



Old Stratford Parish Council Newsletter

Spring 2023

For Residents of Old Stratford and Passenham

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Chairman's Update

It has been a busy year for the Parish Council, during which we celebrated the Queen's Platinum Jubilee with a beacon and street party event. Sadly, not only has the Queen since passed away, but so too have a number of members of the Parish who have played key roles in our community over the years and will be greatly missed.

The significant planning proposal for warehousing at Furtho Pit remains undetermined with a number of issues raised that the Applicant has been asked to look into. Several regulatory bodies have requested further technical information to support the application. These requests are very technical and time consuming so is unlikely to resolve any time soon. The Parish Council are monitoring things as they progress and we will respond as and when required.

There is also a proposed housing development at The Meadows, which the Parish Council have opposed for several reasons, but primarily as the development would be within the flood plain. The development is also outside the village confines, removes a historic public footpath and the application states that the developer intends to give the final parcel of land to the Parks Trust with no offer to the Parish as a Public Open Space. The developer stated in his planning brief that there is a need for affordable homes within Old Stratford, which is contrary to a recent application from the housing association for the existing Meadows development to remove the affordable status off their remaining properties, so that they can be sold at full market value as they believe there is NO requirement for these types of homes in Old Stratford. Again, the Parish Council will continue to monitor the situation in respect of this application.

To celebrate the coronation of King Charles III, Old Stratford Parish Council is planning a family day for the Sunday 7th May. The Community Hall will open from 2.30pm until 7.30pm, with a Disco, BBQ, bar, children's rides and more. Please come along and join the celebration. Look for more information on our website, Facebook page and notice boards.

The Parish Council has two Councillor vacancies so if you think you like to help your community and would like to get involved, please contact the Parish Clerk for details.

Tony Pateman, Chairman

West Northants Ward Councillor Update

These are challenging times but I have tried to detail below some of the major increases in next years' budget and reasons for their introduction:

West Northants Council (WNC) - 2023/2024 Budget

- Council Tax will see an increase of 2.99% plus an additional 2% for Social Care. Also, an additional increase for the Police £10 and Fire £5.
- There is an additional £86 charge for 'Harmonisation'. When WNC was formed, it was agreed that all legacy councils will pay the same Council Tax by 2023. SNC residents historically paid less than the other councils.
- Overall, this means that Council Tax band D house residents will pay £1694 per annum, an increase of £1.55 per week
- Council House Rents will be subjected to an increase of 7%
- Planning Applications and other services, too many to mention, but most will be increasing compared to their current charge.

Sorry for such bad news regarding next years' increases, but this is the result of increased costs and inflation that we all are currently suffering and the significant increased costs of Adult Social Care and Childrens Services. The intention of these increases is to provide a balanced budget (ie not overspending) for the coming year. The increases were approved by the Full Council on the 22nd February.

WNC- 2022/2023 Budget.

This years' budget has been very closely monitored and WNC Finance Department forecast, a 1% overspend (between £3/£4m year end to 31st March 2023). Compared to other Councils this is quite an achievement.

Other News

- There is a proposal that black bins will be collected on a 3-week basis as opposed to 2-week, aligning with the other council areas
- Furtho Pit (commercial development) WNS/2022/1741 and The Meadows (32 houses) WNS/2023/0011 applications are being monitored and meetings with WNC Planning officers are ongoing.
- As part of next years' budget an additional £1million has been allocated for 'pot holes' and road surfacing
- Towcester Link Road - Delays are being experienced resulting from National Highways (previously Highways England) and the expected date of opening is now towards the mid/end of 2025
- The Electoral Boundary Commission are consulting on potential changes to Deanshanger Ward area. This could mean boundary changes in our area, and a reduction in WNC Councillors from three to two. Final recommendations will be released towards the end of the year.
- A new national Integrated Care Strategy (ICS) has been introduced to combine local health and social care services (including surgeries). Most of our residents use Stony Stratford Health Centre which comes under the responsibility of the Luton Bedfordshire and MK trust. No immediate changes are planned. More information can be found online about ICS. I will keep the parish informed of any changes but this is a long-term programme so nothing will happen in the immediate future.

Ken Pritchard, Deanshanger Ward Councillor

Old Stratford in Bloom (OSIB)

The past few months have been very busy with weeding, tidying and planting the Spring bulbs and container plants. We lost a few plants during the recent cold snap but we had some spares so we've been replacing those that succumbed to the inclement weather. We're also keeping our fingers crossed that the 8 cherry trees planted eighteen months ago, will have survived the extremes in weather that we've had over the past year.

Last November, we planted 5000 more daffodils along both sides of Deanshanger Road, as we thought we'd lost a lot from the previous year due to the broadband installation work. However, they're showing resilience as they seem to be recovering, so hopefully we'll have a great show.

The clearance of the overgrown ditch and verge at the Travel Lodge has really enhanced the entrance to the village and we now have a planter under the village sign.



At the end of May, we'll be totally clearing the containers, replenishing the compost and replanting with our Summer scheme ordered from a local nursery. We'll be filling the greenhouse at the back of the Memorial Hall with geranium plug plants ready for Summer planting too.

The watering contract, which only covers the large rectangular and hexagonal planters, is due to start in May and carries on until October, so we rely on neighbours and volunteers to keep the wooden boxes watered during warm spells.

We continue to look after 4 rose beds, the boat green, the shop green and the garden next to Hyundai, which also includes mowing the grass on these areas to keep them looking neat and tidy throughout the year.

Since January we've been working hard to encourage sponsors to continue with their support and at the time of writing we hopefully have 8 or 9 sponsors paying about £100 a year for a plaque on the larger planters. We have approached at least 10 other companies and await their response.

We need more volunteers!

We really want to encourage more villagers to help out. We're a friendly group, there's no ongoing commitment and there are tasks for all abilities. So, if you'd like to give it a go, then get in touch with Alan Holloway on 01908 56276, email: alan.holloway@oldstratford.org.uk

Remember to visit our Facebook page for updates on our activities
www.facebook.com/Oldstratfordinbloom

Community Hall Update

As many of you in the village are aware, one of our long-standing committee trustees, Janet Ranson, passed away over Christmas. Janet joined the committee in February 2016 and was an enormous help with organising the monthly afternoon teas and the annual Senior Citizens' Christmas Lunch – both of which will continue to run (see below for more details). We will miss having Janet on our committee and we send our very best wishes to her son, Ian, at this difficult time.

This also means our committee now has the minimum number of trustees allowed so we are desperate for a few new members. We ask every year for people to step forward but very few are prepared to commit unless they have some involvement with the Hall, such as representatives from the Pre-school, Bowls or True Colours Performing Arts. We only have 6 meetings a year and need help with organising the Fireworks Display and Senior Citizens' Christmas Lunch, so it is not too big a commitment. The Hall is there to support the local community and the current committee have been in post for a number of years so it would be nice to welcome some new faces to help us. You may have ideas about how the Hall should be run or groups to be held, but without your input there is only so much that the existing small committee can do. So, if you think you can spare a few hours and would like some more information, please contact the Hall and our chairman will get in touch with you. oldstratfordcommunityhall2@hotmail.co.uk / 01908 307461.



We now have a Facebook page – 'Old Stratford Community Hall News' – which our Manageress, Sue Price, will be updating as regularly as possible with new groups and other community events. And don't forget, as a village resident you will receive a discount if you book the Hall for an event.

And please do consider joining the committee, you would be made very welcome.

The Old Stratford Community Hall Committee

Fireworks Display

Saturday 4th November (5.30pm – 7.30pm)

We had a great turnout for our fireworks display last year and have already booked the same company for this year. The gates open at 5.30pm, with the display starting around 6.30pm for 15-20 minutes. The event is FREE to anyone under 16, but this year we may have to increase the admission price for adults slightly – we will let you know in the next newsletter if this is the case. We currently can ONLY accept cash on the gate and at the various stalls/rides outside, so please bring cash with you on the evening. We are looking into the possibility of a card reader but this will depend on the available wifi range.



Senior Citizens Christmas Meal. Saturday 2nd December (from 4pm)

We welcomed 80 guests to last year's event and everyone seemed to have a really lovely time. Our thanks to all the volunteers who helped organise the evening and then helped serve on the day. We received a number of thank you letters praising the meal, so a big thank-you to Heather from the Stony Conservative Club who cooked and delivered the main course for us. You all enjoyed the new singer so she is already booked for next year!

We understand there was some confusion about who could be invited to the event as a couple of people last year were residents of Stony Stratford. Invitations were sent to these people because they regularly attend our monthly afternoon teas and therefore support our community events. We felt it would be nice to invite them to the Christmas event as they would be able to join their friends. Please remember, this is a time of year when some people may feel very lonely and this event is an opportunity to bring people together for the festive season.

If you are new to the village and would like some more information, please contact the Hall on 01908 307461. Invitations normally go out in October/November, but you can let us know earlier than that if you'd like to be added to the list. We may struggle a little without Janet's knowledge of village residents so please do get in touch if you would like to be added to the list – if we don't know about you, we can't invite you! We welcome any resident of the village over the age of 65, however if you have a partner who is under 65, or if you have a carer who needs to assist you, they are also welcome to attend.

Senior Citizens Afternoon Teas



We have been holding our monthly Afternoon Teas in the Memorial Hall (behind the village shop) for the last few years, organised and run by Janet Ranson and Lesley Peach, along with a number of volunteers. Our thanks to Lesley and Linda who have kindly agreed to continue to run this event for us. The Afternoon Tea is on the last Friday of every month, between 2pm and 4pm. Any senior citizen is welcome; you don't have to be a village resident to attend, so come and spend a couple of hours chatting with your friends.

Whalley's Apprenticing Charity

Applicants of 16 years and over, can claim up to £100 towards books and equipment required for their chosen profession.

For more information or an application form please contact Derek Everett on **01908 569053**

Old Stratford Pre-School

The Community Centre, Deanshanger Rd, Old Stratford,
Registered Charity no.1033454 OFSTED NO. 219885

Old Stratford Preschool is a friendly community preschool run by a parent committee. We provide a child friendly environment where children feel safe, happy, and cared for by our highly qualified staff. Every child is treated uniquely being able to grow in self-confidence and gain independence being able to enjoy developmentally appropriate and stimulating play experiences at their own pace. They have opportunities to **Play-Learn and Grow** together while developing core skills in line with the Early Years Foundation Stage.



Old Stratford Preschool aims to:

- ❖ Provide a high-quality care and education for preschool children.
- ❖ Work in partnership with parents to help their children learn and develop
- ❖ Offer children and their parents a service that promotes equality and values diversity
- ❖ Promoting the life and well-being of our community

We are open Monday -Friday during term time from 8:30-15:00 offering full and half-day sessions (minimum two sessions per week) We also offer a breakfast club from 7:30am.

***All children aged 2years until school entry are welcome!
Spaces are available for our funded (15 & 30 hours) and non-funded sessions from September 2023.***

Our Open morning will be in the preschool room at the Community Centre on Saturday 22nd April 2023 10am-1pm

Please contact Dawn to learn more about the preschool and view our excellent facilities!

Email: manager@oldstratfordpreschool.co.uk
www.oldstratfordpreschool.org

Tel: 01908 260664

Reporting Issues in the Parish

Residents wishing to report an issue with our roads or rights of way are encouraged to report directly to WNC via "fix my street" www.fixmystreet.com.

This handy app can be downloaded on your phone and enables you to send a report with photos for many issues including abandoned vehicles, dog fouling, fly tipping, potholes, blocked drains and failed traffic lights, and receive updates on the actions being taken

Alternatively the Parish Clerk can assist with these reports.

Old Stratford Parish Clean Up

OSPC would like to send a massive THANK YOU to all those who have been active in village litter picks, including that on 11th March 2023.

If you are undertaking any voluntary work for the benefit of the Parish, please let our Clerk know so we can ensure you are covered by our insurance.

Bag that Poo - Any rubbish bin will do!

Dog fouling – loose or bagged – is offensive, disgusting and a potential health hazard. The Parish Council has received complaints from residents about dogs fouling the footpaths, children's play areas and the playing field at the Community Hall.

We know most dog owners are responsible and do clean up after their dogs, however there are many sites around the Parish where bagged poo is repeatedly left or thrown into hedgerows. If a dog waste bin is not available, then the bagged poo can be placed into any rubbish bin.

Changes to Green Bin Service

From April, the annual subscription charge for garden waste collections in West Northants will increase from £42 to £55 per annum

Find out more and subscribe online by searching for "Garden Waste" at www.westnorthants.gov.uk

Street Parties for King Charles' Coronation

If you are thinking of organising a street party for the Coronation, with associated road closure, you usually have to apply at least 12 weeks in advance. Please check out the West Northamptonshire Council's webpages for further information <https://www.westnorthants.gov.uk/>

Towcester Area Door to Door (TADD)

There are lots of elderly and mobility restricted people in Old Stratford Parish who rely on TADD for door-to-door transport to their medical and well-being appointments.

TADD require new voluntary drivers to meet the increasing needs of our ageing population. Many of their volunteers are retired and approaching old age themselves. Without the continued recruitment of new volunteers, TADD would struggle to help the elderly and vulnerable in **YOUR** community.

For more information about becoming a volunteer driver, please visit: www.towcesterareadoor2door.com/

Councillor Contact Details

Role	Name	Address	Telephone
OSPC Chairman	Tony Pateman	32 Mounthill Avenue	01908 567907
		Tony.pateman@oldstratford.org.uk	
OSPC Vice Chairman	Ray Smith	18 Deanshanger Road	01908 564815
		Ray.smith@oldstratford.org.uk	
OSPC Councillors	Tania Arthur	Firs Farm, Towcester Rd	07957 288080
	Colin Carey	71 Dickens Drive	01908 569171
	Nickie Gibbs	Oxfield Park Drive	07952 670517
	Alan Holloway	45 Willow Grove	01908 562761
	Lynda Murgatroyd	19 Towcester Road	07713 622328
	Dr Stewart Tolley	The Gardeners Bungalow, Passenham,	07825 854326
	VACANCY		
	VACANCY		
	VACANCY		
	Councillor emails: firstname.surname@oldstratford.org.uk		
OSPC Clerk	Derek Everett	10 Deanshanger Road	01908 569053
		clerk@oldstratford.org.uk	
District Councillor	Kenneth Pritchard		07764 939070
		Ken.Pritchard@westnorthants.gov.uk	

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<https://en-gb.facebook.com/OldStratfordParishCouncil/>

Website: www.oldstratford.org.uk