



The Neighbour

Official Newsletter of
Bletchley and Fenny Stratford Town Council

Upcoming Election: May 2021 It takes all sorts!

All 18 seats for Bletchley and Fenny Stratford Town Council are up for election on **Thursday 6th May 2021**. If you are passionate about the local area and want to represent your local community, then stand to be a Councillor today.



The deadline for submission of papers is **4pm on 8th April 2021**. Completed nomination forms need to be given in by hand to Milton Keynes Council Civic Office. The Election Department is open 10am-4pm on weekdays.

What makes a good councillor?



- Commitment
- Leadership and team work
- Representing views of the community
- Balanced decision making
- Promoting the work of the council
- Strong listening skills



This issue:

Election May 2021
Become a councillor
PAGE 1

Myth Busting!
PAGE 2

Town Deal
Funding Update
PAGE 3

Rangers Team
Roundup
PAGE 4

Get Support -
Counselling and
Wellbeing Service
PAGE 5

Town Council
Meetings
PAGE 6

Share Your Stories!
Get In Contact With Us
PAGE 8

Let's Bust Some Myths about being a Town Councillor

'I'm not standing for the Town Council because...'

- **I'm too young.** If you are eighteen or older, then you are old enough.
- **I'm too busy.** Well it does take up some time but as the old saying goes 'If you want something done, ask a busy person'. Most Town and Parish Councillors say their roles take a few hours per month. We can also provide you with more information and a meeting schedule.
- **I'm not interested in party politics.** You don't need to be a member of a political party and lots of Town Councillors stand as independents and never mention party politics.
- **I'm worried I wouldn't know what to do.** Support and advice is available and training is provided. Town Council officers are there to assist you and we provide a tablet device to help keep you organised and look after your documents.
- **I'm concentrating on my career.** Being a local councillor can be a definite plus point to add to a CV - it shows you can make decisions, work in a team, are community minded and proactive.
- **I haven't lived here very long.** If you have lived or worked in Bletchley and Fenny Stratford for a year, you are eligible and newcomers often have a lot to contribute as they see things with fresh eyes.
- **I'll have to sign that code of conduct that the press keep on about.** Yes you will, but the code of conduct is not very demanding. It's just about behaving reasonably and it is there to protect you.
- **But wouldn't I have to let everyone know all about my business and personal affairs?** The declaration of interest form completed when you start asks you to list business and property interests within the area, to guard against bias when local issues are debated. As for personal affairs, be realistic everyone knows already or else they don't care!
- **I might not get many votes and it would be embarrassing.** Even if you are not voted in this time, you may be approached if a vacancy occurs in the future and have the opportunity to be co-opted to the council. Besides, most people don't remember who didn't get elected.
- **The Town Council is full of dinosaurs!** Why not stand and change it then?
- **I'm not interested in my community.** An excellent reason for not standing.
- **I prefer to let others do the work and then criticise from the side lines afterwards.** Another valid reason for not standing, but do bear in mind that sharing your views over a morning coffee will not change a thing in your area. And if you can't be bothered, does that mean it's fair game to criticise those who do make the effort?

I'm interested! What do I need to do next?

Please email our Town Clerk, Delia Shephard, to find out more about what is involved and what the next steps are to stand for election.

Email: clerk@bletchleyfennystratford-tc.gov.uk

Find out more on our website: www.bletchleyfennystratford-tc.gov.uk

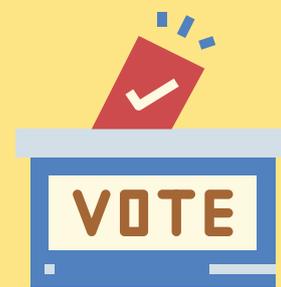
Call on 01908 649 469

Milton Keynes Council's website: www.milton-keynes.gov.uk

Exercise your right to vote this May

Alongside elections for Town Councillors, there are also elections for some Ward Councillors and for the Police and Crime Commissioner. Find out more at www.gov.uk and at www.milton-keynes.gov.uk.

Have a look at the details of our current councillors on the Councillors page on our website.



Town Deal Funding Confirmed for Bletchley and Fenny Stratford

More than £20 million pounds of investment has been confirmed for Bletchley and Fenny Stratford. This will enable major projects going forward, with proposals including:

- A Transport Hub – a new eastern entrance at Bletchley Station
- Improvements to Bletchley and Fenny Stratford town centres
- New redway links – creating improved connections between Newton Leys and the Lakes Estate to Central Bletchley
- Tech Park Bletchley – based at MK College providing more opportunities

Working closely with the local community, the Town Deal Board, which includes a representative from the Town Council, submitted the funding bid in October last year. This is fantastic news for our parish and the local area. Find out more in the news articles on our website. We will continue to share updates and progress on our website and across our social media channels.

Fenny Stratford Community Centre



Fenny Stratford
Community Centre

On 1 January 2021, the Town Council took over direct management of Fenny Stratford Community Centre when a previous lease ended. Historically this building has been a hub of community activity since its early days as a Temperance Chapel. The Town Council wants to continue this tradition. We are planning for FSCC to be a vibrant and attractive space which is available for different activities and enjoyed by a wide cross section of the local community.

For the time being the building is not open to the public because of the Covid-19 restrictions. We undertook structural repairs to the exterior of the building during 2020. This year the Town Council will be undertaking further work to the premises before re-letting any facilities. We also hope to consult with previous users and the local community as we determine our plans.

Bletchley Market Stalls

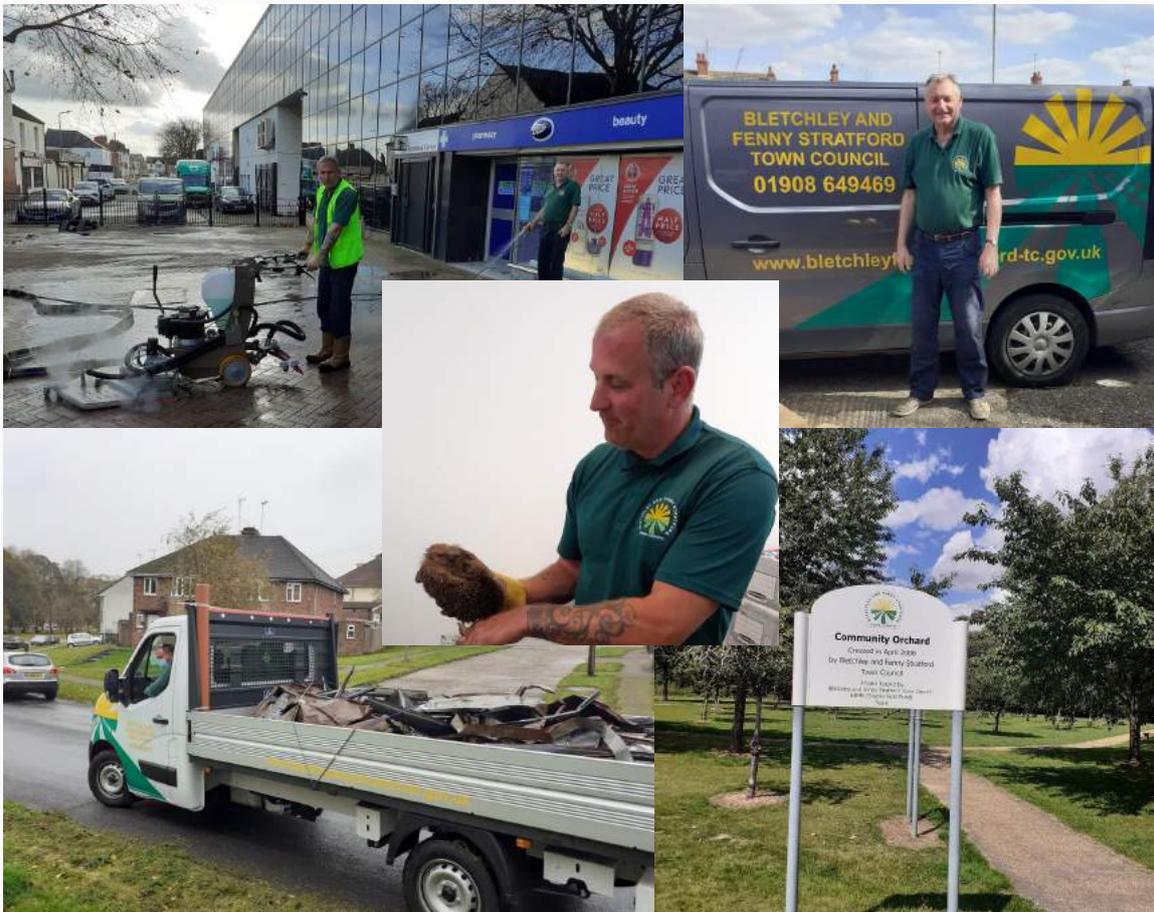
Following government advice and guidance, market stalls selling food continue to sell delicious fresh produce in Bletchley on Thursdays and Fridays.

We have a number of loyal traders who provide market stalls in Bletchley. These stalls supplement the retail outlet in Bletchley's town centre and we encourage residents and visitors to use them. Our market pitch prices are very competitive and we welcome new traders.

Visit our Bletchley Market webpage to find out more.



Rangers Team Roundup



It has been a very productive year for the Ranger Team. Highlights include:

- Using the Gladiator machine (fondly nicknamed Gladys!) to clean the block paving in Queensway. The cleaned paving looks much better and the Rangers will continue to work on the length of Queensway.
- Making excellent use of the new van to help facilitate the Rangers work. The picture above was taken when the Rangers cleared the Community Allotment site, ready for a new tenant who will hopefully make use of the site soon.
- Responding to and supporting local residents by delivering food parcels.
- Ongoing work and maintenance of the Community Orchard.
- One of our Rangers, Dave, even rescued and cared for an injured hedgehog found at Orchardside Allotments back in August!

We will continue to share regular updates from the Rangers on our social media channels.

Town Council grant for Community Boat and new partnership with BMK Waterway Trust

Later on this year, the Bedford & Milton Keynes Waterway Trust is launching an all-electric, fully accessible 12-passenger community trip boat, named Electra, into the Grand Union Canal which will provide cruises for the benefit of Milton Keynes and its communities throughout the canalside.

Bletchley and Fenny Stratford Town Council has contributed to the set-up costs for the Community Boat project and this grant will also support further development of the Community Boat, including its activity and events programme which will benefit groups and communities within our parish. The Town Council has also subsequently entered into a three year partnership with the Waterway Trust.



This photo shows the Electra under construction.

This is a very exciting project and we look forward to seeing the Community Boat in action in a couple of months' time!

Counselling and Wellbeing Support

Residents in our parish can access free wellbeing and counselling support as the Town Council has gone into partnership with the West Bletchley Wellbeing Counselling Service.

If anyone feels that they would benefit from some support at this time, just call or email and they will carry out an initial assessment to see if this is the right support service for you.

Please call: 01908 370 860 (phone lines are open between 10am-12pm and 2pm-4pm with voicemail facilities available too) or email: wbwbcounselling@btconnect.com

Find out more on the West Bletchley Wellbeing Counselling Service's website and on our own website.



**FREE FOR BLETCHLEY AND FENNY STRATFORD
TOWN COUNCIL RESIDENTS ONLY**

**COUNSELLING AND
WELLBEING SUPPORT**

Call: 01908 370 860

Email: wbwbcounselling@btconnect.com

Website: www.wbwbcounselling.org.uk

Allotments



Share your allotment photos!

Email your photos to:
info@bletchleyfennystratford-tc.gov.uk

Allotments are a great place for people of all ages and backgrounds to grow organic fruits and vegetables, keep fit, socialise with like-minded people and enhance biodiversity by cultivating the plots. The Town Council owns four allotment sites within the parish at Larch Grove, Manor Fields, Orchardside, Stoke Road thus providing over 200 plots for the people of Bletchley and Fenny Stratford Town Council to enjoy. The sites at Manor Fields (81 plots), and Larch Grove (24 plots) and Orchardside (71 plots) are managed by the Town Council.

If you would like to be considered as a possible Allotment Tenant, please complete and return the application form available on our website. To do this, simply go to the Allotments webpage under Services. Please note, due to the popularity of our allotments, we may require to hold your data and add your name to the waiting list until a suitable site becomes available.

Town Council Meetings

Town Council Meetings continue to be livestreamed and are available to watch on our YouTube Channel. Simply search for Bletchley and Fenny Stratford Town Council and you will find us and please subscribe to our YouTube channel to stay up to date. Find out more about upcoming Town Council meeting dates and details by visiting the Council Meeting webpage on our website. We also regularly share our news articles on our website too!

You can also receive Town Council meeting updates by email in just a few easy clicks. First, go to our Council Meetings webpage, click on the 'Meetings, Agendas, Minutes' link, then click on the 'Subscribe to updates' button (with the bell icon) and register to receive meeting updates.



Subscribe to the Town Council's YouTube Channel

Councillor Attendance

(As of 10th March 2021)

Councillor	Number of meetings Attended (full council and committee meetings)	Attendance rate (based on attendance at all meetings the councillor was due to attend during the year)
Gavin Bedford (from November 2020)	5	100%
Samantha Browne	16	80%
Keith Ely	24	83%
Richard Graham	16	76%
Ron Haine	23	100%
William Hewitt	6	43%
Ed Hume	27	90%
Mohammad Imran (from December 2020)	3	75%
Ethaniel Kelly-Wilson	30	94%
Angela Kennedy	17	56%
Gary Kenworthy	17	94%
Ayesha Khanom (from December 2020)	4	100%
Michael McDonald	21	77%
E'Amonn O'Rourke	23	92%
Sean Porter	5	29%
Mohammed Rohim	7	50%
Terry Stephens (from October 2020)	6	100%
Mariee Wymer (from November 2020)	9	100%



New Newsletter



We will be distributing a new quarterly Town Council newsletter. The next newsletter will be sent to local residents in late June 2021. If you would like to contribute to the June newsletter, then please send any articles or information to us by **23rd April**. The newsletter will include Town Council news and updates as well as upcoming local events and consultations.

Please see upcoming newsletter contribution and delivery dates below:

COPY DEADLINE DATE	NEWSLETTERS DELIVERED
23RD APRIL 2021	JUNE 2021
23RD JULY 2021	SEPTEMBER 2021
3RD DECEMBER 2021	JANUARY 2022

We want to hear from you!

If you also have local news that you would like to share with our community, we will be happy to share this information on our social media channels and in future Town Council newsletters (we also send out monthly e-newsletters!). Let's ensure that we stay connected and share good news and ideas across our parish.

To discuss this further, please get in contact with Ruth, our Projects and Media Officer, by emailing: ruth.horsburgh@bletchleyfennystratford-tc.gov.uk or via Facebook Messenger.



Share your ideas, concerns and success stories with us

'Where can I get help for my project?'

'I think there should be more focus on...'

'Are you aware of my community group?'

Contact Us

Phone 01908 649 469

Website: www.bletchleyfennystratford-tc.gov.uk

Email info@bletchleyfennystratford-tc.gov.uk

The Town Council office is based at Bletchley Library, Westfield Road, MK2 2RA. These offices are currently closed to the public at this time. The best way to keep up to date is by following us on our social media channels. We are on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, LinkedIn and YouTube where you can watch our Town Council meetings.

