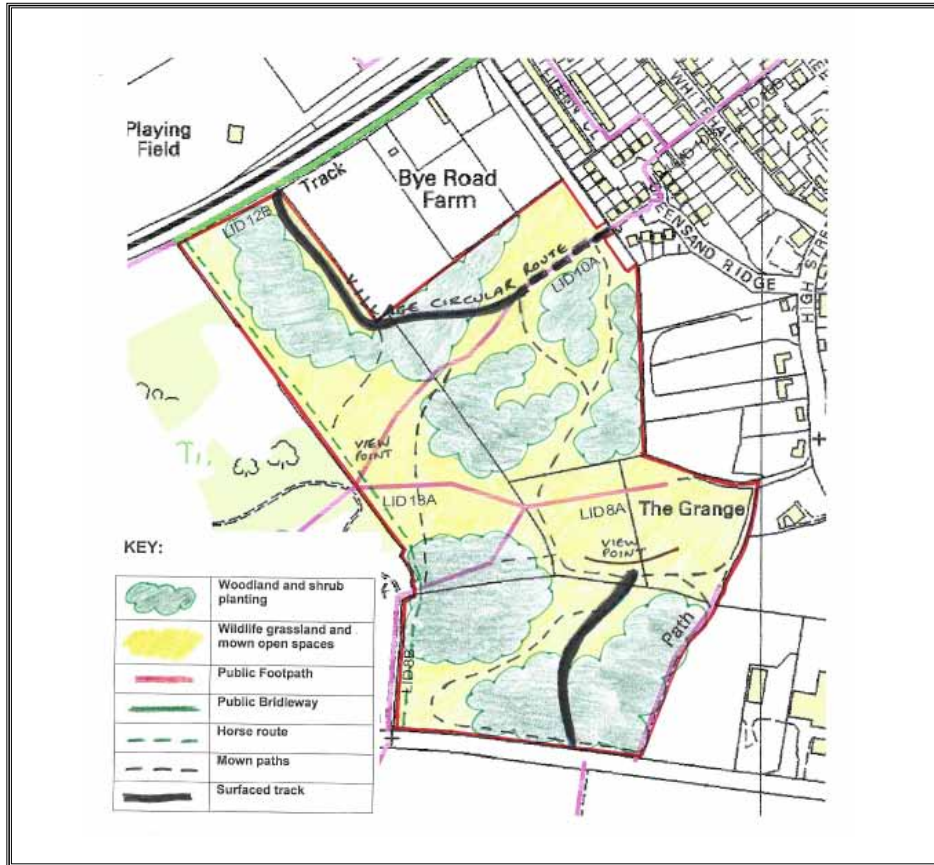


TOP FARM, LIDLINGTON, BECOMES PART OF THE FOREST OF MARSTON VALE

In 2007 the Forest Centre at Marston Moretaine purchased some land from Top Farm on the road to Boughton End Farm. This included the vantage point known by many in the village as 'The Folly' (and by my family as 'Rabbit Ridge').

The proposals for this land have now been published and we are including them in The Advertiser to ensure that everyone in the village is aware of this exciting new facility and can find further information if they require it.

Below is the proposal for the land as published by the Forest Centre.



Proposals for Woodland Creation at Top Farm, Lidlington.

Formerly a part of Top Farm, this 30 acre area of former grazed pasture on the slopes of the Greensand Ridge to the east of the village, was purchased in 2007 by the Marston Vale Trust as a contribution to the creation of the Forest of Marston Vale. Since then, professional ecological and landscape assessment studies have been carried out, resulting in the landscape proposal shown. The proposal's main features are:

- To plant locally native trees and shrubs across around half of the site, which takes account of existing features such as hedges and trees, rights of way and other informal access routes, slopes, wildlife interest, and views across the wider landscape.
- To retain and manage existing grassland areas for wildlife, with some regularly mown areas for recreational use.
- To provide a regularly mown path network to increase and improve access around the site, with a new route for horse riders connecting the village to the top of the Greensand Ridge.
- To construct two sections of surfaced track, one that creates an easy access circular route from the village for people of all abilities; and the other to provide a surfaced route from Boughton End Land to the site's main viewing point.
- To provide picnic tables, benches and information signs to enhance visitors' enjoyment of the area and the views.

When is it due to happen?

Funding has been secured from a number of sources for different aspects of the project, which means that:

- Signage, surfaced track and other infrastructure works need to be completed by the end of this year.
- Planting is likely to commence in December 2011.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION AND COMMENT PLEASE CONTACT ANDREW LINGARD AT THE FOREST CENTRE, STATION ROAD, MARSTON MORETAINE MK43 0PR; E-MAIL andy.lingard@marstonvale.org; OR CALL 01234 762617