

Hello and welcome to the February newsletter

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On sunny days it almost feels like spring, the daffodils are starting to come up around the estate and new benches have popped up in the Community Garden. These were created and installed by Woughton Men In Sheds. Thank you, they look great and we are very grateful to them for their hard work. The end of February also brings the Annual General Meeting for Tinkers Bridge Residents Association. This is an important group made up of residents who fight our corner, maintain our estate, work in the community and host events for all residents. We are looking for residents to pop down and join in, have your say and help plan future events. We need support so we don't follow other Associations who have folded due to lack of interest. We are lucky to be quite a small estate and we feel that helps build a friendly helpful community because people know each other. We have had fabulous events in the past- Pig Roasts, Fun Days, Community picnics, and themed parties at the meeting place. But people are needed to allow these events to happen! So come down on **Thursday 28th February at the Meeting Place, next to Tesco 7.30pm until 9pm**, and meet the gang!

Gas Pipe Replacement

There has been a lot of concern about the damage which is being inflicted on the grass verges and the state of some of the paths after the work has been done. We have been assured that everything will be restored once the contractors have left. Some has already been done and grass seed put down, so please don't tread on these areas. I am told they are ahead of schedule now after a very slow start and water mains issues. Some streets were taking two weeks to complete, but a new crew are smashing through it and getting each street completed much quicker.

If you do have any concerns contact Paula Mason at the Environmental Department or Neil Lackey, Project Manager for ITS on 07725 543866 or email him at neil.lackey@itsutilities.co.uk

Street Lighting

Great news came through our doors recently, with the news that the council are finally going to be upgrading our street lighting in the not so distant future. The lights will be brighter and will help to ensure residents feel safer. More information can be obtained by ringing 01908 252353.

Speed Limits

T.B.R.A have been trying to apply to lower the speed limit around Tinkers Bridge to 20mph. The application process takes quite a while so we will let you know of any progress when we do.

Big Conversation

Milton Keynes Council has started what it calls a "Big Conversation" with residents of the Regeneration estates. As part of this, we have been asking them about the painting of the outside of Council properties, which have a lot of external wood. This is something that has been a concern to us for a long time and it came up in the survey we did in 2016.

We have found out that the council, which seems not to have been doing routine maintenance for some time, is now planning to invest £165 million in this across Milton Keynes over the next five years. It says there will be a cyclical programme of work from 2020/21 but it has not yet been decided where painting of the outside of Tinkers Bridge houses will fit into these plans. It is therefore not possible to give any date for painting these houses but it is unlikely to be before 2020 (Cyclical plan of works), and may be delayed further by giving priority to sheltered housing. We are hoping someone from the Council will be at the AGM so come along if you want to talk to them about maintenance of your house or anything else to do with regeneration.

Rubbish Issues-A reminder

Everyone is doing a great job organising your rubbish and recycling. Please remember to put it out on the correct day (Wednesdays!) and to clean up any spillages that may have occurred in collection. Thank you!



What should go in a pink or clear recycling sack

Washed plastic bottles
Washed plastic food containers
Washed food and drink cans or tins
Aluminum tin foil
Empty spray cans
Paper, Newspaper, Envelopes-not padded
Washed yoghurt pots and margarine tubs
Washed rigid meat trays and fruit punnets

What should NOT go in a pink or clear recycling sack

Textiles, Clothes or Shoes
Food or garden waste
Crisp packets or Sweet wrappings
Glass
Nappies or any Sanitary Products
Pet Waste
Food Waste
Polystyrene packaging

Thank you for helping us keep the estate clean by putting the correct rubbish into the correct bags!

Recycling bags can be obtained by ringing 01908 252353 or ordering online for delivery.

Cookery Corner by Rosemary

Sweet Potato and Red Pepper Soup

Ingredients

2 red peppers. Wash, remove the seeds and chop into cubes.
500 grams (1 1/2 lbs) of peeled sweet potato. Cubed.
1 roughly chopped onion.
2 large garlic cloves, peeled and roughly chopped.
300 mls or 1/2 pint of cheap white wine (this improves the taste but you can add extra stock if you don't have any.)
1.2 litres or 2 pints of vegetable or chicken stock. Cubes are ok.
Salt and black pepper

Method

Place sweet potatoes, peppers, onion, garlic, wine and stock in a large saucepan. Bring to the boil, lower the heat and simmer (that is, the mixture should be still moving but not boiling) for 30 mins or so until the vegetables are quite soft.

At this stage it is best to allow the mixture to cool slightly and then blend in a blender or food processor.

Season with salt and pepper (and, if you like spicy hot tastes, add a dash of Tabasco sauce).

Serve hot with fresh whole grain granary style bread.

The Swan Diaries

Tales from the lakeside

And it's all change at the lakeside!

A couple of weeks ago a new pair of swans arrived. The new cob (male) has a leg ring so I was able to contact a register and find out his history; he was ringed last year in Bedford so these birds were initially known as The Bedford Birds. These birds quickly decided that they wanted to stay and make their home at our little lake.

Swans can be extremely aggressive over territories and will fight to the death in some instances so I knew there was going to be a battle, and sadly Missy & Monty were driven away and will now have to find themselves a new home. For the first few days The Bedford Birds seemed to tolerate Micah sharing the lake as she had done with Missy & Monty, but it wasn't long before they decided she had to leave too and started being extremely aggressive towards her to try and make her leave. Micah didn't want to leave, I didn't want her to go either, but a breeding pair will always need a nesting site more than a lone swan does so I was in the process of arranging for Micah to be picked up and moved to a flock when she decided to go off on her own to find somewhere new.

As the new birds were clearly staying, I decided they would need names but struggled to think of anything suitable, but then it came to me! Bedford to Bedrock, to Fred & Wilma, so maybe we will be using Flintstones themed names for cygnets this year!

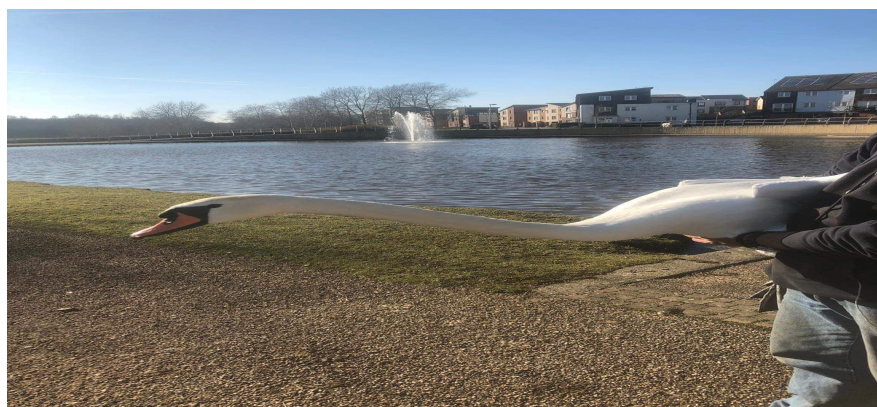
Oh but, then the lake flooded, as it does so often, and Fred & Wilma flew away. I was devastated as it seemed as if they had chased my three resident swans away for no reason.

For several days there were no swans at the lake at all, then last Sunday there was a new arrival and I am so pleased that this beautiful swan found its way to me because it desperately needed help. The last few months have been awful for wildlife with many water birds suffering from malnourishment. This is due partly to people being wrongly advised that feeding bread was harmful and not knowing what else to feed them, but also to the long heatwave last summer destroying all of their natural grazing. The swan that arrived on Sunday was completely exhausted and close to starvation; I've never seen such a skinny swan and when I got home from meeting this one, I actually stood in my kitchen and cried as seeing a swan in such poor condition was so upsetting to me.

I named the new swan Molly and asked her to stay long enough for me to help her get strong again, and have been visiting twice a day (before and after work) to make sure there was plenty of food available. Molly quickly learnt to trust me and it wasn't long before she started to feel better; the difference in her was easy to see just after a few days of regular food - on Wednesday she had the strength to lift her wings for the first time since she arrived, and this morning I was greeted by her standing up tall in the water and properly flapping her wings as all swans love to do.

However, Fred and Wilma arrived back at the lake so I knew Molly couldn't stay, and I couldn't take the risk of Fred chasing her away or attacking her when she still needed extra care to help her recover from whatever she has been through. So I contacted Swan Support and asked them to help Molly and they came and collected her today. Molly will now have all the care and food she needs to make a full recovery before being released to a new, safe, territory where she can make a new home.

A quick thanks to Derek and Terry for the photos they took of Missy and Major for me.



By Allie Short

Molly going to her new home

Community Fridges

Grand Union Vineyard Church, Broadlands, Netherfield, MK6 4 YP

Tuesdays 17.30pm to 18.30pm

Thursdays 10.00am to 11.00am

The Woughton Community Fridge is located in Coffee Hall at the local centre

Mondays 18:00pm to 19:00 pm

Tuesdays 12:00 pm to 13:00 pm

EVERYONE WELCOME!!

Thursdays 15:30 pm to 16:30pm

Fridays 09:00am to 10:00 am

THIS TO STOP SURPLUS FOOD FROM BEING WASTED SO GET DOWN THERE AND GRAB A FREEBIE!!

What's on in the local area

Mondays

Netherfield Youth Club

9-12 years old

5.30pm-7pm

Meeting Place, Farmborough, Netherfield

Tuesdays:

Rainbows 4.45pm- 5.45pm

Brownies 6pm-7.15pm

Guides 7.30pm- 9pm

All are on during term time only at Charles Warren Academy, Groveway, MK6 3AZ

Contact Tawny Owl Cheryl by email on pricecheryl20@hotmail.com

Wednesdays:

Tinkers Bridge Youth Club

8-12 years old

4.15pm-5.45pm

Meeting Place, Tinkers Bridge

Thursdays: 28TH FEBRUARY ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Tinkers Bridge Residents Meetings are held on the last Thursday of every month at the meeting place next to Tesco's.

7.30pm till 9pm. ON THURSDAY IT IS OUR ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING!

Come and have your say, put ideas across or find out about setting up a club for residents as well as finding out about local issues. Above all GET INVOLVED!

Easter Egg Hunt

Last year was so successful that we are hoping to fund another fantastic Easter Egg Hunt this year during the Easter holidays. Look out for more information in the March Newsletter!

We are on Facebook! Check out Tinkers Bridge OFFICIAL GROUP and Tinkers Bridge - Free To A Good Home for freebies in our estate. A great way to get rid of your unwanted items locally!

If you wish to submit an article, a recipe, a poem, a request or local news please contact the editor by email at editorthetbridge@yahoo.com Many thanks.