

Great Linford Parish Council News & Views

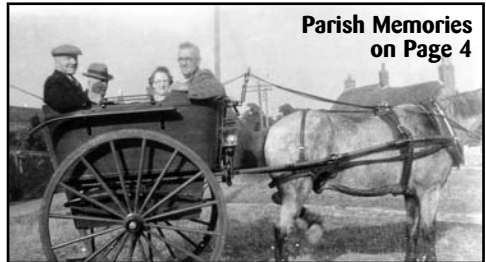
Issue Nine

March 2005

That time of year again...

The Parish Precept is the amount on the Council Tax Invoice, itemised separately under the heading Great Linford Parish Council. This money is paid to the Parish Council for them to provide and maintain the services not provided by Milton Keynes Council. These include the provision of the staff and office at Neath Hill, the football and cricket pitches, tennis courts and allotments. We also provide and empty the dog bins, provide seats and give grants to local organisations.

Last year the precept was £87,000, this compared very favourably with precepts raised by similar sized Councils in Milton Keynes, whose figures ranged from £129,000 to £523,000. Due to careful budgeting and an increase in usage of our sports facilities and pavilions, the Parish Council has been able to reserve monies for projects in the next year. We are hoping that during this year the handing over of the land at Loriner Place, Downs Barn from



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Milton Keynes Council to the Parish Council will be completed. We have reserved money to begin clearing the site, for community use. There is also a budget to improve the security of Downs Barn Pavilion, by way of additional lighting. The Reserve Allotment Site at Sandy Close, Great Linford will be looked at in depth, and a long term plan created. Further allotment plots may be required in the future - our four existing sites are currently full.

Our Precept for the year 2005/2006 has been set at £89,650. This is an increase of approx 3% on last year and merely covers inflation and increased contract costs. We would remind residents that all our facilities are available for their use and can be booked through the Parish Office which is open from 9am to 4pm, Monday to Friday. If you've got a problem we can help with call in at the office at Neath Hill local centre or phone 606613.

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GREAT LINFORD CRICKET GROUND

Residents of Great Linford Village may have noticed with concern the demise

of several trees around the cricket ground. These were sadly, badly effected by Phytophthora, this is a soil based virus which kills the trees. After obtaining professional advise, the Parish Council are hoping that by removing the worst effected, they may be able to stop to spread of the virus to the remaining trees. The Council are currently looking to purchase some semi-mature replacement trees, possibly Oak or Ash.

and parking is nothing short of appalling and no thought seems to be given to the safety of their own children, other peoples children and residents. If you have passed a driving test, then you will be aware that parking on or even close to turnings and junctions is illegal, and blocking residents driveways is extremely antisocial. There will be forthcoming actions to penalise those persisting in this activity.

MARSH DRIVE SPORTS GROUND

It is noted that adults with kites are causing a lot of damage to the surfaces of the football pitches at this facility. Whilst the ground is open for the enjoyment of the public, it is inconsiderate to use these areas for activities which clearly damage the surfaces. The grounds are extremely expensive to maintain to the standards they are, and the football clubs that use them, pay considerate charges to use the pitches for games. If you are a culprit of this activity, please find another area to use.

ROCLA Pipes Development

The redundant Rocla Pipes site in Wolverton Road (opposite Giffard Park) has been earmarked for development for the last twenty years. Following a public presentation, a report was produced and the Parish Council shared the concern of some residents of Broadway Avenue, in relation to the extra traffic which may use this road. The development is not within our Parish, therefore any objections made by the Parish Council must be in relation to any knock-on effect it may have on our Parish.

Written representations were made to English Partnerships (EP) with regard to the extra traffic that may use Broadway Avenue and Marsh Drive, Great Linford. We were also concerned about the positioning of the new footpath directly adjacent to the traffic on Brickhill Street. Subsequently a meeting was held between representatives of the Parish Council, EP and the developers, whereby all our concerns were strongly put. We have since been informed that Highway regulations insist on there being two exits from the estate, one on to the existing roundabout and a second opposite Broadway Avenue (where there will also be lights). Accepting that there will be some extra traffic, the developers do not think that this will be significant and will not cause undue danger. They have however agreed to make the vehicle capacity of the existing roundabout greater, which should increase the flow of vehicles. Our suggestion to dual the V10 was rejected, however there is agreement to move the new footpath, planned to be adjacent to the V10, to a safer distance.

Residents can be assured that the Parish Council will continue to monitor the situation and pursue, where necessary, any further problems that may become apparent.

**Parish Manager
Jenny Sharp
reminisces...**

MEMORIES



It occurred to me whilst sitting in the office one day last week, how I remembered the now Neath Hill area as a child. Having been born in Sherington (just outside Newport Pagnell), my father worked for the local farmer Jack Cook. His brother farmed at Lodge Farm, Great Linford and during the harvest they shared their staff Dad spent a lot of time in the Linford area, to ensure that all the crops were gathered before the weather turned. In those days, the harvest was not usually completed before the beginning of October, in recent years however, it becomes earlier each year. My father had a keen interest in horses and did some wheeling and dealing with others locals. Some of the animals he purchased were unbroken or unsafe and I would be given the unenviable privilege of being able to ride (and sometimes fall from), these delightful animals. One of his dealing partners was a Mr Richardson of Great Linford. I remember clearly going out for a ride on a Sunday evening to Great Linford, to inspect his latest purchase and then have pop and crisps at the Nags Head. The road through the village continued through a brook and wound its way through what is

now Neath Hill, Downhead Park and onto Woolstone and Woughton, then to Fenny Stratford and Bletchley. We were very lucky as we had a car, shared with my aunt and uncle. This was one of the very tiny Fords (circa 1940s), and I still wonder with amazement how me Mum, Dad, Brother, Auntie, Uncle and cousin all managed to fit in this minute vehicle. Thinking about it, each adult (apart from the driver) had a child sat on their knee, this would be frowned upon today, but as you only travelled at 25-30mph and rarely saw another car, there was little danger. Another weekend treat was to drive to Little Linford Lane in Newport Pagnell and stand on the bridge. There we watched the progress of the building of the M1 (what a waste of money said Dad). The enormous earth moving machines that were digging out the motorway, looked like dinky toys from where we stood on the bridge. Times have certainly changed and it makes one feel very ancient, maybe its time to retire.

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YOUR PARISH COUNCILLORS

Here are the members of Great Linford Parish Council and their contact details:

Charles Allum (Downs Barn)	668115
George Byfield (Conniburrow)	604063
John Figg (Great Linford)	666916
Gill Hobson (Giffard Pk/Blakelands)	670609
David Lovesy (Pennyland/Bolbeck Pk)	605502
Brian Morsley (Chair, Downhead/Willen Pk)	666054
Allan Pugh (Downhead/Willen Pk)	662441
John Perrott (Great Linford)	393770
Jill Russell (Conniburrow)	679140
David Stabler (Neath Hill)	232025
Colin Tripp (Giffard Pk/Blakelands)	618304
Alan Williams (Neath Hill)	677402
Sue Williams (Conniburrow)	690337
Mike Williamson (Great Linford)	605664
Allan Wright (Downs Barn)	666926

Parish Manager is Jenny Sharp, tel: 01908 606613,
email manager@greatlinfordparish.co.uk
or write to 10 Tower Crescent, Neath Hill,
Milton Keynes MK14 5JY.



This popular local festival is coming on strong, and promises to deliver all the family entertainment of previous years. There is still a lot to do, and the whole event is organised by a dedicated team of volunteers - and they could do with your help! If you think you could help in the organisation or spare a few hours over the weekend itself to be part of the Event Team then please call the committee chair David Lovesy on 01908 605502 or visit the festival website for details of future meetings: www.watersidefestival.co.uk.

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Brickhill Street Improvements

The Parish Council have been aware for several years of a number of accidents at this junction and therefore opposed an application for new industrial units, on the grounds of safety. We firmly believed that no further traffic should be encouraged onto this estate until adequate safety provision had been made at the junction. As a result of our objections, a condition of the granting of the planning application was that a third lane be installed on the V10 before the new units were opened. We are delighted with the results and now hope that accidents at this site have become a thing of the past.

PARISH FACILITIES

There are within the Parish a large amount of sports facilities,
all for hire by the public:



Downs Barn: Football Pitches and a Pavilion which may be hired. The Pavilion has a maximum capacity of 50 and is on the first floor with an open staircase. It is therefore unsuitable for small children's groups or the infirm. The pavilion cost is currently £8.00 per hour. There are also Tennis Courts, which are free and can be used by the public.

Marsh Drive - Great Linford: Football Pitches (Cricket in Summer), and Tennis Courts. Contact Great Linford Tennis Club for details. We are currently taking Cricket bookings for the 2005 season, for details please contact the Parish Manager on 01908 606613.

High Street - Great Linford: There is a Cricket Pitch and Pavilion. The pavilion has disabled access and is suitable for small children's parties and meetings (max capacity 50).

Pavilion prices are currently £8.00 per hour. For cricket prices and availability for the 2005 Season, please contact the Parish Manager on 01908 606613.

Allotments: We have two vacant disabled plots at Neath Hill (designed for wheelchair use). We also have two other plots which have just become available. The Hills Close, Great Linford site currently has one plot vacant. The allotments at Willen Park and Giffard Gate, Great Linford are currently full, however we do operate a waiting list and you are welcome to put down your name if you particularly want one of these sites. Costs vary according to the size of the plot, but average £10 per year. For further information please contact the Parish Manager on 01908 606613.

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Sayonara, Gyosei

On the 15th March 1985 the Milton Keynes Gazette reported that the Planning Committee welcomed plans to build a multi-million-pound Japanese school; near Willen Lake, the only purpose built boarding school of its kind in Europe.

The Gazette report also noted: - "...linked to the buildings will be a range of sports pitches available for use by the public says a council report."

Gyosei International School UK opened on the 1st April 1987 with 280 pupils registered for the first year. Designed by Higgs and Hill and built by Mitsui Construction the school had study/bedrooms rooms for the students aged 10 to 18 and a range of facilities including tea house, chapel, science and computer laboratories, dual-purpose gymnasium, judo and kendo rooms, class and study rooms in addition to dining hall, kitchen and administrative offices. Students were also able to use the soccer and rugby pitches, baseball diamond, all weather running track and the six tennis and netball courts

Father Shigeru Tagawa, Chairman of Gyosei International School, a highly respected Catholic charitable foundation from Kizarazu Japan said that the school would play a vital role in educating its Japanese pupils to take an active international role in adult life. "They will learn to be young English gentlemen, also Japanese gentlemen but international gentlemen."

So Gyosei prospered until the late 1990's and the downturn in the word economy eventually forced Japanese business and families to cut back on their spending abroad. Expensive school fees became a burden and the effect on Gyosei Milton Keynes was terminal.

And so it has come to pass that exactly 20 years later in March 2005 Gyosei International

School UK is to be demolished, and the playing fields sold to a private housing developer to subsidise 258 flats for the over 55s.

In 1985 the school land was offered to the Japanese at a discounted price and Milton Keynes Development Corporation, well aware of the potential true development value of the site, took great care to structure the deal so that the buildings could only be sold for educational purposes and the playing fields were only leased to Gyosei for 50 years. The freehold of the paying fields were held by MKDC until April 1992 then passed to Milton Keynes Council with a 999 years lease to the Parks Trust. The remaining Gyosei playing field lease period became a sub-lease from the Parks Trust.

These carefully constructed safeguards were supposed to prevent the redevelopment of the school buildings for commercial gain and preserve for a millennium the playing field as open space for the benefit and enjoyment of ALL citizens of Milton Keynes.

English Partnerships the Parks Trust, and ExtraCare all of whom, recover ALL of their costs and/or benefit by many millions from the deal, will in collaboration with Milton Keynes Council set aside all the safeguards made only 20 years ago and demolish this landmark building and sell off the playing fields to the highest bidder. Perhaps Father Tagawa is reconsidering his understanding of the values of an English gentleman?

Your Parish Council has explored every opportunity to challenge the decision of Milton Keynes Council to sell off the playing fields, which for many months the Council denied owning, but we have been overruled and the Parish will be greatest loser on the outcome.

SAYONARA, GYOSEI

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