

HOUGHTON CONQUEST Village Newsletter

December 2021



***All the latest news, events and reports
for our Village inside.....***

HOUGHTON CONQUEST PARISH COUNCIL

Members

PCllr Brian Blackall

PCllr Peter Bullock (Vice Chair)

PCllr Tracey Fry

PCllr Bec Hares (UCllr)

PCllr Liz Lovell (Chair)

PCllr Katie Lovell

PCllr John Miller

PCllr Anthony Mullin

PCllr Bryn Whitaker

Committees, Working Parties and Representatives

Highways & Horse Watch

PCllr Fry

Planning Sub-Committee

PCllrs Blackall Bullock,
Whittaker and Mullin

Village Hall

PCllr Mullin

Play Area

PCllrs Blackall and Miller

Sports Field

PCllrs Blackall and Miller

Allotments	PCllr Lovell
School Liaison	PCllr Mullin
Police Liaison	PCllr Beaumont
Tree Warden	PCllr Miller and L Askham
Newsletter	PCllr Bullock
Community Facebook	PCllr Bullock
Website	Parish Clerk
United Charities	PCllr Bullock
Covanta/BACI/Millbrook Power	P Rolfe

Parish Council Clerk – Gill Wiggs Tel: 01234 270016
clerk@houghtonconquest-pc.gov.uk

All correspondence should be forwarded to the Clerk to the Parish Council: Gill Wiggs, 10 Parklands, Bedford MK41 9LZ
 The Parish Council usually meets on the second Thursday of the month except August & December, in the Village Hall committee room at 7.30pm. Parishioners are invited to attend the meetings and time is allocated for them to address the council.

Central Bedfordshire Councillor:

Bec Hares T: 0300 300 8505

E: rebecca.hares@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk

If you have a matter you wish to draw to the attention of the Parish Council, you can contact any Councillor, write to the Clerk, or attend a meeting. If you wish to speak to the Council please notify the clerk or the chairman before the meeting, so that you can speak during the time allotted.

Parish Council website

You can register for email news updates from Houghton Conquest Parish Council by going to houghtonconquest-pc.gov.uk & click on the "subscribe" button on the home page. We promise we won't inundate you. We only post news items that we believe are important to Houghton Conquest residents. Subscription is completely free of charge

Thanks, Houghton Conquest Parish Council

Please note that the closing date for insertion of copy into the February 2022 issue of The Houghton Conquest Village Newsletter is 21st January 2022

You may send copy c/o the Editor, Village Newsletter, 38 Victoria Drive, Houghton Conquest MK45 9LY or send it by email to hcvillagenews@gmail.com

All contributions are welcome but are subject to the editor's discretion as to size and content

Place your advertisement here

For a reasonable payment to Houghton Conquest Parish Council, you can reach the entire Village every two months.

Copy may be emailed to hcvillagenews@gmail.com or posted to the Editor at the address above.

Payments to Houghton Conquest Parish Council

Parish Council Updates

Chair's Report



Hi All

Welcome to the last newsletter of the year. As we approach the festive season let us hope that it will be a true celebration this year with friends and family being able to get together. Please do find the time to look in on any vulnerable or lonely neighbours and offer the hand of friendship to those in need over the winter months.

By the time you read this the Christmas lights should be shining across the Village and you will note that we have installed more this year. There is also the addition of the Tree outside of the Church. If anyone has any ideas for further lights next year just let us know.

At our last meeting your Parish Council welcomed a new Clerk, Jo Graves. She will replace Gill Wiggs in this role starting 28/11/21 although Gill will remain in post until 31/12/21 in order to carry out a hand over of business. We thanked Gill for all her help, patience and kindness to us on the Council. We are also grateful for her tact and diplomacy. As the many of you who have had any correspondence with Gill will know she is always very tactful and diplomatic in everything she writes and this skill

will be sorely missed. However, we are sure that Jo will be more than capable of making this role her own.

We have one vacancy on the Parish Council. This was created when PCllr Sue Beaumont stepped down. We would like to thank Sue for her years of service and she will be missed, not least for her experience and knowledge. Sue was our Police Liaison representative for many years and has built up a close working relationship with our previous Community Officers. This role has been taken on by PCllr Tracey Fry. If you have any issues then please feel free to contact her through the website. The other vacancy was filled at the last meeting where Katie Lovell was co opted onto the Council. If you would like to help make a difference then please contact the Clerk through the 'Contact' page of the Parish Council website – Houghton-conquest-pc.gov.uk. We would love to hear from you.

One area of concern in the Village is the state of the Town Well. This is sited at the top of Bedford Road by the bus stop. It is in need of repair and for this we need a bricklayer who can tidy it up and put a top row of bricks on it. The job is too small to be of interest on a commercial level so we have had problems getting anyone to do it. If you can help us out please contact the Parish Council through the website. We would be very grateful.

The improvements to the sports field are ongoing and the Orchard is shortly to be prepared for planting in the Spring. The children's play area has been tidied up and will soon have additional seating as per requests from playground users. It is hoped that the new shelter will improve the facilities for everyone that uses them.

We do not have a meeting in December but if you have any issues that you wish to bring to the attention of the Parish Council please use the contact form on houghton-conquest-pc.gov.uk.
I wish you all a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Warm regards

Liz

The Chair's newsletter is intended to provide a general update. Agendas and approved minutes can be viewed on the Parish Council website www.houghtonconquest-pc.gov.uk



POLICE LIAISON REPORT NOVEMBER 2021

I have only recently taken on this brief and as a result there is not much to report. I am currently in the process of making contact with the relevant

authorities and hope there will be more to report in the next edition.

October Crime Stats for Houghton Conquest show a total of 7 offences – 3 assaults (1 case being with injury); 1 theft from a motor vehicle; 1 instance of criminal damage to a motor vehicle and 2 incidents of harassment.

For anyone wishing to report a crime that does not merit a 999 emergency call, please either ring 101 or report a crime on-line by visiting www.bedfordshire.police.uk, where you will be offered a variety of options for reporting.

PCllr Tracey Fry - Police Liaison Officer

Report from your Central Beds Councillor

I apologise for not being present in public correspondence of late. The truth is that I am completely disillusioned by the democratic process and the way that it is so easily and willingly manipulated by many of those who are literally in place to uphold the integrity of democracy; and just how limited the public are in their opportunity to hold these people to account.

Wixams Village 4 residents have been desperately pleading with Bedford Borough Council to allow their children safe access to school which is actively being denied, meaning these children and families have to be left with the choice of employment or their child's safety. All because of the developer's decision to alter the delivery of the next phase of building. Profits before duty of care? A number of Bedford Borough residents contacted me for support because the Wixams Ward Councillor was unable to be contacted, only for me to receive a rap over the knuckles for advocating for these families. This is not the response from the Council residents deserve, nor should residents have to fight for this poor response.

We are now being offered yet another development application for an extension to Wixams. More houses with no infrastructure, with roads already at full capacity and the local road network seeing a significant increase in accidents at our junctions. The proposal intends to alter the junction on the B530 and Bedford Road, encouraging all additional traffic heading South to the A6 to traverse through the old Village and access a junction which has had 3 serious incidents, that I am aware of, in the last month. Whilst the Bedford Road junction in its current state is an issue, is altering this junction to move traffic through the new estate, for the benefit of the residents who live here and for future residents?

Village 4 residents are forced to use this route already and the main Houghton Conquest village are already inundated with cut through traffic; so let's add more houses and compound the issue!

The applicant, Present Made are hosting two additional consultation evenings via Zoom on the 25th and 30th of November. I have requested that these meetings be held in person also, to allow more involvement for residents who would only be able to attend in person but that request has not been responded to.

This, like any planning application, “consults” the public for their input; one thing I will urge you to do, take the opportunity to respond to this application in its consultation stage. Once this stage has passed there is even LESS opportunity for residents to have their voices heard and I can only represent views that have been put forward.

Our road network is already at capacity, there is now significant congestion in Ampthill and at the lights by the Interchange Retail park due to the scale of original Wixams Development. This development is still not even 50% complete more than 20years after its approval, yet more housing has been added to this original scheme with all new infrastructure provided already oversubscribed. All of the traffic assessments have been based on an elusive railway station that is nowhere to be seen on Network Rail’s 20year plan, nor on the East West Rail Plan, how can more traffic be added to a network already at capacity with no mitigations to alleviate issues? Are residents happy for more housing to be provided when not only is the original scheme not yet complete, but all of the infrastructure due to be delivered last, still has not been implemented or even permitted?

Residents outnumber Elected Members thousands to one, and yet residents are content to allow the Council not to listen because many choose not to speak or speak on the incorrect platforms after the fact. If residents want to influence the outcome then they need to make their voices heard; there’s no point in complaining about an outcome when you’re not prepared to input beforehand.

Stand up, speak and be heard and maybe, as a collective, we can change the way our Councils work for us; if not then the cycle will continue - the choice is yours.

Rebecca Hares

If you have any issues that you wish me to raise with Central Bedfordshire Council, please do not hesitate to contact me at bex.hares@gmail.com, on 0300 300 8505, or via my Facebook page: [Facebook.com/CllrHares/](https://www.facebook.com/CllrHares/)

Speed Indication Device Data Summary

For the Period 14-10-21 to 11-11-21

Arriving – from Grove to the High Street Violations 71.26% (73.99%) Of which 60%. (59%) = 21-25 mph 40%. (41%) = 26+ Average speed 23mph (23mph) Average Vehicles per day 245 (245) Total in period 6,812 (8,376) Highest recorded 60mph (64 mph)	Departing – from The Grove to How End Violations 55.49% (58.15%) Of which 68.4% (66.9%) = 21-25 mph 31.6% (33.0%) = 26+ Average speed 21mph (22mph) Average Vehicles per day 256 (258) Total in period 7,128 (8,823) Highest recorded 44mph. (56 mph)
Arriving from Chapel End Lane Violations 51.58%. (50.54%) Of which 72.7% (72.3%) = 21-25mph 27.3% (27.6%) = 26+ Average speed 21mph (21mph) Average Vehicles per day 843 (840) Total in period 23,817 (25,707) Highest recorded 48mph (67mph)	Departing towards Chapel End Violations 72.53% (70.89%) Of which 54.5% (55.8%) = 21-25 mph 45.5% (44.1%) = 26+ Average speed 23mph (23mph) Average Vehicles per day 1,158 (1,164) Total in period 32,717 (36,242) Highest recorded 61mph (58mph)
Arriving from the Vision Blinds towards the Oak Violations 1.9%. (1.73%) Of which 85.4% (85.4%) = 31-35mph 14.5% (14.5%) = 36+ Average speed 20mph (20mph)	Departing towards Vision Blinds from Oak Violations 3.25%. (3.23%) Of which 84.9% (85.6%) = 31-35mph 15.1% (14.4%) = 36+ Average speed 20mph (20mph)



All Saints Church

Rector: TBA

Assistant Minister: The Rev'd Roger White

Reader: Mr. Robert Heley 01234 740927

Wardens: Gary Mudd – 01234 741871

Chris Robertson – 01234 741964

Services: Sunday Eucharist - 9:30a.m.

Family Service - First Sunday of the month at 9:30am

Church Social/ Fundraising committee

Sarah Hanant 07900 927050 Brenda Hartley 01234 740482

Church Issues

Hello again everyone, a quick update on things. Not a lot to report. Mainly what's on until Christmas

Services:

Sunday Morning Eucharist at 9:30am continues if we can find visiting Priests to cover, or there will be a service of Morning Prayer if not. We are most grateful to clergy from the deanery, curates and the archdeacon and Bishop for covering services. The Bishop will be taking our Christmas Midnight Mass joining both churches of our Benefice together at All Saints, Wilstead. Service starts at 11.30pm. Our Christingle Service in aid of the Children's Society will take place in church at 3.00pm on Friday 24th December.

Our **Christmas Tree Festival** will take place over 10th, 11th, 12th Dec. Starting on Fri Evening at 6.00pm with refreshments and singing from the school children. Our 9 lessons and Carols Service is at 6:30pm on Sat. the 11th.

Weddings and Funerals: These are going ahead with the advice that people still wear masks if possible and are aware of space.

Church Wardens: Myself (01234 741871) and Chris Robertson (01234 741964). Let us know of any concerns.

Christmas Bazaar: Thank you to all who helped and attended to make this event a success. We made £800.

100 Club:

October Draw: 3 prizes of £10 to – Julie Bave, Chris Robertson, S. Circuit

November Draw: Mrs M. Richardson (passed to her daughter), Martin Day, Julie Bave.

Our thanks to all who take part in this.
If you would like to join 100 Club or find out more, please contact Carol (01234 381393) or Jackie (01234 740635).

Please check posters and Facebook page for further information and events.

Stay Safe
Best Wishes, Gary Mudd (01234 741871)

Village Clubs, Organisations & Events

Village Hall Regular Events

Contact group contacts for details.

Weekly

Monday	Indoor Bowls	2pm to 4pm
	Whist	7:45pm
Tuesday	Line Dancers	10am to 12:30pm
Wednesday	Line Dancers	10am to 12:30pm
	Novice Line Dancers	1pm to 2pm
Thursday	Line Dancers	10am to 12:30pm

	Houghton Pioneers (Start date TBA)	5.30pm to 6.45pm
<i>Friday</i>	<i>Yoga</i>	<i>7pm to 8pm</i>
<i>Friday</i>	<i>Yoga</i>	<i>7pm to 8pm</i>

Every Other Week

<i>Thursday</i>	<i>Jigsaw Club</i>	<i>7pm to 9:30pm</i>
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Monthly

1 st Wednesday	Art Society	7:30pm to 9:30pm
1 st Thursday	WI	7:30pm to 10pm
1 st Friday	Quiz Night	8:30pm
2 nd Tuesday	Garden Club	8pm to 10pm
2 nd Thursday	Parish Council (Committee Room)	7:30pm
3 rd Wednesday	Art Society	7:30pm to 9:30pm
3 rd Thursday	Village Hall Management Committee	7:30pm
3 rd Friday	Family Night	8:30pm

To Book Contact:
Mrs Christine Dean
01234 741182
Cjdean5@aol.com

IF YOU ARE PLANNING A
ONE-OFF EVENT OR
REGULAR MEETING. DON'T
DELAY AND BOOK TODAY.

- Run by volunteers for the benefit of the villagers. Hire charges are very reasonable with varying rates for day, evening and weekend, with residents getting preferential rates.
- Fully equipped kitchen
- Licensed bar with air conditioning at £25 hire charge
- Large hall including stage area with curtains
- Small committee room and lounge area
- Large car park

Village Notice Boards

If you would like to put notices in our boards, please:

- Hand them in to Houghton Conquest village shop.
- We have 5 noticeboards, so please provide 5 x A5 copies to ensure a copy goes in each board. Regrettably, we cannot accept larger than A5 due to limited space.
- If you provide only one copy it will only go in one board. The choice of board will be at the discretion of the Parish Councils representative.
- If you are advertising an event, please allow plenty of time, as our noticeboards are only updated once a week.
- We do not accept commercial advertising, unless it is for community activities, such as local classes.

- Space is limited, so priority will be given to local community events, & is at the discretion of the Parish Council's representative, who kindly keeps all the noticeboards up to date.

Any queries please contact the Clerk to the Parish Council at clerk@houghtonconquest-pc.gov.uk

Houghton Conquest Garden Club



We had an interesting talk about Marjorie Fish the gardener and writer on cottage gardens. She was someone who did not start her gardening career until she was in her 60s.

For our December meeting we are having a meal out, and so far I have been unable to find a speaker for January but I will keep trying, and will let members know.

The garden centres are full of cyclamen now, and these lovely colourful plants have 'special needs'. They are not hardy so have to be inside but they do not like too much heat. So they need to be in the coolest place in the house. A conservatory is ideal as there is plenty of light and usually a bit cooler. If they have these conditions they will flower for weeks and weeks.

Margaret Whalley
01234 740892

Houghton Conquest Art Society



Since returning to our regularly Wednesday evening meetings we have had some really interesting events. Our Open day resulted in several new members joining the club, which we are always pleased about. One new member has just moved to Houghton Conquest so it was really good to welcome her.

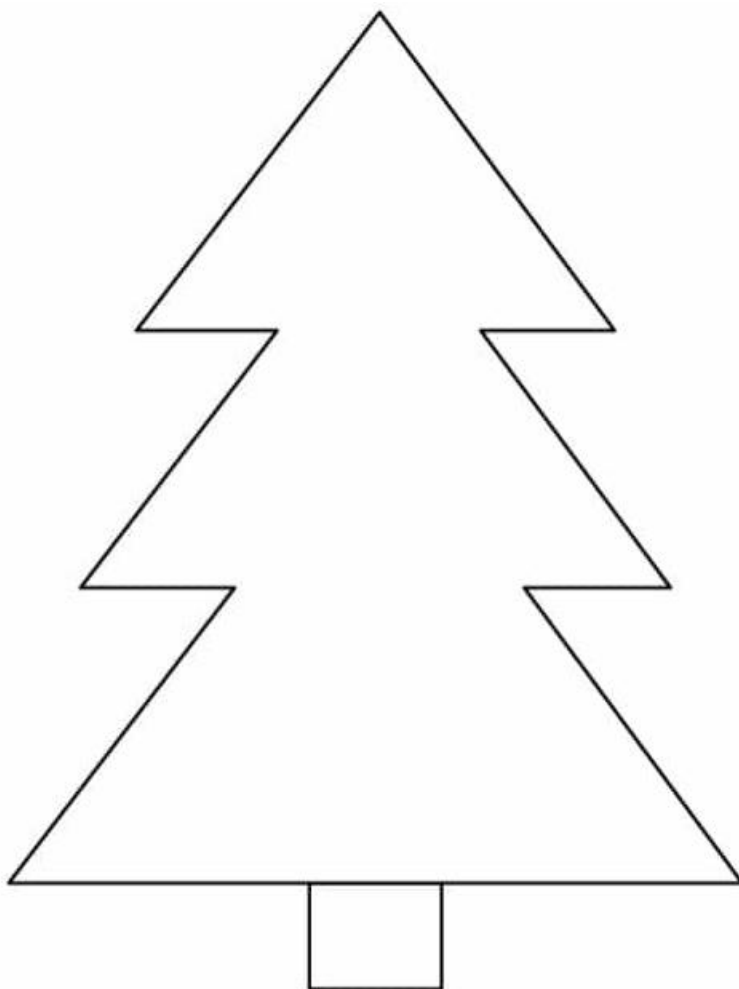
We have enjoyed a demonstration by local Pastel Artist Jane Rhodes, in fact we enjoyed Jane's session so much we have invited her to return for a one day workshop, to which you are invited, details below.

We had a fascinating evening with Sara Janaviticus who works with a process called textural collage to produce stunning and unusual pictures. This method can be adapted to complete beginners and is fun for children too. To produce a collage you can use all sorts of things you already have at home. You can use colour paper, tissue paper, card, foil even leaves to glue to a sheet or paper to form a picture or an abstract design.



This is one of Sara's designs, here she has drawn some petals and buds, then stuck pieces of coloured paper onto individual shapes, building up the picture with some overlaps. The papers can be purchased cheaply in the Works (Poplars), Hobbycraft or the Range. You could also paint your own range of coloured papers using acrylics or watercolour paints on

watercolour paper. Why not try this method, starting with a simple shape such as a Christmas tree, I have included a template for you. Packs of A4 card in gold, silver and bronze or different coloured glitter card are around £1 a pack. As the tree is basically three levels of branches, I would cut each of the three levels from a different colour card.



Lets make enough trees for three Christmas cards.

You can buy ready-made card blanks with envelopes or make your own from folded card.

Print the template and cut around the tree

Lay the tree on the back of a sheet of coloured card/paper, draw around it and cut it out

Repeat above with two different coloured sheets of card/paper

You now have three little trees in three colours

Carefully cut straight right across each tree so you end up with three sets of branches, use a pencil and ruler for accuracy

Glue three different coloured branches to the front of your card blanks in the shape of the original tree so smallest branches at the top.

Use any colours you fancy, mix up glittery paper with shiny paper the possibilities are endless.

The Art society sponsor and decorate a Christmas tree in our beautiful church every year. We are busy making decorations for the tree. President Dave Williams is teaching us the art of collagraph printing so we can make unusual tiny cards for the tree.

I have two adverts for you, the first for our Calendar, the second an invitation to a workshop

We have created a calendar of Bedfordshire views, example below. The calendars are available from www.askonline.shop/products/houghton-conquest-booklet-calendar They make great presents!



Scenes of Bedfordshire painted by members
of Houghton Conquest Art Society

[www,houghton-conquest-art-society.co.uk](http://www.houghton-conquest-art-society.co.uk)

You are invited to join us with Jane Rhodes, Professional Pastel artist on Saturday 29th January from 10-4pm in Houghton Conquest Village Hall, for a beginners workshop. The cost is £30. You will take home a pastel painting to be proud of. If you have

pastels you can bring them or there will be some available on the day along with special paper for a nominal cost. Bring a packed lunch. We do hope you will join us. Here is one of Jane's pastel paintings.



The Art Society committee are busy preparing next years programme of evening meeting demonstrations and weekend workshops, details will be in the next newsletter. If you would like to find out more about our friendly club please have a look at the website above.

Barbara Boxshall
Publicity Manager
Houghton Conquest Art Society



Friends of Houghton
Conquest Lower School's Best Ever...

CHRISTMAS
FAYRE



Saturday 4th December 2021

12PM-4PM at Houghton Conquest Village Hall

Over £1000s worth of raffle prizes!

Local business stalls. Agimal petting farm.

Festive food and drink. Tombola!

Fun and games. Music. Face painting.

& our super special Santa's Grotto!



BOOK YOUR SANTA GROTTO TICKET NOW!

Scan the QR code to go to our booking site or visit

www.pta-events.co.uk/fohcls or speak

to a Friends rep!

Tickets must be pre-booked!



**FREE Entry! A great family day out whilst
raising money for your local school!**

Face coverings are recommended but not mandatory. Please do not attend if you have Covid-19 symptoms or are self isolating. If government advice around Covid-19 changes, this event could be cancelled at short notice.

Bowls Club



The club is open again!! Carpet bowls is an easy game to play and gives you some exercise but is not too strenuous. We play on Monday afternoon in the Village Hall from 2pm until 4pm. The majority come for a good natter, a good laugh, a cup of tea and a biscuit – also a game of bowls. This costs only £2 per session. If you would like to join in, please come and give it a try.

Houghton Conquest Care



First of all, thank you to those residents of the village who supported us by attending the Care Group AGM. It was good to see them and their input into our decision making was appreciated. It was, however, disappointing not to see any new faces.

It was decided at the AGM that due to the increase in petrol prices we need to request that villagers who require transport contribute £4.00 per return journey, an increase of £1.00. This £4.00 goes towards the petrol expenses of our driver volunteers. While most of our requests for support are to provide transport to hospital, doctor and dentist appointments, some of our volunteers will also help with small tasks such as changing a light bulb,

picking up prescriptions or shopping or helping to fill out a form. If we can help, we will.

If you need help please phone our pager phone, 07969982970 and leave a message, one of our volunteer phone holders will get back to you. Try and give us at least 24 hours notice.

If you would like to volunteer or have any other enquiries, please phone:

Kate Smith (Honorary Secretary) 01234 740522

Sue Derrick (Chairperson) 07886459225)

OUR PHONE NUMBER is 07969 982970



At our November meeting we had a demonstration of different ways to make chocolate sweets, such as truffles. We were given some useful tips on how to use chocolate, and then we were able to sample them and they were delicious.

On 2nd December we are having a social evening when we will have some Christmas poems and stories read, and maybe sing a few seasonal songs. Then on 6th January we have our new year party when there will be a three course meal, and for those with some energy there will be line dancing.

If you would like any further details, please give me a call on 07951024876.

Shirley Johnson

Houghton Pioneers



Unfortunately, we haven't yet re-started Pioneering but hope to soon.

Recycling

Local recycling directory (for stuff that can't currently go in our green wheelie bins) can be found at <https://amphillclimatechange.co.uk/projects/recycling-directory>. Various packaging labelled 'Do Not Recycle' can now be accepted (incl biscuit wrappers, toothpaste tubes). Unfortunately, some collection points are not that local so please don't waste fuel making a special journey, wait until you're passing.

Recycling used stamps for charity Many thanks to everyone who has been passing stamps to me throughout the year. I am happy to continue to act as a collection point (please pop through my letterbox at 29 Rectory Lane) but unfortunately the RSPB has stopped collecting everyday used stamps. I will now take the stamps to the Oxfam shop in Bedford which is still happy to receive everyday stamps as well as more valuable ones. The stamps are sold to collectors worldwide and thus raise funds for the charity.

Ros Blevins

Ramblings



That, there Parish Council

We co-opted Katie Lovell to the Council at the last meeting and look forward to having our average age reduced somewhat and another dynamic to your Council. As the Chair's report has mentioned above, we also said goodbye to Gill Wiggs our long suffering Parish Clerk and Sue Beaumont, our Police Liaison Officer.

You will also have noted the plethora of village improvements which will appear over the coming months, which we look forward to seeing.

Scarecrows

...or as I originally typed...Scarecows – a different beast entirely. The Annual Scarecrow Competition run by the Church was held at the beginning of November and whilst there were fewer entrants than the last couple of years, I was pleased to see groups of parents and children tramping around the exhibits on what was a decidedly soggy day. Here are a few of them:







Remembrance Sunday

Wreaths, poppies and crosses were laid at the Village War Memorial in the grounds of All Saints Church by representatives from The Royal British Legion, the Parish Council, Central Beds Council, the Lower School and a number of other village groups and individuals.

As we currently have no rector, a short prayer service was held outside by the War Memorial lead by Gary Mudd – Church Warden. Around 50 or 60 people were in attendance.



At the going down of the sun and in the morning
We will remember them

Robert Laurence Binyon

Apparently, it's almost Christmas!

As I write this, the Christmas Lights have been switched on and this year we even have a substantial tree, located near the Church.

I am sure that we all hope that this Christmas will be a bit more normal than the last one



Developments on the Developments

As more detailed plans for the next phases of housing development are being finalised, there are consultations currently on-going (see Bec Hares' article earlier in the newsletter). We will pass on to you what results from these – in particular those around the latest phase of the Wixams Development, based around Great Thickthorn Farm (now named the Mill View Development). If you have missed the on-line consultation meetings with Present Made – the developer – you can visit their website www.millviewconsultation.com

The Royal Oak

Liz Lovell (in her capacity as a resident) has passed on an update of the Friends of the Royal Oak meeting to apply for CBC to give it the status of an Asset of Community Value.....

Hi All,

We held the first meeting of the Friends of The Royal Oak on Wednesday 3rd November. Nearly 50 people attended this meeting – ironically held in the Knife and Cleaver. It was decided to elect members of an Executive Committee and appoint some officers. It was also decided that the sole purpose of the group was to retain The Royal Oak as a trading Public House. If you would like a copy of the minutes please contact Liz Lovell at royaloakacv@gmail.com and a copy will be forwarded to you. The nomination for Royal Oak as an Asset of Community Value was resubmitted by Liz Lovell on Thursday 4th November 2021. Central Beds Community Engagement team are currently checking the submission and hope to have a decision for us by 13th January 2022; having awarded themselves additional time due to the festive period.

Liz

What would you like to see in the village?

The next Council meeting is in January and we will be focusing on budgeting for the 2022-23 financial year.

As a result, you have an opportunity to put forward suggestions for the Council's consideration, whether that be a small project or something larger that we could aim towards.

A few years ago, there was a request that we put up Christmas Lights – this we duly did and this year have added a Christmas Tree.

Any suggestions you may have can be emailed to the Parish Clerk at clerk@houghtonconquest-pc.gov.uk, or to me at hcvillagenews@gmail.com

We look forward to your input.

That's all for now, except to say have a Merry Christmas and a very Happy New Year.

Pete

THE GREEN PIECE

Good for the Planet, Good for Everyone



Welcome to “The Green Piece” – a place where we can share ideas on how to live a ‘greener’ life. Please send in suggestions.

“No one is too small to make a difference” – Greta Thunberg

I found listening to the coverage of COP26 a bit of a rollercoaster. Moments of hope with announcements of an end to deforestation by 2030, reduction in methane emissions, that countries must update their targets annually (not 5 yearly)...were dashed when India forced the wording of ‘phase out coal’ to be changed to ‘phase down coal’ and no clear action plans. It was unbelievably the first time that coal reduction has been written into the COP pledges and that biodiversity loss has also been addressed and connected to climate change, which are important steps forward, if incredibly late. Whilst it can all seem overwhelming and very scary, we have to hang onto hope. The world changed almost overnight with the Covid-19 pandemic and we saw an encouraging pulling together of communities everywhere and behaviours changing in ways no-one could have anticipated. The climate and biodiversity crises are far bigger and more complicated but we have to hack it. The alternative is too awful.

It may seem as an individual you can’t do much against global governments determined to keep on emitting carbon. But you can sign petitions, lobby politicians and keep demanding change.

Individual personal actions might not seem much but taken collectively can result in change.

One area we have control over is what and how much we consume. *'At the turn of the millennium, consumption surpassed population as our greatest environmental challenge. When it comes to climate change, species extinction, water depletion, toxic pollution, deforestation and other crises, how much each one of us consumes now matters more than how many of us there are. The average person in a rich country consumes 13x as much as the average person in a poor one. We are using up the planet at a rate 1.7x faster than it can regenerate (if everyone consumed like the average American, Qatari or Luxembourger it would be 5x faster).'*”*The Day the World Stops Shopping*” J B MacKinnon



THE FESTIVE SEASON / CHRISTMAS – without costing the Earth or being Scrooge!

We are approaching the biggest consumerist and wasteful time of year*but it doesn't have to be that way. The most important thing is to be together with family and friends. (Just because it's traditional doesn't mean you have to buy into all the paraphernalia!)

Gifts

Consider a gift of an experience rather than an item eg a meal out/theatre trip/ visit a historic house/ attraction / a walk together / massage / try pottery for a day / electronic magazine subscription A friend of mine with an extensive family enjoys the gift of a

treat every month – for her, Christmas lasts all year and creates wonderful memories.

If buying/asking for an item, ask yourself “Do they/I really need it? Will it really enhance their/my life? Aim for good quality items that will last (and may be repairable). Avoid plastic and toys and gizmos requiring batteries. Consider what the item is made of and if it’s been shipped halfway across the world. When it’s worn out, can it be recycled?

But many enjoy the fun and surprise of unwrapping a present - here are some green ideas:

Charity Shop Challenge – years ago our cash-strapped kids asked that we fix a limit on spending as they couldn’t afford much themselves and felt it wasn’t fair for us to spend lots on them - we fixed on £10 per person and stipulated that the gifts had to be purchased from charity shops and had to be something we felt the recipient would really like and use. Over the years gifts have included: china, board games, books, dvds, scarves, jewellery, toiletries ...

Book / DVD (re)visit – pick a book from your bookshelf that you think the recipient would enjoy and make time to discuss it with them after they’ve read it, revisiting and sharing your own enjoyment. Or give one of your dvds and enjoy watching it together.

Wrap the book/dvd up – the surprise is in the opening. We have fun and much laughter describing the contents through playing charades.

Wrap the gift in an unusual way. One year my son needed a water container. I popped some dried peas inside, wrapped it up

making it an odd shape. It made a wonderful thunder/waterfall sound when gently tipped.

Make your own gifts (involve the children) – cake, jam, paint a glass jar as a candle holder....

Sponsor an animal in the zoo or a rescue centre or a child's education (often you can receive regular updates on their welfare)

Donate to plant some trees (or get involved planting yourself) and enjoy visiting them if nearby

Give a charity gift to a stranger (my daughter really wanted chickens but I wasn't prepared to look after them and was also worried about foxes. Someone in Africa got a flock instead. We still gave them names and talked about them.) see Oxfam unwrapped, SendaCow and others.

Christmas Cards: it's good to keep in touch with old friends and charity cards can also support a good cause. Avoid any with foil or glitter that won't biodegrade. Consider the option of a charity e-card or sending a nice newsy email including photos of your family. Or make time for a phone, Skype or Zoom call. Do you need to give a card to those you will be seeing – surely a verbal wish is sufficient? (Used cards make good labels for next year.)

Wrapping paper – only buy ecofriendly paper without foil, or stencil brown paper yourself using friendly paint. Re-use paper from previous years. Avoid plastic sticky tape and plastic ties but use natural hessian string (eg garden twine comes in all colours) or existing hair ribbons.

Christmas trees:: real vs plastic. Real trees are more environmentally friendly as they will have absorbed carbon during their lifetime and, after use, can be chipped for re-use as mulch. Try to buy a locally grown tree rather than one that's been shipped miles. (eg Badger Hill Maulden or Greensand Trust's Rushmere Park – take a walk and visit the café at the same time). But if you already have a plastic tree, take care of it and keep using it. By the time it's too tatty there's a chance that someone will have come up with a way to recycle the plastic.

Decorations: you do not have to 'dress' your tree in this year's 'in' colours. (Blue and silver one year / red and gold the next – what a load of rubbish.) It's all a marketing ploy to get people to buy, and waste, more. Reuse the decorations you have. If you need more, collect pine cones, berries, make your own.

Fairy lights: pretty lights or pretty planet? Outdoor lights – use solar powered or restrict use of others and don't go overboard. Wildlife can be upset by too much bright light.

Other marketing ploys: Christmas jumpers (to wear on a handful of occasions only), a new dress for the party (do you honestly remember what everyone wore last year? And if someone admired your outfit, surely it is bringing them repeated pleasure to see it again?)

Food: don't overbuy. Consider carefully just how much you will realistically consume. There's always the wish to be able to provide for unexpected visitors so look for long best before dates and be sure to use up/ freeze left-overs.

Happy festive season everyone

Rosalind Blevins
ros.blevins@btinternet.com

*Here are a few shocking figures from the UK alone:

1 billion Christmas cards end up in the bin

The equivalent of 2 million turkeys are binned as a result of cooking mishap or wasted

leftovers. Together with 5 million Xmas puddings and 74 million mincepies, these contribute

to the 250,000 tonnes of food wasted each Christmas

500 tonnes of fairy lights are thrown away

81 million unwanted presents are received (many end up in landfill)

ZONITA Community Cinema *Parkside Hall, Woburn St, Ampthill MK45 2HX*

ZONITA is back! Our first three showings have gone well; we are still trying to keep you all COVID safe – socially distanced seating, trying to reduce the numbers standing in the foyer, contactless payments – and we have had good feedback from all who have attended.

We have had problems getting licences to show some of the films we wanted to show, but we hope you like the selection we have made for after Christmas. Please let us know if there are any films you would like to see included for next season.

Our next show is One Chance on the 11th December, we hope to see you there. If you can book your seats in advance, it helps us to plan the seating, but tickets are available on the door.

MATINEE PROGRAMME

Sat 11th Dec	Trolls World Tour
Sat 15th Jan	Robin Hood (Disney animation from 1973)
Sat 19th Feb	The Railway Children (original 1970 with Jenny Agutter)
Sat 12th Mar	The Jungle Book (Original 1967 film)
Sat 2nd Apr	E.T. (Subject to licence confirmation)

Doors open 1:15PM, Show starts 2:00PM
Adults: £3 – Children: £3

EVENING PROGRAMME

Sat 11th Dec	One Chance
Sat 15th Jan	The Favourite (Olivia Coleman, Emma Stone, Rachel Weisz)
Sat 19th Feb	Me Before You (Emilia Clarke, Sam Claflin, Charles Dance)
Sat 12th Mar	The Intern (Robert De Niro, Anne Hathaway)
Sat 2nd Apr	Lawrence of Arabia (1962, with Peter O'Toole, Alec Guinness, Anthony Quinn)

Doors open 6:15PM, Show starts 7:00PM
Adults: £5 – Children: £3

TABLES can be reserved free of charge via email or Facebook.
Licensed bar, popcorn, ice creams and a full range of refreshments

www.zonita.org.uk email: **info@zonita.org.uk**

www.facebook.com/zonita.cinema



The Jigsaw Club Amphill

Are you disabled or feeling socially isolated due to a lack of mobility?

The Jigsaw Club meets fortnightly on a Thursday evening, from about 7pm until 9.30pm and provides a varied programme of entertainment, activities, speakers and outings; refreshments are also provided. We have three wheelchair adapted minibuses, one of which could pick you up from your home in Houghton Conquest or Stewartby.

If you would like more information or would like to come along and give the Club a try telephone Sue on 07886459225.

For the more able of you who may be interested, volunteer members are always welcome to drive or escort on the minibuses or help support our disabled members, for example with their mobility, or even by just chatting to them.

If you are interested in helping telephone Sue on 07886459225.



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Patch tests are required

Banking Scams

Bank Customers urged to stop, hang up and call 159 to check calls are for real.

To help in the fight against fraud and scams, **Stop Scams UK** together with banks and telecom companies have introduced a new service where you can call 159 to get through to your bank if you are concerned you may be being scammed.

Last year criminal gangs stole over £470m from individuals and small businesses by pretending to be a bank or other service provider, encouraging them to make a payment or transfer money.

Fraudsters will often contact customers impersonating banks and other trusted organisations trying to convince you that they're genuine. They use several techniques to do this and will often encourage you to call numbers they've provided in texts or emails or to rely on the number they're calling from, which can be faked. Once they've gained your trust they'll trick you into moving your money or handing over your personal details.

When should you use 159?

If you receive a suspicious call, text or email that appears to be from your bank or if you think someone is impersonating your bank, you should **stop, hang up and call 159**. It's a simple, memorable number and will help ensure you they can contact your bank, without relying on phone numbers that could have been provided by a criminal. As well as using 159, you can still use the number on the back of your card to contact your bank.

It's another great tool to help 'break the spell' and stop, challenge, and protect yourself and your money, stopping fraudsters in their tracks.

Who is behind 159?

159 has been set up by banks and telephone companies who want to fight fraud. It's a pilot scheme which will run for 12 months. The following banks are currently signed up:

- Barclays
- Lloyds (including Halifax and Bank of Scotland)
- NatWest (including Royal Bank of Scotland and Ulster Bank)
- Santander
- Starling Bank

That covers over 70% of UK primary current account holders and they hope that more will sign up over the course of the pilot.

Will it work on my telephone?

Almost all major consumer telephone companies are participating, and over 80% of UK mobiles and landlines will be able to use 159 at the outset. StopScams UK are also working to grow this reach to 100% during the pilot. Please be aware that the calls are charged at the standard national rate

The initial telephone companies are:

- BT, including EE and Plusnet
- Gamma
- O2, including giffgaff
- TalkTalk
- Three
- Virgin Media
- Sky

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**Please sign up via our
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(14 day cooling off period applies)



Amphill Music Centre
9.30am to 12.30pm
Bedborne Upper School
Flitwick Road
Amphill MK45 2NU

Biggleswade Music Centre
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Stanton Upper School
Eagle Farm Road
Biggleswade SG18 6JH

Leighton Linslade Music Centre includes Music Making for those with learning difficulties.

Leighton Linslade Music Centre
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Vandyke Upper School
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Leighton Buzzard
LU7 3DY



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Information is correct at the time of going to press.

CENTRAL_21



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A note from your Editor...

We are always happy to receive your articles/comments/concerns/reports on events and hopefully I have included as many of these as I can.

Contact details are as follows:

Email: hcvillagenews@gmail.com

A note through my letterbox at 38 Victoria Drive or
call or text me on 07748 187069

Pete Bullock

Editor

Please note:

Whilst the cost of the Village Newsletter is kindly funded by the Parish Council, the articles in this newsletter are not necessarily the opinion of either the Parish Council or the editor. Editorial comments are completely independent of and not a reflection of the views of the Parish Council. Letters and articles for inclusion are welcomed, subject to the standard appropriate editorial control. Any questions for the Parish Council should be directed at the Clerk to the Parish Council.

USEFUL CONTACTS

Around the Village

ART SOCIETY	Karen Moynihan	Email: houghtonconquestartsociety@outlook.com
CARE GROUP	Sue Derrick	07886 459225
FRIENDS OF ALL SAINTS CHURCH	Carol Juffs	381393
GARDEN CLUB	Margaret Whalley	740892
HOUGHTON PIONEERS	Liz Thompson	07810 298069
INDOOR BOWLS	Monica Mannings	743345
JIGSAW CLUB	Sue Derrick	07886 459225
VILLAGE HALL BOOKINGS	Christine Dean	741182
WOMENS' INSTITUTE	Shirley Johnson	740265
YOGA	Lisa Van Calsteren	07581 242895

Contacts outside the Village

AIRPORT (London Luton)	01582 405100
BEDFORD HOSPITAL	01234 355122
BUSES (Grant Palmer)	01525 719719
CHURCHES	
C of E	TBA
Methodist - Rev. Silas Wood	01525 571392
D.H.S.S. - (Bedford)	01234 365155
SCHOOLS	
Lower School - Houghton Conquest	01234 740202
Middle - Stewartby	01234 768224
Senior - Wootton	01234 767123
Holywell School - Cranfield	01234 750381
LIBRARIES Bedford	01234 718178
Ampt Hill	0300 300 8053
Flitwick	0300 300 8057
ELECTRICITY (UK Power Networks) General Enquiries	0800 029 4285
ELECTRICITY (UK Power Networks) Power Cuts	0800 316 3105 or just 105
ANGLIAN WATER	08457 145145

HIGHWAYS Dept. (Helpline)	0300 300 8049
Forest of Marston Vale	01234 767037
Central Beds Council	0300 300 8000
POLICE (Emergency only!)	999
County H.Q.	01234 841212
Incidents needing non-urgent response	101
Reporting Anti-Social behaviour	101
Crimestoppers	0800 555 111
RAILWAY STATIONS	
Travel Enquiries	0345 748 4950
Silverline	01923 207258
Bedford station	0345 748 4950
Flitwick station	0345 748 4950
DOCTORS	
Ampthill - Houghton Close Surgery	01525 300898
- Oliver St Surgery	01525 631395
- Greensands Surgery	01525 631390
Kempston	01234 852222
REGISTRATION	

Marriage & archives	01525 403430
Births & Deaths	0300 300 8089.

Should any of the above contacts be incorrect, changed or if additions are required please contact the Parish Clerk or email hcvillagenews@gmail.com. Amendments will be made in the next Issue.