

STANTONBURY PARISH NEWS SPECIAL EDITION

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**FREE to residents of
Stantonbury Parish**

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Chair's Welcome

Welcome to this Special Newsletter. The last two years have presented to all of us unprecedented impacts and changes in our lives, and likewise the functioning of the Parish Council, its work and its staff have all been similarly affected.

In this edition of the Newsletter we have attempted to set out where we are with respect to the many issues the Parish Council are working on which were started pre-pandemic. These activities are either still ongoing or are on hold for the various reasons provided within each article.

In spite of these difficulties we have made progress across a wide range of matters which impact the parish, and these too are described.

Looking to the future it would appear that the virus is in decline, sufficient to be classified as endemic. Naturally we will return to normal parish activity as things improve.

A consequence of the virus was

the isolation. Stantonbury Parish Council adopted the use of the Zoom application to allow conversations between individuals and the parish residents, and I'm pleased to say we saw many new faces at the Parish Council meetings. Whilst Government legislation requires Councillors to return to face-to-face meetings, we will continue to use Zoom as part of all our meetings should any member of the public be unable to attend in person.

It is with great sadness that I have to inform you that Cllr Peter Kirkham's wife Jane recently passed away. Many of you will know Jane from Bradwell Road allotments and of course the regular recipe features in our Newsletter she contributed to. Jane will be sadly missed and we send our heartfelt condolences to Peter and his family at this time.

We sincerely hope that this year we can once again plan the very popular coach trips and events around the parish. These will be advertised on social media.

We have seen some invigorating changes in the parish with the opening of Aldi and more recently McDonald's and Costa Coffee at Linford Wood.

If any resident would like to receive more information regarding the matters raised in this edition, please contact the Parish Office and we will endeavour to provide this for you.



Cllr Graham Davison
Chair Stantonbury Parish Council

Expansion of the Parish Office Update

- During 2021 the Parish Council opted to re-purpose the Wylie Centre and it is now the base for the Parish Rangers.
- In December 2021 we appointed David Outram to the role of Parish Ranger Supervisor and another appointment of Parish Ranger is due to take place at the beginning of March 2022.
- Residents may have noticed the new parish van which was purchased to assist in the litter collections by the Parish Guardians and others.
- Due to an unprecedented demand of Freedom of

Information requests it has been necessary for the Council to employ a Document Controller.

- There is more about the asset transfer of Bradville Hall later in the Newsletter. We are looking to expand the Hall at a future date, possibly 2023.
- We have been advised by Milton Keynes Council that the representation of the residents can be increased through three new Parish Councillors in Stantonbury & Linford Wood, Bradville and Oakridge Park. This will bring the total number of Councillors to 13.

Cllr Graham Davison

Freedom of Information Requests

On 14th May 2021 Stantonbury Parish Council received the first of 9 Freedom of Information (FOI) requests.

The Parish Council have been working with the Information Commissions Office (ICO) regarding these requests since they appear to be a co-ordinated attack on the Parish Council, designed to disrupt the functioning of the office. We anticipate that the cost of responding to the request is estimated to be in the order of £40,000 plus.

Legally the Council have to respond to any FOI request and this we have done. However some of the requests contain libellous statements and these are now being pursued legally. This is considered an abuse of the Freedom of Information Act and is subject to further investigation.

Generally, requestors are not obliged to prove identity however, given the extreme nature of the requests received to date the Freedom of Information Act allows for requestors to provide some form of identity which we may now request.

Budget 2022/23

In January Stantonbury Parish Council set the budget and precept for the financial year 2022/23 as follows:

Council Tax Base – The notional number of band D equivalent properties has risen to 3200.40 from 3071.09, an increase of 129.31, principally due to a number of commercial properties in Linford Wood being converted into residential apartments.

Council Tax Figure – The band D equivalent will rise by £9.68 from £128.43 to £138.11 equating to 18.6p per week.

This 7.54% increase for 2022/23 comes after the precept was frozen last year in light of the Covid-19 crisis and its impact on finances. The total budget for 2022/23 will now stand at £580,884 which is up from the previous year of £431,225.

The Parish Council holds a significant amount of funds in reserve. Much of that is ear-marked including an amount put aside for taking on devolved services for landscaping from Milton Keynes Council. Other items ring-fenced include contingencies for asset improvements or repairs, covid and insurance liabilities and yellow lining.

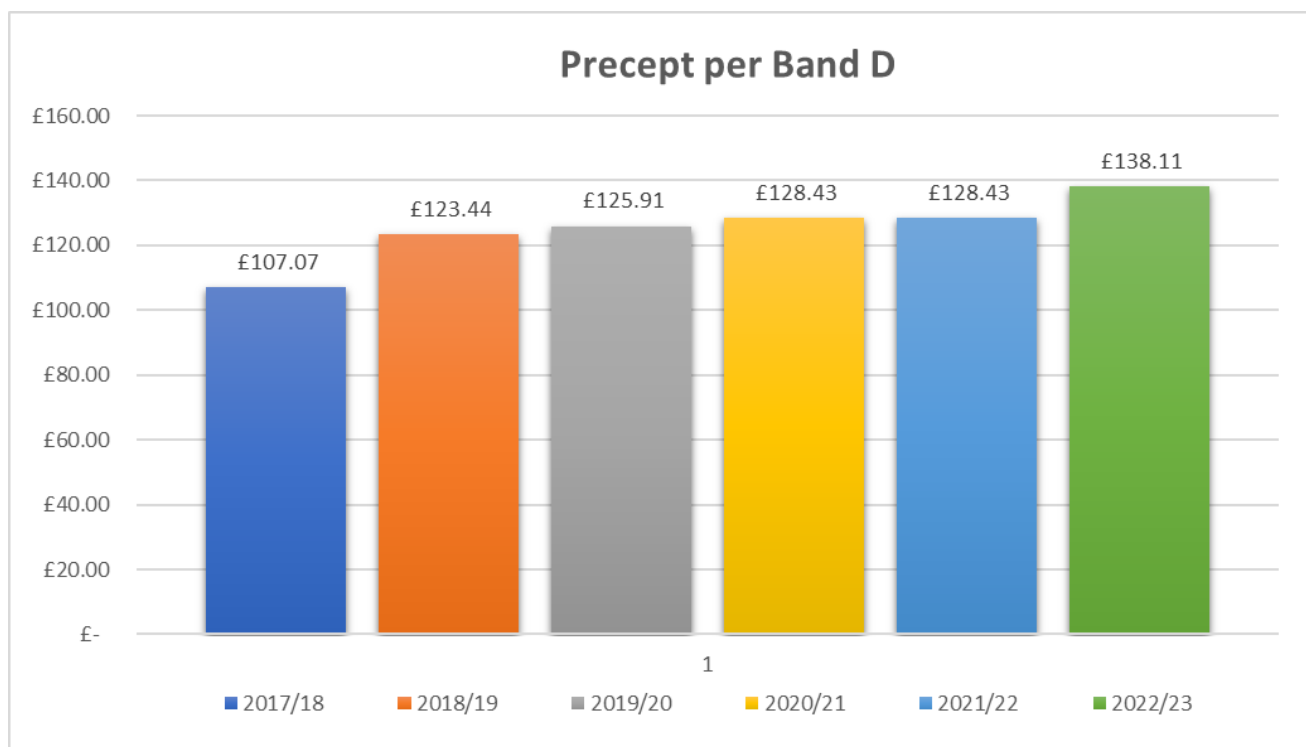
Rising costs and continued financial challenges from the

pandemic encouraged the Parish Council to use £95,000 of its reserves to reduce the increase charged for its services over the next financial year. An impressive programme of community activities and events is planned, which will require investment into IT and increased staffing levels to be able to support it.

The Parish Council put a lot of work into ensuring the budget was as low as possible and took great care to ensure continuation of important existing services such as the running of the allotments, emptying of dog waste bins, enforcement services supporting our Parish Rangers, closed circuit cameras, litter picking events, regular newsletters, and the provision for Citizens Advice Bureau. We have added a much needed rubbish amnesty scheme and some consultant support for planning applications, and finally we are taking on a community asset from MKC that should provide us with a level of income and has helped to reduce the precept required.

A detailed copy of the 2022/23 budget can be found on our website:

www.stantonbury-pc.org.uk/finance/parish-council-budget or alternatively send an email to our Responsible Financial Officer **finance@stantonburyparishcouncil.org.uk**



Transformation

We reported in our Autumn 2021 Newsletter that Milton Keynes Council are undertaking a transformation exercise returning green spaces and planting to its original form in areas of the parish. Stantonbury area has now been completed and the Transformation Team have now moved onto Bradville.

The approach will be to:

- remove all litter embedded within planting to allow, coppicing of shrubs to a reduced height. Particular areas which will be targeted will be planting near or touching fences and reduction of planting detrimental to lines of sight
- depending on the condition of plants after initial coppicing some plants will be removed, some will be replaced or soil prepared and seeded to grass
- Some grassed areas will have new planting to reduce the opportunity to park on the grass
- Transformation will attempt to bring back the planting areas to the original plans



Rubbish Amnesty

In the Spring of 2021 the accumulation of dumped rubbish was getting progressively worse around the estates, especially in Bradville carports and drives.

The Parish Council contacted MKC Housing Department and a working party, along with other residents' groups, was formed to run a skip amnesty pilot scheme in three roads on Bradville during June and July of last year. Residents living in the roads identified were notified a week prior to the amnesty, giving dates, time and position of the skips on the day.

The pilot scheme was a great success and highlighted what can be achieved if we all work together to create a community with spirit and pride within our parish.

Thank you to the following people: Parish Councillors

and Parish staff, Parish Rangers, Environmental Enforcement Officer, ABRA, Apryl and Milton Keynes Council staff: James and Tim from Serco and Milton Keynes Council Caretakers. A VERY BIG THANK YOU TO ALL OF THOSE INVOLVED.

Stantonbury Parish Council are hoping to hold a similar event on Stantonbury around Easter 2022. More details will be circulated nearer the time, so keep an eye on our social media and website. Sign up to our e-newsletter which will keep you fully informed of future events taking place in the parish.



Parish Council Meetings

Attendance and Allowance May 2021 to February 2022

	Allowance Received	Main Council Attendance	Community Projects Attendance	Finance Attendance	General Purposes Attendance	Human Resources Attendance
Stantonbury & Linford Wood Ward	Total of Meetings					
		16	5	2	2	6
Cllr Graham Davison (Chair)	£1,250	16	1	2	2	N/A
Cllr Sandra Kennedy	£625	15	5	N/A	2	6
Cllr Carol Northwood	£625	11	5	2	N/A	4

Bradville Ward						
Cllr Sara Agintas	£625	11	2	N/A	N/A	N/A
Cllr Abid Anwar	£625	15	4	N/A	1	N/A
Cllr Peter Kirkham	£625	13	5	N/A	2	6
Cllr Ann Ronaldson	£625	13	4	2	N/A	5

Bancroft Park & Blue Bridge Ward						
Cllr Linda Morgan	£1,250	15	5	2	1	6

Bancroft Ward						
Cllr Judy Kite*	£250	5	2	N/A	N/A	N/A

Oakridge Park Ward						
Cllr Edward Seaborne*	£250	6	1	N/A	N/A	N/A

N/A = not a Committee Member

* Co-Opted onto Parish Council in October 2021

Parish Councillors are volunteers, and they do not get paid. The allowance although it is not a salary is treated by HMRC as taxable income and is processed on the Parish Councils payroll software. The annual allowance is paid monthly spread over 12 months. It is a figure which is calculated to cover the expenses which are normally associated with the basic duties of being a Councillor. The payment of Councillors' allowances is subject to a statutory process which involves an independent local remuneration panel set up by Milton Keynes Council, whose role is to make recommendations as to the level of the various allowances that a Parish Council can pay.



Residents' E-newsletter

So, if you are interested in current news and events that are happening within the parish, and want to know what new projects we are involved in, then please sign up.

Check out our website or contact Donna Moore on donna.moore@stantonburyparishcouncil.org.uk or telephone **01908 227201**.



Don't Miss Out!

Follow us on Twitter, Instagram and Facebook!



Parking

Parking remains a major complaint with residents across Milton Keynes and unfortunately our parish also has significant parking issues. Parking problems and complaints fall into a number of categories. This short list identifies some of them and we are all aware of other situations.

- Inconsiderate parking causing obstruction and annoyance on the highway or footpaths.
- Parking for convenience. Parking spaces are available, but drivers want to park outside their property.
- Inappropriate parking from taxis waiting for fares.
- Parking overspill from houses of multiple occupancy without adequate parking spaces for all the occupants.

- Parking causing damage to our green amenity space.

In 2019 the Parish Council concluded a targeted parking survey in Bradville where some of the issues above were prevalent. From this a list of 22 zones around the parish were identified where parking restrictions would help and Stantonbury Parish Council applied for a Traffic Regulation Order to introduce parking restriction measures. This work, due for completion in March 2020, was stopped by Milton Keynes Council and they are unable to provide a date when this will now be completed. The Parish Council continues to pursue MKC for this work to be carried out.

Planning

A review of the local press shows that Milton Keynes Council Planning Department is a challenge to deal with and is somewhat subject to adverse comment. As a parish Council we are frequently frustrated with trying to deal with issues which are clearly not in the interests of our community.

In our previous Newsletter we set out the new requirement for comments on Planning Applications. Whilst the right to comment either for or against a proposal remains, residents should be mindful that many planning applications are for extensions of existing premises and may not need planning permission review, provided they are within the new permitted development criteria.

A particular impact of permitted development rights is the opportunity for developers to modify commercial premises to become residential or build residential units on top of existing commercial units. During 2021 we received

applications for a significant number of flats adjacent to Linford Wood through conversions of existing commercial office space or the vertical extensions of commercial premises. Prior to the change in legislation in September 2021 such changes were not permitted, and we therefore did not cover this scenario in the Neighbourhood Plan.

The impact on our community is that we have an additional 500+ residents who require schooling, doctors, shops etc., without the benefit of the infrastructure of planned estates. Given the nature of these developments we can expect to see many more.

To help us to deal with these issues the Parish Council have agreed to employ, on a permanent basis, a planning consultancy to advise on what actions we can take moving forward.

Devolved Services

Prior to Covid-19 the Parish Council were in discussions with Milton Keynes Council regarding their planned devolution of landscaping services. In previous years we have not engaged with Milton Keynes Council with respect to taking on Devolved Services. We declined to do so because we considered the contractual arrangements too onerous upon the Parish.

Since then, however, Milton Keynes Council have reviewed and completely revised their approach to devolution and I am pleased to report that the Parish Council consider the new contractual proposals acceptable. We are in the early stages of consultation, but we have submitted an expression of interest to move forward with this.

The current proposal will include a £73,000 contribution from Milton Keynes Council to the parish annually to ease costs, with the proviso we TUPE across a member of staff from the Serco team.

We will need to comply with the new specification for landscaping which includes a strong element of biodiversity.

In simple terms we will not be required to provide grass cutting as it has been done in the past. Areas will be left to allow for wildlife to flourish during the summer. Hedgerows and shrubbery around the parish will be similarly managed. We will have control over what is done and when. The implementation of this will include providing a support team to handle the maintenance and administrative side of things and over the last two years we have accrued and ring-fenced monies to pay for the start-up of our landscaping activity. We will not however be dealing with issues related to trees which remains the remit of Milton Keynes Council. Obviously the procurement of the necessary plant and equipment will have significant costs and we have therefore begun conversations with Great Linford, Bradwell and Heelands Parish Councils with a view to sharing resources.

The proposal is that we will enter into this new contract in 2023. It is important to stress that the landscape work is a separate function from that which the Parish Rangers currently provide to the parish.

Bradville Hall

UNDER NEW MANAGEMENT

Early in 2021 the Parish Council were approached by Milton Keynes Council to see if we were interested in taking over the management of Bradville Hall, and after much discussion, the Parish Council placed an expression of interest for the hall.

We were asked to provide a business plan and presented to the MKC Cabinet and on the 6th of January 2022 we took over the hall with a short tenancy until the legal completion date on 1st April 2022, at which point Bradville Hall will become the property of the Parish Council.

COMPETITION

Would you like to win a £50 gift card and have the honour of officially opening the refurbished hall?

All you need to do is the following:

- Rename the Hall (remember the hall is for all the parish residents). If more than one member of the parish comes up with the winning name, the winner will be drawn out of a hat.
- Members of staff and Councillors are not allowed to submit entries.
- Please see link below to submit online or drop in the attached slip to the office before **Friday 25th March 2022**.

Your chance to win a £50 voucher!

All you have to do is rename Bradville Hall.

The winner of the competition will also be invited to the official opening of the Hall.

Your suggestion of name:

Name:

Address:

Contact number:

Email address:.....

Please return this slip by 25th March 2022 to:
Stantonbury Parish Council, 126 Kingsfold, Bradville, MK13 7DX
Alternatively you can fill the form in online at: www.stantonbury-pc.org.uk

The Hall will be run by a group of residents (on a voluntary basis) one from each of the following areas and two Councillors:

OAKRIDGE PARK
BRADVILLE

STANTONBURY
BANCROFT

LINFORD WOOD
BLUE BRIDGE

BANCROFT PARK

The hall is intended to be used and run by the community.

We are hoping to implement a number of new ideas for the community such as a Community Larder/Freezer and Café including a monthly Dementia Café and many other activities.

The Terms of Reference for the group can be found on our website:

www.stantonbury-pc.org.uk

To join the group please complete the form on our website or request an application form from the parish office. Closing date for applications is: Thursday 31st March 2022.

Increasing Elected Councillors

SPC applied to Milton Keynes Council to increase the number of Parish Councillors currently elected by 3, bringing the total to 13. We have now been through the process to increase the numbers with MKC and at their Council Meeting held on 16th February 2022 they approved our request.

The vacancies will be filled by elections in May. We therefore have vacancies for a Parish Councillor in the following areas/wards: Stantonbury & Linford Wood, Bradville and Oakridge Park

If you would like to become a Parish Councillor get in touch with us at the parish office, where we would be happy to talk to you about what is involved. Nomination forms for the vacancies can be obtained from the MKC elections office and must be submitted by hand, between the hours of 10am – 4pm from 28 March to 5 April.

Make a difference to where you live

The Annual Parish Meeting (Meet Your Councillors)

As a Parish Council we are duty bound to hold two annual meetings, the Annual Meeting of the Council where the new council is voted in, and the Annual Parish Meeting. The Annual Parish meeting is referred to as 'Meet Your Councillors'. This must be held between 1 March and 1 June and be started by the Chairman at 6pm.

The meeting itself is a chance to meet all our Councillors, hear about what the Parish Council has been doing over the last year and meet representatives of local organisations who have worked closely with us such as Thames Valley Police and Citizens Advice Bureau.

At the beginning of the meeting the Chair introduces the councillors, and any staff present and reads the Chairs' Report. This outlines what the parish has achieved the previous year and gives those present an opportunity to ask questions and make requests of

what they would like the Parish Council to focus on for the upcoming year.

Unfortunately, due to lockdown restrictions of the Covid-19 Pandemic SPC have not been able to hold an Annual Parish Meeting since 16th April 2019. However, we are hopeful to be able to hold one this year and initial plans are already underway to hold it on **Tuesday 26th April 2022**. Keep an eye out on our social media, e-newsletter and noticeboards for updates on attending organisations and confirmation of the location. Please make a note in your diary to come along to meet us.



Why Not Become a Parish Guardian?

- We carry out regular litter picking groups a couple of hours a month around the parish and are always looking for an extra pair of hands. We can supply litter pickers and bags.
- Inform the Rangers of any problems in the area you live. We will do our best to see if we can help and escalate your concerns.
- Contact us about graffiti, fly tipping, drugs, anti-social behaviour and abandoned vehicles.

Please contact the Stantonbury Parish Office on 01908 227201

We want to work for you and with you to improve the areas where you live.

Your Parish Councillors

Oakridge Park



Edward Seaborne
Councillor
Oakridge Park Ward

Stantonbury & Linford Wood



Graham Davison
Chair
Stantonbury & Linford
Wood Ward



Carol Northwood
Councillor
Stantonbury & Linford
Wood Ward



Sandra Kennedy
Councillor
Stantonbury & Linford
Wood Ward

Bancroft

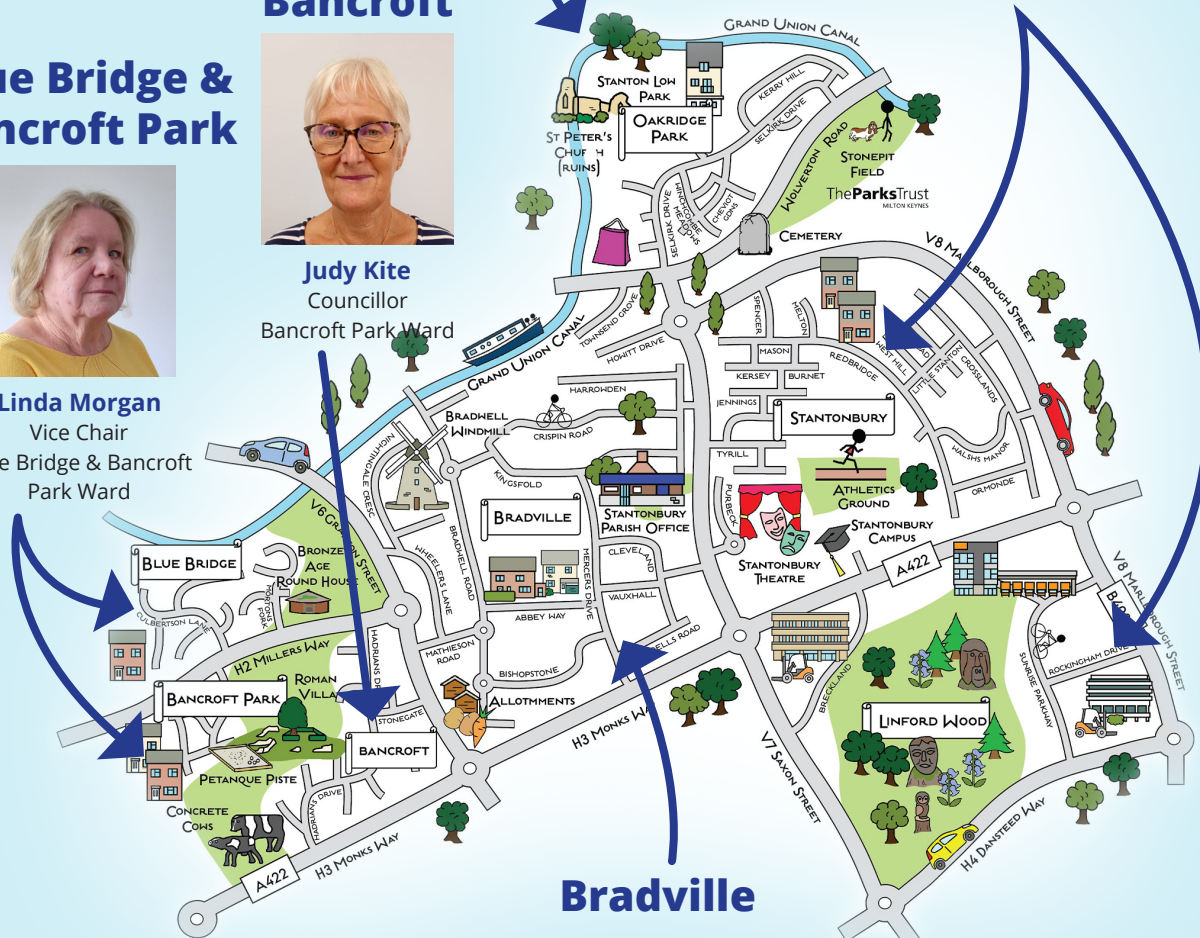


Judy Kite
Councillor
Bancroft Park Ward

Blue Bridge & Bancroft Park



Linda Morgan
Vice Chair
Blue Bridge & Bancroft
Park Ward



Bradville



Ann Ronaldson
Councillor
Bradville Ward



Abid Anwar
Councillor
Bradville Ward



Peter Kirkham
Councillor
Bradville Ward



Sara Agintas
Councillor
Bradville Ward

If you have any concerns you can contact the Councillor for your area by email, or alternatively contact the parish office and we'll forward your email onto the appropriate Councillor.

All email addresses are as follows:

firstnamesurname@stantonburyparishcouncil.org.uk

Renewal of Bradville

Milton Keynes Council have now appointed a new team to undertake the Renewal of Bradville Estate.

Initially their newly appointed Community Engagement Officer for MKC, Mr Stephen Bryant (Mob: 07557318900 E: Stephen.bryant@milton-keynes.gov.uk), will be meeting residents in the north side of Bradville as well as holding meetings with SPC and ABRA to look at how residents can get involved. Further meetings will also take place at a later date for the remainder of the estate.

Drop-in sessions are being planned by the Community Engagement Officer where residents can share with MKC their thoughts about the future of the area. These will be advertised on our website: www.stantonbury-pc.org.uk and social media. Please contact the parish office if you are unable to access these social platforms for further details.

www.stantonbury-pc.org.uk

Christmas Hampers

The week before Christmas Councillors and staff helped to make up and deliver, alongside Lynsey Marriott from Morrisons Supermarket, 15 hampers and bags of food which were donated by Morrisons Supermarket in Central Milton Keynes.

The recipients of the hampers are all nominated by people from our parish as people who are either disabled, elderly, vulnerable or need support.

Residents can nominate a person who they think is deserving of a Christmas hamper. It's never too early to send in your nominations. All we need is the name of the person you wish to nominate, their address and contact number so that we can contact the recipient to let them know when we will be delivering the hampers to them. You can email the details or send a written note to the parish office.

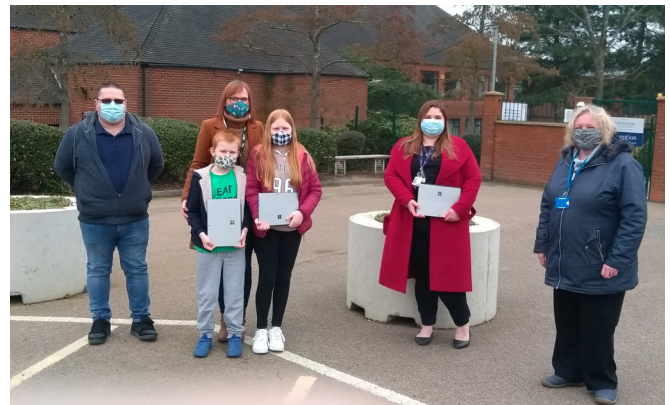
SPC would like to send a huge thank you to Lynsey and her team who helped collect the food and also to the Manager Tom Carlin of Morrisons for both the donations and staff time.



Laptops for Local Schools

During the pandemic Stantonbury Parish Council were made aware of the need for school children to be provided with a laptop to enable them to do their schoolwork at home. SPC contacted local schools and Children's Centres and identified that at least 75 laptops were urgently needed.

SPC then approached the Motor Insurance Bureau (MIB) who really stepped up to the mark and donated 70+ reconditioned laptops for the schools to use. We owe a big THANK YOU especially to Paul Jackman, Sophie Potter, Iain Morgan, Andy Stanley and Matt Gladman who spent evenings and weekend ensuring they were cleaned down and fit for purpose.



Stantonbury Parish Council Dog Bins

Stantonbury Parish Council has some of the best dog walking routes in Milton Keynes. With Loughton Brook flowing between Bancroft, Bancroft Park and Blue Bridge, there is ample parkland for dogs to explore in these areas, together with the unique Roman Villa. Bradville and Stantonbury have both the Grand Union Canal and the Redway along the old Newport Pagnell Railway running along their northern edges, as well as Linford Wood to the South. Oakridge Park enjoys its own country park around the canal.

SPC provide 43 dog bins within the parish for the use of residents and the public, so

please clean up after your dog and keep your dog on a lead when approaching other dogs or cyclists.

All the bins are emptied once a week with 16 of these bins being emptied twice a week. It currently costs SPC £3.00 per week per bin per empty (£177 per week x 52 weeks £9204 per year). Each bin costs over £200 to install.

For location of dog bins in our parish please see our website. However if you think an original dog bin should be moved to a different position please let the parish office know.



RESIDENTS HAVE YOUR SAY!



Stantonbury Parish Council would appreciate your feedback and comments on what you the residents would like to see in the Parish in 2022.

1. What would you like Stantonbury Parish Council to do in your community?

Please select maximum of 3 options

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Coach Trips | <input type="checkbox"/> Community Events |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Community Support – PCSO'S | <input type="checkbox"/> Community Café |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Play Days for children in school holidays | <input type="checkbox"/> Community Larder / Fridge |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Crime Detection Cameras | |

Other (please specify)

2. What activities would you like to see for children in the Parish?

Please select maximum of 3 options

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Football | <input type="checkbox"/> Basketball |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Dancing Youth | <input type="checkbox"/> Boxing |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Club Outdoor | <input type="checkbox"/> Self Defence Classes |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Play Sessions | <input type="checkbox"/> Free Meals in School Holidays |

Other (please specify)

3. What services do you want to see for adults in the Parish?

Please select maximum of 3 options

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Citizen Advice Bureau | <input type="checkbox"/> Job Club |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Local Social Events (Party in the Park) | <input type="checkbox"/> Coffee Mornings |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cycle Repair Workshops | <input type="checkbox"/> Exercise Classes |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Thames Valley Police Bike Marking | <input type="checkbox"/> First Aid Training |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Silver Surfers - Develop Computer Skills | <input type="checkbox"/> Community Bus |

Other (please specify)

4. Which of these communication methods do you use?

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Facebook | <input type="checkbox"/> Instagram |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Twitter | <input type="checkbox"/> Website |
| <input type="checkbox"/> E-Newsletter | <input type="checkbox"/> Parish Newsletter |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Noticeboards | <input type="checkbox"/> None of the above |

5. Any other comments you would like the Parish Council to consider.

Please send your survey back to Stantonbury Parish Office at 126 Kingsfold, Bradville, Milton Keynes, MK13 7DX by **29th March 2022**, or go on our website to complete it online **www.stantonbury-pc.org.uk**.