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# BRICKHILL

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## PARISH COUNCIL

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## Annual Report

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2016-17

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### *Gathering on the Green - July 2016*



### *Community Litter Pick - March 2017*



# **Brickhill – Annual Parish Meeting**

**St Marks Church and Community Centre, Calder Rise, Brickhill,  
Thursday 16<sup>th</sup> March 2017**

## **Annual Overview by**

**Cllr Mark Fitzpatrick, Chairman of Brickhill Parish Council**

### **Introduction**

Welcome to St Mark's for the 13th Annual Parish Meeting for Brickhill.

The Annual Parish Meeting is not a council meeting. It is intended to enable parish electors and local organisations, including the parish council, to meet and discuss items of interest or concern. We can share news of what has happened over the past year and what is planned for the future, as well as allowing residents to ask questions.

### **Work of the Parish Council 2016/2017**

Over the past year, the parish council met 10 times. There have also been meetings of its Planning Committee, Allotments and Open Spaces Committee and other groups. The agendas and minutes of these meetings are available on the parish website. Residents are welcome to all meetings of the council and its committees.

During the past year there have been three parish councillor vacancies. Nick Carter had been co-opted in early 2016 and sadly died in December 2016. He had made a strong contribution to the council during his short time with us. His fellow councillors made a donation to the PEPS team at St John's, Moggerhanger, in his memory. The vacancy will be filled by Lynne Seymour. Alex Chrusiack resigned when he moved out of the area, with James Cross elected in October 2016 to replace him. Gaius Manser resigned due to his work commitments, with Antonie Koch elected in December 2016 to fill the seat.

I thank all the councillors, who are all volunteers, for their work on behalf of Brickhill.

There have been no staff changes during the past year: Sue Bottoms is our Parish Clerk. Alison Southern is Assistant Clerk and Allotments Officer, managing the allotments and takes the lead on production of the Brickhill News parish newsletter. Both Sue and Alison are fully qualified clerks, holding the 'CiLCA' qualification. Dave Britton continues as our litter-picker, keeping Waveney Green free of litter.

The parish council appoints a representative to the AGM of the Brickhill Community Association, which manages the Brickhill Community Centre on behalf of the parish council.

The parish council office moved back to its former base at St Mark's Church and Community Centre during the year and has settled in there once again.


The parish council has agreed to put some signs on its boundary, to help residents understand where Brickhill is exactly. Three were funded in 2016/17, with three more to follow in 2017/18.

Speed-activated traffic signs were installed in Brickhill Drive, near the lower junction with Mallard Hill. These have been funded by the parish council to improve road safety.

After protracted discussions, with the parish council agreeing to contribute £3,000, a tarmac path to connect Browney Path and Grenadier Close is to be installed. This will enable pedestrians to use the route without risk of falling over or getting muddy.

The possibility of a undertaking a Neighbourhood Development Plan has been discussed several times during the year. It is likely that we will be seeking financial support for the first stage of the project, with the aim of making quick progress in late spring/summer 2017.

The parish council has continued to press for progress on the St Thomas More Travel Plan. Several councillors recently met with the Deputy Head from the school, police representatives and borough parking control staff. We remain very concerned about the safety risks.

 <p><b>Community Safety Forum meeting.</b> The next meeting is on Thursday 26th May 7pm, St Mark's Church Community Centre. The guest speaker is Andy Pookham, Service Operational Commander of Bedfordshire Fire and Rescue Services. There will be the usual news about crime in Brickhill, plus reports from councillors and other organisations, with the chance to raise any issues that concern you. All welcome, do come along. Twitter: @CFBBrickhill.</p> <p><b>Wildflower Planting on Waveney Green</b>—you may have noticed that the wildflower area on Waveney Green, near Foston Avenue, is looking somewhat bare. The ground has been prepared and a new set of wildflower seeds have been sown. Weather permitting, we should soon see a riot of colour, with corn chamomile, corn poppy, cornflower, corn marigold and poppy.</p> <p><b>BEDFORD &amp; BRICKHILL Walks</b> — July and August 2016 8 led walks between 4 and 5 miles and approximately 2 hours duration. A mixture of urban and countryside walks ideal for the long summer evenings. Some walks are almost entirely on surfaced paths whilst others are over fields, most are also free. All walks are free and start at 7pm—just turn up. Organised by The Ramblers Bedfordshire. Contact Barry Ingram 01234 353704 or email at <a href="mailto:walks@ramblers.com">walks@ramblers.com</a>.</p> <p>Barry Ingram is a Brickhill resident, knows the area well and was winner in The Ramblers "Laid walks" category at their 75 anniversary celebrations. Barry is also involved with promoting Ramblers PEOPLE activities (Restoring &amp; Improving Public Paths for Local Enjoyment, volunteers are always welcome). Barry is the recent recipient of the British Flower Award for his services to walking and the local community. Full details can be found on the parish council website <a href="http://www.brickhillparishcouncil.gov.uk">www.brickhillparishcouncil.gov.uk</a>.</p> <p><b>Summer Activity Sessions for children aged 7-12 years</b> The Parish Council will be running 4 activity sessions during the Summer holidays. If you have a child aged 7-12 years old and live in Brickhill then why not book them a place. Our activities are run by Sport Support Group and take place at Scott Lower School. The Battlefield Live activity takes place at the Masson Forest Centre.</p> <p><b>26th July</b>—Battlefield Live (transport provided to and from the Forest Centre) <b>2nd August</b>—Climbing Wall and Low Ropes <b>9th August</b>—Bushcraft—make a camp, build your own camp fire and roast marshmallows <b>16th August</b>—Laser Clay Pigeon Shooting &amp; Archery</p> <p>All activities take place from 9am—1pm and cost only £7.50 per child. These activities are subsidised by the Parish Council. Places are limited to only 25 children per session. To book your space contact the parish council on 01234 271708 or email the council office at <a href="mailto:clerk@brickhillparishcouncil.gov.uk">clerk@brickhillparishcouncil.gov.uk</a>.</p>	<h3>Newsletter No. 45 – May 2016</h3>
	<p>The newsletter gave details of the forthcoming meeting of the Community Safety Forum, information about the Waveney Green wildflower area, news of a series of walks around Brickhill and Bedford in the summer, an advert for the Summer Activity Sessions, news from Brickhill Scouts, Brickhill Borough Councillors, Riverfield Football Club, Brickhill Lower School, Peace Haven Church, Brickhill Good Neighbours Scheme and details about sustainable transport.</p>

## Newsletter No. 46 – July 2016

This edition gave details of the walks around Brickhill and Bedford during the summer and the Bedfordshire Walking Festival in September. There were adverts for the Summer Activity Sessions for young people and for councillor surgeries. It contained reports from Park Wood Nature Reserve, Borough Councillors, Brickhill Lower School and All Nations Church. Information was included on improvements to the toddler play area on Waveney Green, plans for a path to connect Grenadier Close with Browney Path, plus possible cycle routes using the cycle path adjacent to the Great Ouse Way section of the western bypass.



**BRICKHILL NEWS**  
The newsletter of Brickhill Parish Council  
Issue 46 July 2016

**BEDFORD & BRICKHILL Walks 2016**  
Eight hot walks of between 4 and 5 miles and approximately 2 hours duration. A mixture of urban and countryside walks ideal for the long summer evenings. Some walks are almost entirely on surfaced paths whilst others are over fields. Most are safe here. All walks are free just turn up. All walks start at 7.00pm.  
Organised by The Ramblers Bedfordshire. Contact Barry Ingram 01234 353704 or email at [walking@madefish.com](mailto:walking@madefish.com). Full details regarding all the walks are also available on the parish website.

**BEDFORDSHIRE WALKING FESTIVAL 2016**  
Saturday 10th September to Sunday 11th September inclusive.  
Lots of walking opportunities across the county with walks ranging from Heath walks to short ambles to half day and full day walks to a forty mile challenge over the weekend of 13th & 14th September.  
Programme available early July.

**SUMMER ACTIVITIES  
FOR CHILDREN AGED 7-12 YEARS  
LAST FEW PLACES AVAILABLE**

26th July	Battlefield Live
2nd August	Climbing Wall and Low Ropes
9th August	Bushcraft (den building and campfires)
16th August	Laser Clay Pigeon Shooting and Archery

These activities are open to children aged 7-12 years. The activities take place from 9am-1pm and cost only £7.50 per session. Transport will be provided for the Battlefield Live activity which takes place at Marston Forest Centre. All other activities meet at Scott Lower School, Hawk Drive, Brickhill MK41 7JA.  
To reserve your place please contact the Parish Council on 01234 271708.

All activities are run by Sport Support Group on behalf of Brickhill Parish Council.




**BRICKHILL NEWS**  
The newsletter of Brickhill Parish Council  
Issue 47 November 2016

**Update on Woodlands Park**  
As one of the top five requested improvements to be funded following the Ravensden Parish transfer, CCTV cameras have recently been installed on Woodlands Park. Two fixed cameras are located at either end of Ashmead Road, at the lamp-post adjacent to the Car Park/Changing rooms and on the lamp-post leaving the built-up area of the estate near Westrope Way. The cameras are connected via microwave link to Bedford Borough Council's CCTV central control room, where the first images were successfully received on 28 October. The cameras are not routinely monitored, but record video for the purpose of crime prevention. The video is retained for a period of time to assist with a lawful request for access from an appropriate authority.

A range of improvement projects resulted from the Woodlands Park community consultation and the CCTV installation is the first of these to be delivered. Most of the other projects are reliant on adoption being completed. A succession of promised adoption completion dates have passed, with Parishioner talking to meet the Borough Council's minimum requirements. Brickhill Parish Council continues to support both Panamanian and Bedford Borough Council to facilitate the smooth transition of estate assets from the original owners to the Borough Council.



**Christmas drawing competition**  
This year's competition will be judged at the beginning of December. We have invited entries from the children in years 3 & 4 at Scott Lower and Brickhill Lower schools. We look forward to seeing their drawings shortly. To view the winning entries visit our website at [www.brickhillparishcouncil.gov.uk](http://www.brickhillparishcouncil.gov.uk)



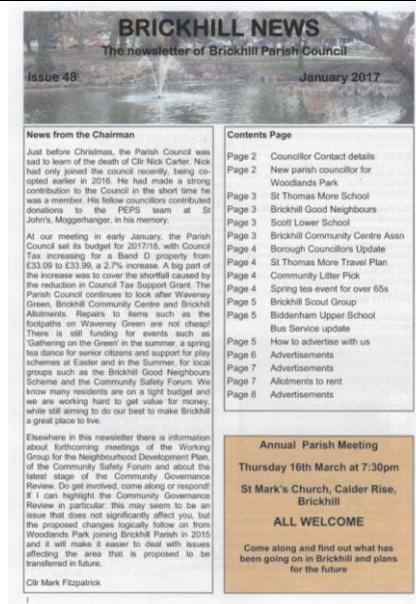
## Newsletter No. 47 – November 2016

The main article was an update on Woodlands Park, with the news that CCTV cameras had been installed. Other items included news about new councillor James Cross, bulb planting in Rooksmead, parliamentary boundary changes, Beauchamp Middle School, Swindale's Christmas lights, the planned Community Clean Up, information about the solar panels installed on Brickhill Community Centre, news from St Thomas More, adverts for meetings about a Neighbourhood Development Plan for Brickhill, a meeting of the Community Safety Forum and news about Thermal Imaging. Residents were asked their views about the play area in Francis Groves Close. News given about the Community Governance Review for Brickhill & Clapham, a gentle reminder about parking etiquette, a report from Brickhill Borough Councillors, an advert for the Community Centre's Christmas Party for senior citizens and details of Christmas church services.

## Newsletter No. 48 – January 2017

Reporting on the sad loss of Nick Carter, the Parish Budget for 2017/18, and the election of Antonie Koch. News from St Thomas More School, Brickhill Good Neighbour Scheme, Brickhill Community Centre Association, Brickhill Borough Councillors, Brickhill Scouts.

Adverts for the Community Clean Up, Neighbourhood Development Plan and Annual Parish Meeting all taking place in March and the Spring Tea in April. Information about: the Parish's involvement with the St Thomas More Travel Plan, buses to Biddenham Upper School, Waveney Green and the parish council's Easter activities.



## Finances

The parish council precept for 2016/17 was £116,185. In addition the parish received £8,430 in Council Tax Support from the borough council.

The parish council tax for 2016/17 was £33.09 for Band D properties, no change from 2015/16. For 2017/18 it will increase to £33.99 for Band D properties.

## Brickhill Community Centre and Waveney Green

These were leased by the borough to the parish council in 2011 for 99 years.

Waveney Green is a much-valued green space in the heart of Brickhill. The parish council hold their annual Gathering on the Green on Waveney Green. It is also frequently used by Brickhill Lower School Football Club. Last year we gave permission for a small funfair to use Waveney Green free of charge during the summer holidays. Feedback from members of the public was very positive. This year the fair will be back for an extended period from 28th July – 2nd August.

Following feedback from local residents, the parish council installed rubber mulch under the toddler play equipment at a cost of £3,225 which was paid for out of earmarked reserves. The footpaths that cross Waveney Green are gradually being replaced and relaid; in this financial year we spent £12,745 on footpath repairs, which should last for many years.

Last year we took over the wildflower meadow trial area on the bottom section of the green near Falcon Avenue. The wildflower meadow was a great success and this financial year the area will be extended to double its original size. The children from Brickhill Lower School have enjoyed visits to the site to see the bugs and butterflies. We have received

many positive comments regarding the new wildflower area which provides a lovely swathe of colour.

Unfortunately we had two unauthorised encampments by travellers in the past year but thanks to our borough councillors and Bedford Borough Council who moved them off quickly and arranged for a clean-up of the green immediately. The cost incurred by the parish towards the clean-up was £1,200. Brickhill Parish Council has been in discussion with the borough about the possible use of an injunction to deter further encampments and to enable quicker eviction in future.

We will be installing 5 pieces of outdoor green gym equipment (similar to those installed at Mowsbury Park), which will be located at the bottom end of the green near to the existing play area. We shall be installing the equipment on the rubber mulch surfacing to ensure the equipment can be used year-round.

The parish council is currently in discussion regarding acquiring the remainder of Waveney Green, adjacent to Francis Groves Close, to enable comprehensive management of the whole site.

Brickhill Community Association (BCA) runs Brickhill Community Centre on a day-to-day basis, with the Parish Council responsible for the structural maintenance of the building. The parish has been in discussion with BCA with the aim of ensuring proper co-ordination of maintenance and enhancement works.

Solar PV panels were installed by the parish council in April 2016, with the first electricity generated on 29<sup>th</sup> April. Between then and 15<sup>th</sup> March 2017, a total of 10.8 MWh has been generated – enough to power over 32,700 lightbulbs for a day, or save over 4,200 kg of CO<sub>2</sub>.

## **Allotments**

The parish council's allotments at the top of Brickhill Drive consists of 121 full plots and 18 half plots. Currently there are 3 half plots and 5 full plots vacant. Rates are £52.00 for a full plot (full rate) and £30 (concessionary). Half plots are £30 (full rate), £20 (concessionary rate). Priority is given to Brickhill residents.

This year the old allotment gardening hut owned by Bedford Borough was demolished. Brickhill Parish Council spent £1,900 towards the cost of groundworks to provide additional parking for not only our allotment tenants but also visitors to the Scout Hut.

We hold a yearly gardening competition and the winners received £100 worth of gardening vouchers. This year we will be holding an open day in July (date to be confirmed) which will allow prospective allotment gardeners the opportunity to visit the site and speak with our existing tenants and find out what it really takes to be a successful allotment gardener.

## **Communication**

The Council has published 4 newsletters over the past year. A big 'thank you' to everyone who helps deliver the newsletters. More volunteers are always welcome. We are increasing the number of newsletters published to 5 per year from 2017/18.

We have seven display boards (Avon Drive and Brickhill Drive shops, by the bus shelter next to Waveney Green, Ashmead Road just off Tyne Crescent, two new boards in Ashmead Road in the Woodlands Park estate and share a board outside Brickhill Community Centre). Our website is updated regularly and the parish council is on Twitter and Facebook.

## **Brickhill Community Safety Forum**

The forum has held two meetings during the year: Andy Peckham, Service Operational Commander of Bedfordshire Fire and Rescue Service, was the speaker at the meeting in May 2016. In November 2016, Andrew Kyle from Bedford Borough Council talked about 'tackling unauthorised encampments'. There will also be a meeting on 22<sup>nd</sup> March 2017. The Forum is managed by the parish council.

## **Community Events**

Community Litter Picks took place on 26<sup>th</sup> November 2016 (meeting in Ashmead Road) and 11<sup>th</sup> March 2016 (meeting in Hawk Drive). Bulb planting took place by the pond in Rooksmead in October 2016. Thank you to everyone who came and helped.

For several years now, the parish council has organised activity sessions for young people; during Easter 2016 we had two events: Multisports (19 children took part) and Terminator and Adrenaline Races (22); during Summer 2016 we held three events – Battlefield Live (23), Climbing Wall and Low Ropes (24) and Bushcraft (25). They are run by Sports Support on behalf of the council and are subsidised by the parish council.

We decided not to put on a Christmas meal for senior citizens in December, in part because there are so many similar events taking place over the Christmas period. Instead we will hold our Spring Tea with entertainment on the 28th April from 2pm-4pm, with 50 residents signed up so far.

## **Woodlands Park**

Woodlands Park officially joined Brickhill Parish on 1st April 2015.

The parish council has been trying to make progress on the projects agreed following consultation with residents of the Woodlands Park estate. The first project to be funded from the 'Ravensden' £20,117.90 money was CCTV cameras in Ashmead Road, two by the 'owl' park and two towards the Westrope Way barrier. Other projects are mostly still stalled, waiting for completion of the adoption of remaining roads, play areas, open spaces and the North Brickhill Country Park.

Following concerns about the quality of some of the CCTV images, Cllr Chris Bailes met with the Borough's officer and the provider of the camera. Agreement was reached to replace cameras with better models, all within the initial budget amounts.

Woodlands Park is part of the Great Barford Borough Council Ward. Cllrs Stephen Moon and Sheryl Corp regularly attend parish council meetings to report on their work.

The Borough launched a Community Governance Review for Brickhill and Clapham parishes, at our request, during the year. It follows on from the previous review for Brickhill and Ravensden parishes, as a result of which Woodlands Park joined Brickhill. The intention is to transfer the remaining section of Ashmead Road, currently in Clapham parish to Brickhill parish. This also covers the kick-about pitch, the football changing rooms, the two adjacent football pitches, the 'owl' park, St Thomas More School and Little Park Farm. Clapham Parish Council supports these changes. The consultation process has been extended to the end of April 2017.

### **Community grants**

The parish council gave the following grants during the year: £1,000 to Brickhill Lower School towards their Trimtrail, £200 to Brickhill Good Neighbour Scheme to cover insurance costs and £200 to Autism Bedfordshire (who support 13 individuals in Brickhill). The Parish has budgeted £2,000 for grants to local groups in 2017/18.



Parish Councillor Attendance April 2016 – March 2017

	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Sep	Oct	Nov	Jan	Feb	Mar
<b>Fitzpatrick</b>	x	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
<b>Blakeman</b>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
<b>Charles Royden</b>	✓	✓	x	x	✓	x	✓	✓	✓	✓
<b>Corinne Royden</b>	✓	✓	x	x	✓	x	✓	✓	✓	x
<b>Ward</b>	✓	✓	x	x	x	✓	x	✓	✓	x
<b>Reeve</b>	✓	✓	x	x	x	x	✓	x	✓	✓
<b>Chrusciak</b>	✓	✓	x							
<b>Rider</b>	✓	x	✓	✓	x	✓	x	✓	✓	✓
<b>Bailes</b>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
<b>Holloway</b>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
<b>Bowler</b>	x	x	x	✓	✓	✓	✓	x	✓	x
<b>Manser</b>	x	✓	✓	x	x					
<b>Johns</b>	✓	✓	x	✓	✓	✓	✓	x	✓	x
<b>Retout</b>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
<b>Carter</b>			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			
<b>Koch</b>								✓	✓	✓
<b>Cross</b>							✓	✓	✓	✓

## Annual Report by

### Cllr Peter Blakeman, Chairman of the Planning Committee

#### Members of the Planning Committee:

Five Councillors were appointed to serve on the Planning Committee at the Annual Meeting on 12 May 2016; Cllrs Blakeman, Chrusciak, Bailes, Johns and Manser. Cllrs Chrusciak and Manser resigned during the year and Cllr Cross joined in January.

#### Brief

The committee assesses each application not just with neighbours in mind but for how it may be seen by the wider community. For extensions, new dwellings and small infill developments the borough council's guidelines are followed looking at basic shape and scale, detailed character, space around buildings, car parking provision, privacy, daylight and sunlight, overbearing and safety and for new buildings also land use.

Not valid planning matters are the right to a view, impact of property values and concerns during construction.

#### Report

The calendar for the committee is to have meetings at approximately four week intervals to deal with planning applications for Brickhill within the timetable set by Bedford Borough Council Planning (BBCP).

In the period covered by this report (1 April 2016 to 31 March 2017) twelve meetings took place and 49 planning applications considered (47 – 2015/16). This was a similar number to the previous year.

In addition there were three applications under the permitted development rules for rear extensions between 3-6 metres for semi-detached dwellings and 4-8 metres for detached dwellings.

In summary the Planning Committee made comments on 18 (17) applications, 7 (7) adversely. BBCP has examined all the applications except for six which are still outstanding. All, except for two of those commented on, have been approved, although two further applications were rejected.

In detail the applications reviewed were:-

- 31 (36) for extensions to private houses. Objections were made on five and comments on a further six. All, except for four which still have to be determined, were granted by BBCP although two others were refused.
- 2 (1) for new dwellings. Objections were made to certain aspects of both. As a result amended plans have been submitted and accepted for one of them. Both still have to be determined by BBCP.
- 5 (6) for tree surgery work. Objections were made on two and comments on the other three. Two were refused.
- 1 (2) for new canopy at Scott Lower School. Application granted.
- 2 (0) for new flats - Conversion of the old LA Fitness premises in Kimbolton Road to 9 one bedroom and 5 two bedroom flats and replacing the garages behind 140 Brickhill Drive by 10 one bedroom supported flat with staff office and bedsit. Comments were made on both which BBCP has subsequently granted.
- 1 (0) for replacement telecommunication mast and cabinets at the Tiger Moth Avon Drive. Granted.
- 1 (1) outline application for business premises – Replacement of the redundant reservoir in Manton Lane by two business units. Concerns were made on this amended application about its effect on the skyline in particular from Curlew Crescent and Eagle Gardens. The determination is still outstanding.
- 1(0) Existing use of a dwelling as a mixed dwelling/place of worship - Comments have been made. It still has to be determined.
- 2 (1) for miscellaneous work – Summer house in garden and extended dropped kerb. Both were granted.

## Reports by Borough Councillors

Councillors Rider and Corp gave a brief report on behalf of the Ward Councillors.

## Reports by Other Bodies

- Richard Millard, Head Teacher, Mark Rutherford School
- Gill Lake, Rainbows, Brownies, Guides and Rangers
- John Wallace, Friends of Putnoe Woods and Mowsbury Hillfort
- Paul Bygrave, Brickhill Lower School Football Team
- Cathrine Ward, Bedford Lions
- Mark Fitzpatrick, Community Safety Forum

## Close of Meeting

Cllr Fitzpatrick thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting.

## Parish Council Contact Details

Clerk to the Council:	Sue Bottoms
Assistant Clerk to the Council:	Alison Southern
Parish Council Office:	St Mark's Church and Community Centre, Calder Rise, Brickhill, MK41 7UY
Telephone:	01234 271708
Email:	<a href="mailto:clerk@brickhillparishcouncil.gov.uk">clerk@brickhillparishcouncil.gov.uk</a>
Website:	<a href="http://www.brickhillparishcouncil.gov.uk">www.brickhillparishcouncil.gov.uk</a>
Meetings:	First Thursday of every month (except August and December) at St Mark's Church Community Centre, Calder Rise, Bedford MK41 7UY
Parish Councillor Surgeries:	Before each parish council meeting  7 pm to 7.30 pm at St Mark's Church Community Centre, Calder Rise, Bedford MK41 7UY