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Editorial by Mick Ridley and James Read

Our cover picture this month brings the colours and vibrancy of the countryside around the village to every letterbox in Meppershall. We hope you will get out and see it for yourself in these hot summer months!



Take a stroll to the top of Crackle Hill (at the back of the new village hall) to admire the view to Campton and beyond. Walk around the back of the church and Manor House to see the spectacular buttercup meadow at this time of year; or walk further afield, down via Shillington Bury and across the vale to the Chilterns at Pegsdon, Hexton and Barton.

The cover picture includes the beautiful pinky-purple wild flowers of the mallow plant. Known by the Latin name *Malva Sylvestris*, it is believed to have been cultivated by the Romans who used it in both food and medicine. It is also a food plant for caterpillars of the 'Painted Lady' butterfly and you will see plenty of those beautiful black, white and red creatures fluttering around on the wild edges of the village over the summer. Mallow is an abundant wild plant in our area but no less beautiful for that. It gets a mention in the poem inspired by our local landscape which you can find on page 22 – *"Bedfordshire June"*.

The cover photo shows the route to Shillington via Shillington Bury, heading south-west from the village from the back of the church and Manor House. The bench and viewpoint at the top of Shillington Road, where it drops down the hill, are another starting point for walks south via the edge of Chibley Farm, connecting with Stondon Road into Shillington and offering connecting paths to Pirton and onward into the Chilterns including Deacon Hill at Pegsdon Hills Nature Reserve.

At the back of the Village Hall, Crackle Hill opens the route to Campton. Adjacent paths across to Polehanger Farm connect to Shefford. You can combine these into a loop walk through Polehanger Wood down along the River Hit – but if you need more of a ramble, keep going through Campton and out the other side through Campton Plantation beside the council offices. From here, a path skirts RAF Chicksands and connects with the Bunyan Trail to Haynes. Ambitious souls can follow the Bunyan Trail all the way to Bedford through some beautiful, quiet and often overlooked corners of the county – rich with red kites, buzzards, muntjac deer and views right across Bedford.

Why not get out in the countryside this summer? You'll probably need OS Explorer Maps (Sheets 193 and 208). And a flask of tea. Meppershall has at least one walking group (@MeppershallStrollers) which can offer advice and guidance if you need pointing in the right direction. It's beautiful, and it's free.

Letters to the Editors

Dear Editors

We would like to thank the residents of Meppershall for their continuing support and trust in helping Mark and I to be reselected as their ward councillors for the Central Bedfordshire Unitary Council for the next four years. We will endeavour to honour that trust and ensure that Meppershall is totally considered / represented in all aspects that could affect the village in any way. Should any of your residents wish to raise an issue of concern that we may be able to help with then they can contact us as detailed below.

Mark 07719916159 Tony 07586056650 or at shefford.conservatives@gmail.com

Dear Editors

It was a great privilege and honour to be asked by Kim Tyler to be a judge at The Easter Bonanza and Easter Bonnet competition. This was held on Good Friday, 2019 at our fabulous new village hall.

There were over 40 fantastic entries, all so creative and brilliantly made. It made it very difficult for me to choose a winner. But I think it's about taking part and being creative. You were all good sports for joining in and I hope everyone enjoyed it as much as I did.

Well done to everyone who took part and to Kim, Lorraine and Lorez for doing such a great job.

Elsie Lawrence

Meppershall Messenger Annual General Meeting



All Welcome!

Got ideas for The Messenger?
Or feedback on what you want
to see? Want to get involved in
your village magazine? Or just
want to find out more?

**Everyone is welcome
at our annual AGM.**

Thursday 13th June 2019 7.30pm. At St Mary's Church.

Meppershall Fair

Saturday September 7th 2019, 15:30 till late – Meppershall Village Hall



It is with great pleasure that the organising committee are delighted to announce the return of the Meppershall Fair! We took a year off in 2018 due to the building of our fabulous new Village Hall and, even though we still do not have access to the field behind the Hall this year, we can use all of the facilities of the Hall in addition to the surrounding land.

So, what do we have in store? We are still in the midst of finalising all of our attractions but as before we want to ensure that the Fair is free and provides enjoyment for all ages.

Some of the attractions include:

- Lifestyle and craft stalls
- Pop up outdoor cinema with large screen and cinema sound – we'll need you all to bring your singing voices!
- Have-a-go Maypole
- Giant Bubbles
- Children's games and activities
- Refreshments and full bar
- Food stalls
- Raffle

...and in the evening Meppershall's favourite rock covers band, RF2, will be playing a full set in the Village Hall.

There is more to come but put the date in your diary and we look forward to seeing the whole village on 7th September!



Parish Church of St Mary The Virgin (Church of England)

Church Road, off Campton Road, Meppershall

www.stmarysmeppershall.org.uk † facebook.com/stmarysmeppershall



Rector: The Reverend Veronica Goodman

01462 339962 – ronigoodman@gmail.com – usual day off Monday

Churchwardens:

Dawn Abbatt 01462 816962 Chris Valentine 01462 815971

Email: Meppershall.PCC@gmail.com

PCC Secretary:

Anne Parsons 01462 813333 Email: annie10639@gmail.com

Message from St Mary's...

June is here already - the blossom is out - (as I write) the fields turned gold - the sun shining (some of the time at least!) - and summer is almost here.

Of course, the sun and the showers are making the grass grow lush and green and in need of cutting! We are now short of volunteer mowers for the Churchyard - if that could be you, please do get in touch with me - as many hands do "make light work".

The church celebrates Pentecost on the 9th June this year. Many will remember it perhaps more often being called Whitsun or Whitsunday in the past.

50 days after Easter we find the disciples gather in one place...

*"when suddenly from heaven there came a sound like the rush of a violent wind, and it filled the entire house where they were sitting. **3** Divided tongues, as of fire, appeared among them, and a tongue rested on each of them. **4** All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other languages, as the Spirit gave them ability. **5** Now there were devout Jews from every nation under heaven living in Jerusalem. **6** And at this sound the crowd gathered and was bewildered, because each one heard them speaking in the native language of each. **7** Amazed and astonished, they asked, "Are not all these who are speaking Galileans? **8** And how is it that we hear, each of us, in our own native language?"*

At Pentecost we celebrate the promised coming of the Holy Spirit on the disciples - giving them the boldness and the gifts they needed to spread the Good News of Jesus throughout Jerusalem and to the far corners of the earth. It is a crucial final chapter in our story; the story which seemed to begin with the visit of the Angel Gabriel to a

virgin called Mary (although it actually began way back in the beginning...), continued with the birth of her child in a stable in Bethlehem, followed his life and ministry to an ignominious end on a cross on a hillside between two thieves. But that was not the end. After that he rose again on the third day as he had said and was seen by many alive over the next forty days until he ascended to his Father in heaven promising that his followers should wait to be “clothed with power from on high” Lk24:49 which they were 10 days later.

Many today if they know the story at all, know most about Christmas - maybe a little about Easter - and not much about what comes between Christmas and Easter - or much about what comes after Easter.

It is Good News that still needs people brave enough and bold enough to pass on the message - witnesses alive with the joy of the Lord and the power of the Spirit so that their message will not be 2000 year old “old news” but truly Good News full of joy and hope and promise and challenge still for our lives and our time.

If you never have, or you haven’t recently, maybe it is time to dare to read the Gospel of Luke and the book of the Acts of the Apostles, asking the Holy Spirit to Bring the Word of God alive in you. And you know what? As I come back to work - it might just be the right time for me to take my own advice...

As the Diocesan Living God’s Love prayer says

“....Holy Spirit
make us heralds of Good News.
Stir us, strengthen us,
teach and inspire us
to live your love
with generosity and joy
imagination and courage;
for the sake of your world
And in the name of Jesus. Amen”

With best wishes, Rector Roni



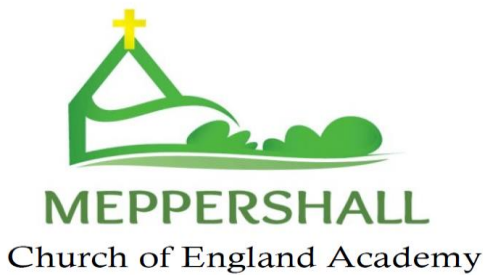
**St Mary’s Church, Meppershall
Junior Church**

Join us on
Sunday 2 June (11am)
at St Mary’s Church
(ages 3 to 12)

Church Services and Events – June 2019

At St Mary's unless stated below

Date	Time	Service / Event
Sunday 2 nd June 7 th of Easter	11.00am 6.30pm	Holy Communion, plus Junior Church. Thy Kingdom Come - Praying for the Spirit
Weds 5 th June	10.00am	Holy Communion
Sunday 9 th June Pentecost	8.30am 11.00am 2.15pm	Holy Communion Morning Worship – all welcome! Second Sunday Stroll – meet at the church gate to walk to Pirton ending at the Motte & Bailey pub. Just under 4 miles. More info / lift coordination: tel. 857836.
Monday 10 th June	7.15pm for 7.30 start	Bible Society: God promises restoration and renewal (Jeremiah chapters 30-33). Revd Lorna Valentine, at St Michael's, Shefford.
Tuesday 11 th June	2-4pm	Rectory Tea - Chat and a cuppa, all welcome
Weds 12 th June	10.00am	Holy Communion
Thursday 13 th June	7.30pm	St Mary'
Friday 14 th June	9pm	Silent Together Enjoy the presence of God in the tranquillity of the church - 30 mins.
Sunday 16 th June Trinity Sunday	8.30am 11.00am	Holy Communion Morning Worship – All Welcome!
Weds 19 th June	10.00am	Holy Communion
Saturday 22 nd June	9.00am	Celtic Morning Prayer (breakfast from 8ish)
Sunday 23 rd June 1 st after Trinity	11.00am	Holy Communion, plus Junior Church.
Tuesday 25 th June	2-4pm	Rectory Tea - Chat and a cuppa, all welcome
Weds 26 th June	10.00am	Holy Communion
Sunday 30 th June 2 nd after Trinity	11.00am	United Benefice Service (with our friends from St Michael's, Shefford) at St Mary's, Meppershall, with breakfast from 10am.



by Caroline Sledge

How can we serve you and the community?

One of the joys I have had over the past year has been getting to know the community to which the school belongs. Much of what we all focus on in school day-to-day goes on within our school building and grounds, yet I have become increasingly aware of how much our links with the wider community shapes who we are and what we do. Being part of this growing community is a core part of who we are. I am convinced we have much to offer each other.

As a Church of England School, we naturally have close links with St Mary's Church, from regular Collective Worship led by one of the team there and support from Revd Roni, to Harvest, Christmas and Easter services led by the children in church. We have a link with the care home and at Christmas our choir sang to the residents. We have appreciated the support from Roger's Bakery in giving our youngest children a bread baking session there.

We are currently talking to the children about how small acts of service for each other can have great impact. Our thinking has turned to the many ways in which people in our community serve us and others, including for example, the Brownie pack and those who sit on the parish Council and village hall group. To help the children understand how others serve them we have invited a representative from the local food bank to talk to the children, along with some of those parents who have jobs in the emergency or armed services.

There are of course many other acts of service happening daily in the community of which we may be unaware. If there is anything you think you could offer us, from reading, sewing or knitting with the children to helping with gardening and tidying our school grounds we would love to hear from you. Also, many village residents have lived here all their lives and would have lots of memories to share with us about the changes over the years. We would love to hear from you as you could add richly to the children's learning.

Equally, next year we will begin focusing on the ways in which the children can serve the community. We hope to develop a greater involvement in serving our community with some leadership development opportunities for the children. If you know of any ways in which we may be able to help, we would love to know. The more opportunities we know of, the more the children can have the choice about what and how they could best serve others in our community. Together we can make a difference. Thank you.

Caroline Sledge



Croudace
HOMES.CO.UK

June Ponderings

We are all really enjoying the summer term here at Preschool, with lots of activities going on outside to make the most of the fine weather. We have been exploring bubble wands, pulling each other around in the radio flyer, whizzing down the slide, and even having some umbrella fun in the rain.

Our topic this term is 'Changes'. In May we looked at Growing, Healthy Eating, Nutrition, Germs and Oral Hygiene. The children made sausage rolls, coleslaw, cheese straws and egg and cress sandwiches. The cress grown here at Preschool. The children have really enjoyed baking, preparing food and making fruit smoothies. We recently did two experiments, the skittle experiment and the bread experiment. With the bread experiment we gave the children two pieces of bread. One of which they touched with dirty hands and one with clean hands. Both pieces of bread were then put into separate plastic bags and labelled. We are watching each bag to see what happens and how germs spread and develop. With the skittle experiment we placed different coloured skittles round the edge of two plates, then poured cold water onto one, and hot onto the other, observing the rainbow effect afterwards. We discussed the changes we could see happening. We also looked through magazines at pictures of different foods asking the children to sort them into healthy and unhealthy groups. Cutting and sticking the pictures into their groups.

Thank you to everyone who attended our Annual General Meeting on Thursday 16th May. We now have three new committee members. Laura, Wendy and Rebecca. Staff and Committee wish you a warm welcome to the team. We would also like to thank Amelia's nanny for providing the children at Preschool with sunflower seedlings. And finally thank you to everyone who filled the Bag's to School bags to help support the Preschool.

Important Dates

27/05/2019 - 31/05/2019 – Half Term Preschool Starts: 03/06/2019
07/06/2019 - Sports Day which will take place at Meppershall Care home
15/06/2019 - Father's Day Breakfast
17/07/2019 - End of Term Party
19/07/2019 - End of Term show

The highly qualified diverse team at Meppershall Pre-school is dedicated to offering the best possible care to all our children by creating a safe and stimulating environment, encompassing all individual needs.

We are currently open every weekday from 9am till 3pm and welcome all children from in and around the surrounding areas. (term time only)

Many of our sessions this term are full. Please ring Tamsin on 07816 357159, or email meppershallps@gmail.com, to enroll your child or join our waiting list. You can also visit our fantastic new website: www.meppershallps.co.uk for more information.



Walnut Tree Café by Karen and Viv

Your local independent café

Walnut Tree cafe has now been open for 5 months and we have received fantastic support and lovely reviews. Thank you so much.

It's been a massive learning curve for us both, to set up and run our own catering business. Firstly, we needed to secure the backing of the Village Hall Committee to hire an area within the hall and to have the facilities needed to run a cafe fitted in during the build. Then much research went into finding good coffee and teas but also to establish fair and reasonable prices. We always wanted to support local suppliers and so the fact we had a very good cake baker and bakery on our doorstep made life easy. Many of you have commented on how nice it is that we are supporting local businesses. The cafe has certainly had its ups and downs but the fact that so many of you enjoy the facility rewards the hard work.

We have been overwhelmed by the success of the Craft Club and a massive thank you goes to Kim, Lorraine and Diane for setting this up and running it every Wednesday morning from 10.00 – 12.00.

We also now have a Sit/Stretch/Relax group running every 2nd Tuesday in the month from 10 – 10.40 and a Book Club running every 3rd Tuesday of the month.

If you have an interest you would like to share with others please pop in and see us – maybe a Board games club, an old cars club...?

With all the clubs that run within the Cafe there is no fee to attend, only that attendees purchase a drink from the Cafe.

After reviewing the usage of the cafe over our first 5 months, we have decided to amend our opening times slightly. From the beginning of June, the cafe will open from 9.10 – 2.30 every Monday to Friday (last food and drink orders at 2pm). Monday is often our quietest day so we are looking into the possibility of closing to normal trading on certain Mondays and holding pre-booked specials, such as Afternoon Tea. We would welcome your feedback on this idea.

Many thanks again for your continued support.

Meppershall Social Club by Lisa Frost

If you have recently moved into the village come and check out the Social Club. Everyone is welcome. We are open:

5pm - midnight Monday to Friday

12 noon - midnight Saturday and Sunday.

There are a number of regular events held which include: Bingo on a Friday Night (eyes down at 7.30pm); Barbeques; Quiz Nights - 3rd Sunday of the Month; Karaoke - 2nd Saturday of the month; Discos & Vinyl Nights.

We are fortunate to have a snooker table and a pool table in the games area right near the Social Club Bar. We also have a number of crib and domino players who play in a local league and hope to restart our darts team soon. Pool, snooker and darts are available most weekdays from 5pm, and midday on most weekends.

We have lots of live sporting events coming up on our screens - ask at the bar for further details.

Our next live event is a **Take That** tribute act on 6 July.

Coming Up In 2019	
DATE	EVENT DETAILS (Timings TBC)
Rev. date 6 July	Take That Tribute – Live music
17 August	Michael Buble Tribute – Live music
14 September	Charity Quiz Night
21 September	Frankie's Guys – Live music
16 November	Michael Jackson Tribute – Live music
21 December	Soul & Motown – Live Music

These live events will cost £10 - £20 per ticket.

For more information on these events phone Helen on 07989 914 941.

MEPPERSHALL GIN CLUB



Let the evening
BE GIN!
Gin tasting evening

A social evening
of gin and nibbles,
come and find
a new fave gin!

Meppershall Village Hall 8pm Saturday 22nd June
Booking required Tickets £20
available on eventbrite or from dawn.abbatt@gmail.com

Shefford Leisure Group by Enid Pamment

During the month of May we have a few trips and outings taking place, unfortunately reporting on these outings will have to wait until the July newsletter, we just hope they will be enjoyable for all and the weather fine and dry, especially for the boat trip, near Chelmsford in Essex!!



The 'Classical Spectacular' proved very popular last November, so with this in mind, when I saw it advertised, I decided to book tickets early to ensure we had good seats, the date is November 24th and a few tickets have been sold already, this is for the matinee performance! During this year and into 2020, there are shows at the Milton Keynes Theatre which I thought you would enjoy.

On June 12th (Wednesday) it is our 'Shefford Leisure Group's 'Get Together' at the Stondon Golf Club. This event is the only gathering of the year where members and friends are able to meet, enjoy a scrumptious tea, present our cheque to a representative from Keech Hospice Care for Children. Also, there is a tombola, some of the prizes have been donated by local shops and businesses in the area. The time is 2pm until 4pm. If you would like to come just telephone me (01462 851397) and book yourself in. This year we will also have a guest speaker, a director from 'Go Cruise' Martin Hay who will answer any questions you would like to fire at him! We hope the weather will be kind so we can admire the golf course from the building.

With the Summer weather ahead of us, the gardens looking a treat with their summer flowers, people spend more time outside where you can meet each other. On behalf of our 'Leisure Group', I do hope you all have a lovely month of June and able to achieve all you have planned. If you are taking your Summer break, hopefully travelling will be pleasant and hope everything is as you would like it. Next month will be July and the schools will be breaking up, exams all out of the way and able to spend a little time the way you want to.

Wishing you all good health and an enjoyable Summer.

Enid x

FORTHCOMING EVENTS PLANNED FOR 2019

CAMDEN MARKET – Sunday 2nd June – Camden Lock Market by the Canal, was the original craft market established in 1974, but now has a much wider spectrum of goods on sale. Both this and the ever-popular Camden Stables Market – centre of the alternative fashion scene. coach leaving at 8.30am.

ANNUAL 'GET-TOGETHER' – Wednesday 12th June 2019 – Time 2pm to 4pm. – Representative from Keech Hospice Care for children where we will present our annual cheque. Also, we are expecting a visit from 'Go Cruise' Company Director Martin Hay who has kindly offered to join us and answer any questions on Ocean or River Cruises, there will also be a Tombola, accompanied with an enjoyable afternoon tea, set in lovely surroundings at Mount Pleasant Golf Club, in Stondon.

WISBECH ROSE FAIR – Thursday 4th July – Last year the visit to Wisbech Rose Fair proved very popular and everyone really enjoyed their day, so why not join us this year and see what they do to make this event so popular. The coach will leave Shefford at 9am

VINTAGE ESSEX – Sunday 21st July 2019 – Leaving Shefford at 9am making our way to Chelmsford. In partnership with Lodges Coaches of High Easter near Chelmsford, we bring Vintage Essex.

A very entertaining new day out for groups who like to see a lot without walking too far! We spend an afternoon at the Lodge HQ in the Essex Rodings. This trip includes morning refreshments and a ploughman's lunch, where you will see the collection of old coaches immaculately restored 1940's 1950's. They also have 'chitty bang bang (not the flying one)! We will also visit to the chocolate box village of Finchingfield before homeward bound., there will be time for a 'cuppa' before returning home, hopefully by 6.30pm.

MANCHESTER – LIVERPOOL Monday 29th July – Friday 2nd August 2019. Our hotel is the Best Western Cresta Court Hotel with en-suite facilities. The hotel is adjacent to the famous Trafford Centre. The holiday includes a Blue Badge Guided coach tour and a cruise on the Manchester Ship Canal plus a visit to Liverpool and Port Sunlight Village. Bookings still being taken. Twin rooms still available. For further details please contact Enid.

ANNUAL TRIP TO THE SEASIDE - Sunday 11th August, 2019. Leaving Shefford at 9am. We have planned our annual trip to Hunstanton – so buckets and spades at the ready! Unfortunately, last year this trip was cancelled due to a spate of very bad weather (surprise surprise! Especially after the Summer we experienced!) so hopefully we will have a lovely day out and be able to enjoy the sunshine (and the fish & chips!). We anticipate arriving back to Shefford by 6pm.

STOWE HOUSE & GARDENS – Sunday 8th September 2019. We will leave Shefford at 9am so we arrive at our destination for coffee and a tour of the house & school which can be quite amusing, afterwards we re-board our coach to take us to the gardens which is a National Trust property. There is also a cafeteria and superb grounds. *(All National Trust members, don't forget your cards).*

ELTHAM PALACE & THAMES RIVER CRUISE – Sunday 13th October 2019 – Leaving Shefford at 9am. *(this is an English Heritage Property entrance for members cheaper, so don't forget your English Heritage card).* We will tour the house as an invited guest of the 'Caurtaulds' This house is full of quirky details. After the tour we are off to Greenwich where we can find a 'spot of lunch' before meeting our one-hour cruise taking us to the Thames Barrier taking us past the Docklands and the old Millenium Dome where you can see the vast new developments. You can purchase a 'cuppa' before we get back to Greenwich to re-board our coach for the homeward journey back to Shefford.

BRICK LANE MUSIC HALL – Thursday 7th November – A Wartime Music Hall, which includes a lunch. Brick Lane Music Hall is re-housed in Silvertown and has become synonymous with British music hall. *(This is an event organised by our colleagues Stevenage Group Travel).*

THURSFORD CHRISTMAS SPECTACULAR – Sunday 17th November Leaving Shefford at 9am. Will return to Shefford by 9pm. Stopping on route at Elvedon for the outwood journey and a Fish & Chip restaurant on our way home.

CLASSICAL SPECTACULAR – Sunday 24th November – London Philharmonic Orchestra at the Royal Albert Hall. Arena Seats rows B.C.D & E – matinee performance including the 1812 overture.

COCKNEY CHRISTMAS MATINEE – Tuesday 10th December 2019. Leaving Shefford at 9.30am for lunch at 12noon. Held on the Tereza-Joanne in London's Royal Docks (E16 2QY) which includes a Christmas lunch. The coach will leave for homeward bound by 4pm.

JOHN RUTTER'S CHRISTMAS CELEBRATION – (Matinee) Wednesday 11th December 2018. Royal Albert Hall - Leaving Shefford approx. 11am.

LONDON SHOWS CURRENTLY AVAILABLE

(organised in conjunction with Stevenage Group Travel) – 2019

Kindly note: Shefford is not a regular pick-up point however arrangements may be made to transport you to either Baldock, Letchworth or Hitchin to collect the coach, this depends solely on how many people require Shefford as a pick up for any particular show.

TINA TURNER – THE MUSICAL – (Evening Performance) Tuesday 4th June – The Aldwych Theatre – Coach leaves Shefford at 4pm. *(Fully booked)*

MAN OF LA MANCHA (MATINEE) Wednesday 5th June Returns to the London Coliseum Award winning Musical – Stall Seats. Coach leaving Shefford at 10.30am.

THE PLANETS: Sunday 30th June – Royal Philharmonic Orchestra. An HD Odyssey. Gaze in wonder as breath taking NASA images and footage are projected onto a giant screen complementing Holst's awe-inspiring suite. The Planets inspired by the system featuring the much-loved movements *Mars and Jupiter*. Hear other well-known themes, synonymous with outer space including *Star Wars*. Nick Davies is the Conductor – Royal Albert Hall – Arena or Circle Seats. Coach will leave Shefford at 3pm.

9 – 5 THE MUSICAL (MATINEE) – Wednesday 10th July 2019. – Dolly Parton's rollicking musical. Savoy Theatre, Dress Circle seats. Coach leaving Shefford at 10.30am. *(Fully booked, reserve list only)*

THE BEAUTY OF TCHAIKOVSKY – Wednesday 2nd October 2019 – A sensational new concert, featuring dancers from the Birmingham Royal Ballet at the Royal Albert Hall. Coach leaves Shefford at 4pm.

Please telephone for prices and availability of any holidays, outings or shows listed above.

Kindly Note: Trips marked with a * have been arranged by Stevenage Group Travel.

If there are only a few people booking their trips, so save time their 'regular' pickups are Baldock, Letchworth, Hitchin and Stevenage as sometimes it is not viable for a coach to come to Shefford first and makes it difficult for driver's hours etc. We do hope you understand.

For all holidays, including transport from Shefford and hotel accommodation, Shefford Leisure Group acts as an agent for the Tour Operator; their terms and conditions apply.

Shefford Leisure Group is open to everyone in the local community, who feel they would like to join us on our ventures and see places they would not see under their own steam. We are always happy to meet new friends.

Raffles are held and all the proceeds are for Keech Hospice Care for Children. For further information regarding dates, prices and availability or to receive our monthly newsletter, please contact Enid (phone number below) or e-mail enid.pamment@gmail.com.

Looking forward to meeting you,

Enid Pamment – Shefford Leisure Group

Telephone: 01462 851397



Meppershall Players at S.T.M.A.



Help! It's June and with our show just four weeks away we are now all biting our finger nails (filthy habit boys & girls so try not to do it) which is the same panic up we have every time we get near to our performance. Why? I hear you ask. Nerves, yes, we don't save them just for the performance, we worry because we don't want to let the rest of the cast down and we want to give our audience a great show, so sometimes the more we panic the more we care. It's all good fun (saves on nail polish too).

So, if you would like to see our bitten nail polish free fingers come and see our summer production "An Evening of Entertainment" to be performed at Shefford Town Memorial Hall (S.T.M.A) on Friday 28th & Saturday 29th June. Tickets on sale now from <https://www.ticketsource.co.uk/themeppershallplayers> (there is a small charge per ticket when booking on line) or if you're not on line call 01462 816336 or pop into the S.T.M.A hall on Monday evenings between 7.30pm - 9.30pm Tickets £10 Concessions £8.

For this production the audience will be seated at tables in a cabaret style evening and we encourage you to bring your own supper for your own enjoyment. The S.T.M.A Social Club provides an excellent bar and hot beverages will be available too.

Don't forget we now meet at 7.30pm on Monday evenings at the S.T.M.A and welcome any new members who want to join in the fun of any or all aspects of theatrical performances.

If you want to join our merry band of thespians whether it's on or off the stage contact Karen on the number below or pop in and see us on Monday evenings 7.30pm-10pm at The STMA (Junior members usually finish at 9pm due to school the next day).

Sat 1st June Players at the S.T.M.A summer fete 1pm-5pm

Fri 28th & Sat 29th June Summer Production at S.T.M.A

Fri 29th & Sat 30th November Cinderella Panto 2019 at S.T.M.A

Sat 11th & Sat 18th January 2020 Cinderella Panto Venues T.B.C

You can find the Meppershall Players on Facebook (Meppershall Players Community), Instagram, and Twitter.

The Players meet Monday evenings 7.30pm-10pm at Shefford Town Memorial Hall. Membership is currently free and we welcome people to indulge in all areas of theatrical performances, set building, costumes, directing, acting, make-up, song & dance, etc. Interested? We look forward to meeting you.

Karen Mitchell (Players' Secretary) 01462 816336

The Meppershall Players Present

An Evening of Entertainment

On Friday 28th & Saturday 29th June
Curtains up 7:45pm

At Shefford Town Memorial Hall

Tickets £10 Concessions £8

Available to purchase from
ticketsource.co.uk/themeppershallplayers

Mondays 7.30pm-9.30pm at STMA
or call 01462 816336 to reserve only

Table Seating - 8 per table

Feel free to bring your own nibbles

All drinks to be purchased from licensed STMA bar



Clophill Heritage Trust Update

This month we have welcomed several hundred new residents to the Eco Lodge site: Bees! A swarm of bees was safely collected locally and has been housed in one of the empty Eco Lodge hives, so far, they seem content in their new home and it was fitting as the 20th May was World Bee Day!

At this time of year, it is common to see a swarm of honey bees that will settle on trees, bushes, signs or sheds. If you should find a swarm please notify one of the Swarm Collectors from the Bedfordshire Beekeepers Association <https://www.bedsbka.org.uk/swarm-collectors/> who will come and collect the swarm into a travel hive, they will then be moved to a new home in a nearby vacant hive (for honey bees only). If you would like more information about any types of bee or swarming, they have lots on their website.

We are thrilled to announce another new resident; our new On-Site Warden Louise. She has moved into the Warden's Lodge and is already hard at work championing new menus for our café which include gluten & dairy free options.

Throughout the summer we will be running guided walks identifying medicinal, edible & interesting plants and we are lucky to have resident expert Kate Gardner leading these. She has been hard at work trying out many different uses for plants; some obvious and some very surprising, and will have samples available for you to try at every walk. We also stock various jams, chutneys and jellies from Dragon's Kitchen that are available to buy at any time. For a full list of walks and to book please see www.clophillecolodges.co.uk/events or call us on 07935 911207.

And remember, you can book a tour of Old St Mary's Church & Tower at any time by going to www.ClophillEcoLodges.co.uk/book-a-tower-tour

Next Events:

30	Sun Jun	Sunday Brunch & Teas
30	Sun Jun	Guided Walk - Medicinal & Edible Pla...
12	Fri Jul	Prosecco & Pamper Night
28	Sun Jul	Sunday Teas

Financial Matters by Paul Savuto

Planning your pension in the new world of work

Not long ago, work meant a 9-to-5 role, probably spent with the same employer and ending abruptly when you reached retirement age. Things are very different today. People tend to move jobs more frequently and many more of us are self-employed, thanks to the rise of the gig economy. Those past State Pension age are much more likely to still be in employment, perhaps choosing to work less hours or even embark on a new career. Equally, the change in pension rules that came into effect in 2015 means that if you want to retire at 55, you can do so. Thanks also to strides in modern medicine, many can look forward to a retirement that could last a good few decades.

Taking control of your future

Whatever your stage of working life, we believe it's never been as important as it is now, to take professional advice about your pension. To enjoy a comfortable retirement, especially if you plan to retire early, you need to have saved enough to make this a reality. The tax breaks available on pension contributions (subject to the Annual and Lifetime Allowances) act as a clear incentive to save as much as you can comfortably afford.

Know your numbers

Reviewing your pension arrangements with us will help keep your plans on track, as will drawing up a budget of your likely income needs in retirement. Getting a State Pension forecast makes sense too.

Plans to match your needs

Pension plans come in various forms to suit the needs of different types of worker, from the basic State Pension to Self-Invested Personal Pensions (SIPPs), personal or private pensions, and workplace pensions schemes, to name but a few. So, whether you're self-employed, an employee, work part-time, run your own business or have accumulated pension pots with past employers, we can offer you advice. After all, your retirement should be a time to enjoy life, not a time spent worrying about money.

Financial mistakes even the experts can make

We're all human, lead increasingly busy lives, and can be prone to making mistakes. When it comes to our money, it can be easy to lose track of the big picture; here are just a few financial mistakes we can all avoid.

Not keeping an eye on statements

Checking your bank and credit card statements regularly will help you budget better, get rid of expenditure you no longer need, and alert you to any signs of fraud.

Allowing your insurance policies to automatically renew

Although it can seem a chore, it makes sense to keep your insurance policies under regular review to ensure that you're paying a fair price and have the cover you need.

Letting your mortgage drift

If your fixed-rate deal is nearing its end or has already ended, then it makes sense to ask us to recommend a new one. When your deal ends, you will generally find your lender moves you to their Standard Variable Rate, which could mean you'll end up paying far more than you need to each month.

Not seeking professional advice about retirement

With many of us set to enjoy several decades in retirement, it's important to get the right advice about saving enough money during our working lives. When it's time to access our pension pots, we can all use professional help to make sure that our money lasts as long as we do.

Not thinking ahead

Putting a Lasting Power of Attorney in place and making a Will are important steps to safeguard family finances. They provide the valuable peace of mind of knowing that your wishes will be followed, and your family provided for when you are no longer able to.

DGS are Independent, whole of market and Chartered. I am also a Chartered Financial Planner with over 20 years financial services experience, so you are in safe hands. For a free review of your current plans and financial situation, please contact me, Paul Savuto, AFPS, Chartered Financial Planner. DGS Independent Financial Advisers Ltd. 07834 499595 or email ps@dgsifa.com, I'll be happy to talk to you and answer any questions you have.

FCA 225814.



GNOMES (Meppershall Good Neighbour Group)

FIVE YEARS OF THE MEPPERSHALL GOOD NEIGHBOUR GROUP

AS PRESENTED TO THE PARISH COUNCIL ON 29TH APRIL 2019

The Meppershall Good Neighbour Group was officially formed on 2 December 2013 when we had public liability cover for our volunteers. We are identified locally by the acronym GNOMES (Good Neighbours Offering Meppershall Excellent Services) and currently have 33 volunteers offering various skills and services on request. All our volunteers are DBS cleared and the majority are Dementia Friends. Our telephone is manned Monday to Friday all year by volunteers on a rota basis. We are self-funding, receiving donations from clients, volunteers themselves and village organisations. We do not charge for any services we undertake but do ask clients to assist our car owners with expenses currently at the HM Revenue and Customs authorised level of 45p per mile. We would also ask clients to compensate our volunteers for any unavoidable out of pocket expenses incurred whilst carrying out a task for them. At present we have no plans to approach any organisation for financial support. Our telephone costs are met by a local business which is a very generous gesture, displays community spirit and enables us to keep our costs down. All our committee members subscribe, not only their time, but the costs of phone calls, stationery and the like. Our predominant expenses are public liability insurance and room hire for the compulsory annual general meeting.

In the first year we had 48 calls for assistance from 22 people our initial job being to check a household fire alarm, in the second year we more than doubled our requests to 100 and had a slight increase to 107 calls in 2016. This, however, was not sustained and the calls dropped to 85 in 2017. 2018 has shown an increase to 140 calls. The first quarter of 2019 has seen a job tally of 58. Not all calls require physical action some are to advise, give information or assist other village groups or attend training sessions. Some are even for social events like transport to coffee mornings, village fetes and charity events.

A fair proportion of our work is either visiting people in their homes (288) or driving to appointments (122). In total we have helped some 81 individuals from the village in one form or another and on more than one occasion.

Predominantly, our driving tasks are to the surgeries in Shefford and Stotfold and to the Bedford and Lister hospitals. These are essential services as there is no convenient public transport solution for any of these venues. Other driving tasks has been to:

- A crematorium
- Library to collect books
- Shops to do the weekly household shopping
- Shopping for a specific cat food
- Collecting batteries for hearing aids
- Council offices to collect a Blue Badge
- Transfer a patient from Shefford Health Centre to A&E
- A memory clinic in Biggleswade.
- Taking Evergreens out for afternoon tea

DIY Tasks have included:

Setting up the village hall for a wake. Fixing leaking hose pipe, installing door bell, changing batteries in fire alarms, hanging net curtains, assisting with wallpaper hanging, putting up shelves, construction from a flat pack, grass cutting and path weeding to name a few.

We do not profess to be able to do everything, sometimes we cannot help because of lack of expertise or training or because we believe they are not a service to assist those in need. An example of the latter is we would not take people to a departure point for their holiday.

Needless to say, we are always on the lookout for volunteers. To volunteer or request assistance call 07760 793931.

The GNOMES invite you to join them at their June Coffee Morning in the Walnut Tree Café in the Village Hall on Thursday 13th June at 10:30 when we shall celebrate 75 years (or so) since the D Day Landings by listening to, tapping our feet to or even singing to, the songs that kept Britain going during World War Two. Such as Run Rabbit Run Rabbit Run Run Run, Underneath the Arches and White Cliffs of Dover to name a few.

Any villagers wishing to attend but who need a lift please call (in good time) 07760 793921 and we will see what we can do. Look forward to seeing you there.

Village Verse by James Read

The Meppershall Messenger has printed a range of poetry over the years from a variety of contributors. We very much want to keep that up and we would welcome submissions from creative writers young and old, on any subjects on which they have been inspired to compose.

This month's cover picture shows the kind of scene that inspired the lines here. Originally a South Londoner, I grew up with the 'lungs' of the North Downs in Surrey a short train journey or bike ride away. It was such a big contrast from suburbia and the city. One of the things I have loved about Meppershall is the opportunity to leave your front door and walk all day, sometimes exploring miles and miles of rural footpaths and byways. It is why we've tried to encourage the growth of @MeppershallStrollers. On a decent summer day, we've been known to hike up to 30K to places such as Ashwell, Bedford, Woburn, St Paul's Walden and beyond. It was probably a trip like that which helped me dream up the following thoughts.

Bedfordshire June

Open the vale to me
Warm sunlit symphony
Hedgerow in harmony
Birdsong in bliss.

Meadows indulgently
Rise to the panoply
Footpath embracingly
Breezes a kiss.

Mallow, the dancing dames,
Bees waltz their slender frames
Jubilant lark exclaims
Over the tune

Sycamore clamouring
Hail to the waving wind
Summer's abundance
In Bedfordshire June.

Got something for the Messenger?

The Meppershall Messenger relies on the many contributions we receive from individual readers, writers and local organisations. We want to say a big 'thank you' to everyone who helps fill our pages every month.

If you are reading this and thinking of sharing a story, letter, article or just some information – PLEASE DO!! We would love to hear from you... Email us at mepp.messenger@gmail.com or find us on Facebook @MeppMessenger.

And why not come to our Annual General Meeting on 13th June, 7.30pm kindly hosted by St Mary's church? Find out more about the magazine, meet some new people, just listen or bring your ideas. We will even lay on the tea and cake!

‘TRUGS & TROWELS’ Campton Gardening Club

Our next meetings will be on: -

Monday, 10th June

‘Bonsai – History & Care’

Sir John Trinder (Chairman of the Bedfordshire Bonsai Society) will be giving a talk and demonstration on trimming a starter tree; this will be raffled off at the end of the evening.



Monday, 1st July

‘Managing Trees & Shrubs in your garden’

A talk by Colin Carpenter.

Sunday, 14th July..... Campton ‘Open Gardens’: starting at Campton Manor for 1.30pm and will carry on to other gardens within the village. A ‘pot luck’ Buffet and Raffle will follow at 28 Greenway.

You don’t have to be a member to attend, so why not come along with a friend or neighbour to see what it’s all about. We have a ‘Free & Swap’ table for any unwanted plants, tools, pots or anything garden related.

You can also browse through our free library of garden books whilst enjoying a nice cup of tea or coffee and biscuit.

Campton Village Hall, 7.30-9.00pm

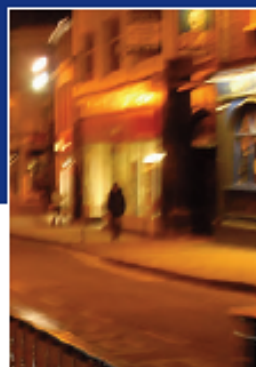
Everyone Welcome - Admission £3

For more information, please contact... Maryika 01462 851729



Crime Prevention ADVICE AND INFORMATION

ROBBERY AND VIOLENT CRIME



Violent crimes by strangers in public places are still rare and account for a very small part of recorded crime. However, you can make yourself even less likely to be the victim of a violent crime such as robbery or assault by taking a few sensible precautions, many of which you probably already do.

ROBBERY

Be Wise, Be Confident

Recent studies considered the sort of person who becomes a victim of sexual assault or robbery. The offenders questioned did not choose people who had projected an air of self-confidence and walked with purpose. They picked, instead, on people who appeared timid, shy and vulnerable.

Remain aware of your surroundings, for example not listening to a personal stereo or talking on a mobile phone as you walk.

Shout!

If you find yourself face to face with potential attacker, let them know what they are up against. Shout and scream as loud as you can. This is worth doing even if there is no one obvious around as you are likely to unnerve your assailant and frighten them off.

Alarms

If you think that you may not have the confidence to shout or scream in this type of situation, then consider buying a personal attack alarm. The important point to stress is to take the opportunity to escape while your attacker is startled by an alarm.

Self Defence

Only you can decide whether to fight back or not, and much will depend on the circumstances in which you find yourself. If someone is trying to snatch your bag, be prepared to let it go as you may get hurt trying to hold on to it. Try to get a description of the attacker and tell the police immediately.

Weapons

As you probably know, you are not allowed to carry weapons. However, a person being attacked has every right to defend themselves with reasonable force and with any means at their disposal. That includes keys, rings and hairsprays. Having your car or house keys ready in your hand not only stops you being vulnerable while searching in a handbag or pocket, but could even be used to stop an attacker.

If you are a victim of robbery or violent crime you may wish to speak to Signpost for Bedfordshire. They can provide emotional support and practical guidance. Please call them on 0800 0282 887.

VIOLENT CRIME

Keeping Safe in the Home

Always look to see who's at the door before opening it. Use a door chain or spy hole if there is one fitted; otherwise look through a window. Ask for identification.

If In Doubt – Keep Them Out!

If you hear someone breaking in, do not confront the intruder – telephone the police immediately on 999.

Domestic Violence

Domestic violence can occur in any relationship and Bedfordshire Police have domestic violence units throughout the force area. They are staffed by specially trained officers who can tell you what help is available and will support you in your decisions. They also have specialist leaflets, which go into much further detail. Please call 101 to speak to speak to the team. Remember, in an emergency (for example, there is an immediate threat to life or property), call 999.

Keeping Safe When Out and About

Sexual Assault

If you are sexually assaulted, you should consider reporting it to the police who will ensure that you are given help with care and sensitivity. Specially trained officers will explain the process and can offer support and advice throughout.

Young Children

KIDSCAPE(www.kidscape.org.uk) is a private organisation active in the protection of children and have produced a set of guidelines to assist parents and carers protect their children. Children should be encouraged to tell you of any incident that concerns them and assured they will be believed. They should be reminded not to talk to strangers and that it is okay to break rules in order to stay safe.

Hate Crime

Hate crime is defined as any hate incident, which constitutes a criminal offence, perceived by the victim or any other person, as being motivated by prejudice or hate. A racist or prejudice incident is any incident that is perceived to be racist or prejudice by the victim or any other person. This behaviour is unlawful and tackling Hate crime is a priority of Bedfordshire Police.

Please Report It

Tackling Nuisance Bikes

Operation Meteor is the force's response to the issue of anti-social riding, nuisance bikes and related criminality.

As the days are getting longer and warmer, we are preparing ourselves for the increase of nuisance biking offences. This operation consists of regular ride outs of trained officers and police volunteers on off-road bikes, which allows them to crack down on bikers trespassing and causing nuisance in our communities.

The team is specially trained to identify and target offenders who use their vehicles in an anti-social and dangerous manner.

The officers who are on the Operation Meteor deployment respond to the 101 and 999 calls from the public, with high-visibility patrols aiming to deter potential offenders.

Our tactics are based on information from the public. It is very important to report all sightings of nuisance bikers, as the information is crucial in building a better intelligence picture of this kind of criminality in our county.

All details like the colour of the bikes, clothing, helmets if they are wearing any, and any other special markers are all important to the officers.

Apart from disruption, the team also has a number of tactics they can use to target the offenders.

One of the techniques used by the officers is a stinger deployment. Stinger is a device which pierces the tyres of the vehicle and causes it to stop.

If the vehicle is being used in an anti-social manner, we have a right to seize it and crush it.

For all the bikes enthusiasts out there, we would like to reassure you that there are ways of riding your bike off-road fully legally.

Make sure that your vehicle has a valid MOT and you have paid your tax and insurance. You need to hold a driving license for your bike.

You can use your vehicle on Byways Open to All Traffic (BOAT) and you can find locations on your council's website:

<http://www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/leisure/countryside/byways/traffic.aspx>

Some of the BOATs are only open during certain seasons or certain times, so make sure that you familiarise yourself with the restrictions before visiting the location.

You can also attend organised events, which are an amazing opportunity to find people with similar interests and enjoy your hobby in a safe environment and with health professionals available in case of an incident.

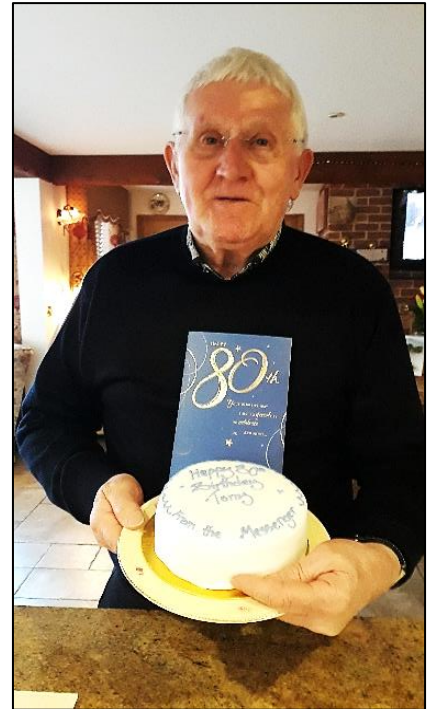
Sergeant Barry Smith

Birthday Greetings



Mary Thompson 91
Gordon Dew 90 (pictured left)
Tony Primett 81
Tony Edwards 80 (pictured right)

Many congratulations from the *Meppershall Messenger* team – especially to Gordon and Tony, shown here with their *Meppershall Messenger* birthday cakes!



Rotary members have been busy over the last few months supporting local children who have talent and ambition, and who just need to be given a chance to shine. Every year there are competitions, all over the country, for schools who want to take part in some or all of the categories - Young chef, musician, photographer and writer. There is a public speaking competition called Youth Speaks and this year Robert Bloomfield school from Shefford did very well in getting through to the final. Teams of youngsters gathered at Stratton school, Biggleswade to perform tasks which called on their knowledge of science, technology, engineering and maths, by taking part in the Technology Challenge. For young people who are about to leave school there have been Mock interviews and practise assessment situations. Everyone who took part not only enjoyed it but gained experience, had advice from expert judges and had something good to put on their CV.

Rotary Youth Leadership Awards (RYLA) are opportunities for young adults aged 18-26, sponsored by a Rotary club, to develop their leadership skills at either Graffam Water for one week or Woodrow High House in Amersham for a long weekend.

Rotakids are clubs for 7-12 year olds based in schools, Interact is a club for 12-18 year olds and Roteract is for the 18-30s. All the clubs promote being a responsible citizen and learning how to help the local community while making friends and having fun.

Rotary is a world wide organisation so can offer the chance to gain work experience or study abroad, or to spend some time in another country for up to a year, with the Youth Exchange Scheme.

If you are interested in any of this and would like to be involved in some way then please get in touch with us at Biggleswade Ivel Rotary club or telephone Pamela on 07817 014865.

Summerfield Miniature Railway Bedford Model Engineering Society

Off the A600 just past Haynes Turn Public Running Days in 2019 from 10.30 AM to 4 PM

MARCH	Sunday 31 st	AUGUST	Wednesday 7 th *	
APRIL	Wednesday 10 th (half term) *		Wednesday 14 th *	
	Sunday 21 st		Sunday 25 th	
	Monday 22 nd		Monday 26 th (Bank Holiday)	
	Sunday 5 th	SEPTEMBER	Sunday 1 st	
MAY	Monday 6 th (Bank Holiday)		Sunday 22 nd	
	Sunday 26 th	OCTOBER	Sunday 13 th	
	Monday 27 th (Bank Holiday)		Wednesday 23 rd (half term) *	
	Wednesday 29 th (half term) *		Sunday 27 th	
JUNE	Sunday 9 th	DECEMBER	SANTA SPECIALS	
	Sunday 23 rd		PRE-BOOKING ESSENTIAL:	
JULY	Sunday 7 th		NB	Saturday & Sunday 7 th & 8 th
	Sunday 21 st	Booking for Santa Specials opens on Sept 1 st and places sell out very quickly		
	Wednesday 24 th *			For further information on any event, see our website: www.bedfordmes.co.uk
	Wednesday 31 st *			
*On our Wednesday openings, only limited catering will be available.				

The Team

CONTRIBUTIONS

The Editor welcomes contributions to the Messenger, whether as letters, articles or notices. Contributions should preferably be as attachments to e-mail (address below) but handwritten contributions may be sent by post, or left in the folder kept at the Village Stores. Contributions should run to not more than one A5 page (except by prior arrangement) and should be received by the Editor not later than the 12th of the month for publication at the end of that month. Contributions received after the deadline may be held over.

DISCLAIMER

The Editor reserves the right to omit or alter any advertisement or article and to change the content, format or issue date of the magazine without prior notice. The Editor cannot be held responsible for the factual correctness of, or for any libellous comment or statement made in any advertisement, article or other contribution published in this magazine. Every effort will be made to avoid any deliberate attempt to mislead or otherwise cause harm or damage to any person or persons by any advertisement, article or any other contribution published in this magazine.

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Collating Dates - 2019			
July Issue	July 1	November Issue	October 28
Aug/Sept Issue	July 29	Dec/Jan	December 2
October Issue	September 30	February (2020)	Jan 28 (2020)

Please note that dates in the above table show when collating will take place, for the corresponding month, displayed to the left. The issue being collated usually relates to the following month.