

Mepal Matters

The newsletter for Mepal people

October 2020



website: www.mepalparish.org

Disclaimer: The views and opinions expressed in this publication are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect those of the editor or the Parish Council.

Mepal Play Park

We know that many residents have been pressing us for an indication of when we can safely open the Mepal Play Park. Sadly, we had a number of vandalism incidents earlier in the year, which, coupled with the COVID lockdown, meant we were unable to get contractors in to carry out the necessary maintenance work to safely open the park.

We now have clearer guidance in terms of what we need to do to be able to comply with the legal regulations, in terms of numbers and procedures to safely open the park, and over the last few weeks we have been getting the damaged areas repaired and made safe. The new rules



from 14th September will mean that the maximum number of people meeting in the playpark at one time will be 6, so we will have to work out how this can be safely

implemented. It might be necessary to impose a 6 person capacity limit at any one time.

Chairman Brian Rollason is acutely aware of the importance of being able to open the park as soon as we can, and has personally been involved in the repair work, so please just have a little more patience and we would hope that we can open the park soon.

It has however been lovely to see residents flying kites on the field, having picnics, playing rounders and at least taking advantage of the wonderful field we are lucky enough to have in the village, whilst we try to get the park re-opened.

Coming Soon!

We have money in the budget to add some new equipment in the playpark before 31st March 2021 – but this is your playpark so what would you like to see?

We had planned to complete the necessary repairs in the spring and then to be able to install some new activities for you in the summer but alas our plans were foiled.

We will also be asking the school – but it would be great to get some

ideas from you all. If you have any pictures of a piece of equipment you think would be fun or an idea for us to improve the park, please get in contact as soon as possible.

We do not have bottomless funds, and really need to install only low maintenance equipment, but we really want your input.



Contact us via clerk@mepalparish.org with your ideas, or fill in the 'contact us' form on the website.

Mepal Recreation Field Renovation Project

We have finally been able to get a consensus from a number of contractors for a solution to the uneven surface in the field that sadly caused the temporary suspension of Mepal Senior Football Club last year. We had hoped to be able to start the project much earlier in the year but have about 6 months of delay due to the Corona virus outbreak.

Anglian Land Drainage will start the work to renovate the whole recreation field on 21st September after this was approved via a tender specification process in the July Extraordinary full Parish Council meeting.

Initially the work will form an attenuation pond at the back of the field next to the play area to alleviate the intermittent flooding

problems experienced in the play park and allotment areas.

We will also be levelling the spoils heap at the edge of the field, left from the original drainage, before moving on to the main field during the last week in September. By the time you read this, we should be well under way!

It is hoped that the work will be completed and the surface in a condition to be able to reinstate sport in 2021, something that many residents would like to see.

During the work as we will be reseeding the surface, we ask everyone to only use the perimeter of the field to allow the grass to take root.



Mepal Community Pavilion – Limited Opening

We are pleased to say that after a lot of work to ensure the correct policies, procedures, signage and equipment were put in place, we have been able to open the Pavilion up for the Schools education

booking. This means that we have an ongoing term time booking from 9am – 12pm each Monday-Friday.

Unfortunately, because of the additional cleaning requirements, and with the

general restrictions regarding numbers in gatherings etc, at this stage we cannot take any other bookings for hire of the Pavilion. We will let you know via the website as soon as this changes.

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Councillor Rebecca Margieson

Chairman Brian Rollason

Councillor Cassy Brown

Councillor Georgina King

Visit our website for the new councillor vacancy: www.mepalparishcouncil.org



New Parish Council Website

Regulations came into force on 23 September 2018 which say that all public sector websites must meet accessibility standards by 23 September 2020. Mepal Parish Council was therefore required to commission a new website to ensure that the content and functionality is WCAG 2.1 AA compliant. We agreed to the quote by local Ely company Redact Solutions and have now completed the migration of the old data and are pleased to announce that the new website is live.

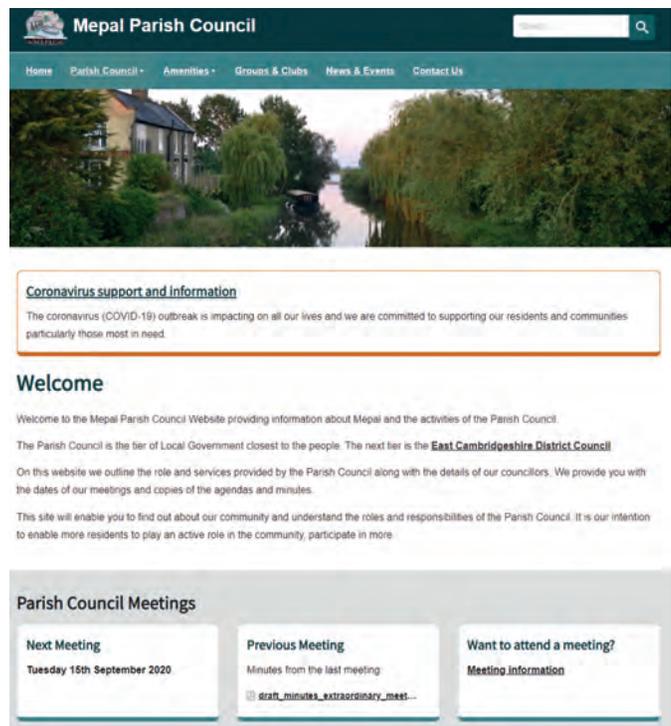
We hope that it will be much more user friendly and any groups in Mepal are welcome to submit news stories for consideration.

We would like to remind all Mepal residents that if they want to contact the Parish Council then the first point of enquiry should always be via the website www.mepalparish.org. Enquiries related to areas under our control can be made via the 'Contact us' form and the contact details to call our Parish Clerk are available.

We have all of the policies and procedures that we are legally required to follow

published on the website and agenda, minutes and meeting details are all available for you to read. Please visit the new website to familiarise yourself with what is happening.

The position of Parish Clerk is not a full-time position, so it may not always be possible to respond immediately and we would ask that any requests are not made via social media channels.



Make sure you visit www.mepalparish.org for all the latest information.

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St Mary's Parish Church

Rector: Rev'd Mary Hancock tel. 01353778722 **Churchwarden:** Mrs Elizabeth Stazicker tel. 01353 778129

Services

Services of public worship have now resumed at St Mary's – every Sunday at 10.15am, including the Harvest Festival service on 11th October. Exceptions to this will be on 8th November when the Act of Remembrance will be held at the New Zealand Memorial at 10.45am, and 29th November when there will be a joint service with Sutton & Witcham at St Andrews Church, Sutton, at 11.30am. All are very welcome at our services at which we have made every effort to ensure that the church is a hygienic and COVID-safe place; sanitising and social distancing arrangements are in place in the church building. Currently there can be no singing in the services. The church is also open every Wednesday from 10am – 5pm for private prayer or a time of quiet reflection.

Annual Meetings

These will be held on Sunday 11th October at the church: the Meeting of Parishioners is at 11.15am following the Harvest Festival service and is open to all residents of Mepal to elect the Churchwardens. This will be followed by the Annual Parochial Church Meeting which is restricted to those persons whose names are on the Church Electoral Roll. Please see the notice at the church for further information.

Events

We still have hopes for a socially distanced event in the near future, possibly a Harvest Supper. but due to changes in government regulations this looks uncertain, so please look out for posters for more information. See details of all our services and events to the right and look out for notices at the church and at Mepal PO & Stores.

Diary dates

October

Sun 4th	Holy Communion BCP	10.15am
Sun 11th	Harvest Festival Eucharist	10.15am
	Parishioners' Meeting & APCM	11.15am
Sun 18th	Holy Communion BCP	10.15am
Sun 25th	Parish Eucharist	10.15am

November

Sun 1st	Holy Communion BCP	10.15am
Sun 8th	Remembrance Sunday - Act of Remembrance at NZ Memorial	10.45am
Sun 15th	Holy Communion BCP	10.15am
Sun 22nd	Parish Eucharist	10.15am
Sun 29th	Joint Service at Sutton	11.30am

A note from Mepal Good Companions:

Hope you are all keeping safe and well and have been able to enjoy the beautiful late summer sunshine. I am sorry to say I don't think we can meet yet which is very sad, Jenny (and Ralph) and I miss seeing you on Tuesday afternoons in the Village Hall.

It is good to see some of you when out in the village, look after yourselves. Best wishes, Jane Edmenson (01353 777621)



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A stylized orange tree with a thick trunk and a dense canopy of leaves. The roots are visible and spread out below the ground line.

Village Hall

Thanks to the grant of nearly £11,000 from the Mick George Community Fund administered through Grantscape, the Hall now has its smart new floor. Instead of the old tattered vinyl tiles, badly worn wood-blocks with potential trip hazards, and shabby unstuck carpet tiles, we now have elegant oak wood-block throughout, all on one level including the side hall. Some doors needed adjusting to clear the new level and our Chairman Allen Sallis has been taking the opportunity to replace them with new ones that add greatly to the smartening up of the Hall's appearance. Hearty hanks are due to him as well, and also to our Treasurer Tony Pleasance, for the work they are putting into the improvements.

This means that we will now be able to host carpet bowls and all sorts of other activities that would previously have been difficult. With the partial relaxation of official Covid-19 restrictions we have been able to declare the Hall open for use again. It may be some time before the testing and tracing system or vaccination allow life to return to anything like normality, and meanwhile we and our hirers must observe the social distancing and other safety precautions to avoid spreading infection. This may seem hard, but we have shown that it can be done, with our very successful Cornish cream teas on Sunday 30th August, where we were delighted to welcome old friends that we hadn't seen since before lockdown. We are planning more events so look out for publicity.

Chairman: Allen Sallis, **Treasurer:** Tony Pleasance, **Bookings Clerk:** Rowena Pleasance 777275, **Secretary:** David Stazicker 778129 david.stazicker@gmail.com, **Other members:** Greg Matthews, Gordon Reid, Rosemary Wells, Lynne Woodward.



A note from the Friendship Club:



We have had some trying times over the last six months just as we were all looking forward to having a lot more freedom this is not going to happen. Due to rises in the corona virus we are having restrictions reintroduced so this means that we must take care and follow rules that has been proposed by the government so that we can be safe. So please take care and stay safe, we are all thinking about each other in this trying time and hopefully we will eventually see a light at the end of an exceptionally long tunnel.

Reminder to Local Businesses



Don't forget that all local businesses are currently being offered FREE advertising in Mepal Matters until 31st March 2021!

Please contact mepalmatters@mepalparish.org if you would like to submit an advert.

A Sad Farewell to a True Fenman



The people of Mepal gathered outside pond farm on 31st July 2020 to pay their respects to Mike Delanoy, who will be greatly missed by so many.

Mike was a devoted husband of Lorna, father to three sons and Grandad to five.. and of course a special honorary Grandad to many Mepal Children. Mike made and gave away over 200 woodies in his latter years and had so many wonderful conversations with residents on his walks around the village.

A True Fenman by MD

I think that I'm a true Fenman –
For most of the criteria I meet:
With the exception of one that is,
In that I haven't got webbed feet!
In order to come here with Vermuyden,
Great (times eight) Grandad left home.
He and his brother helped Cornelius
Drain the lovely Isle of Axeholme.
I was born at King's Lynn, at the mouth of
the Ouse,
And lived there until I was three –
Then moved to Ely for twenty one years:
I couldn't leave the river, you see!
Haddenham next, where the village lies
Just a mile from the River Old West
And now, right close to the Bedford Rivers
In Mepal, the place I like best.
And so the Fens mean so much to me
In Summer, or Winter's flood:
I think the reason's plain to see –
I've got rivers in my blood!

Can You Beat This?

Picture sent in by Pam White.

This Tomato measures approximately 21 inches/ 53cm round and weighed 1lb 6oz/600 grams.

For a scale, the average hand size is about 7.5 inches, so can you imagine 3x the size of your hand!

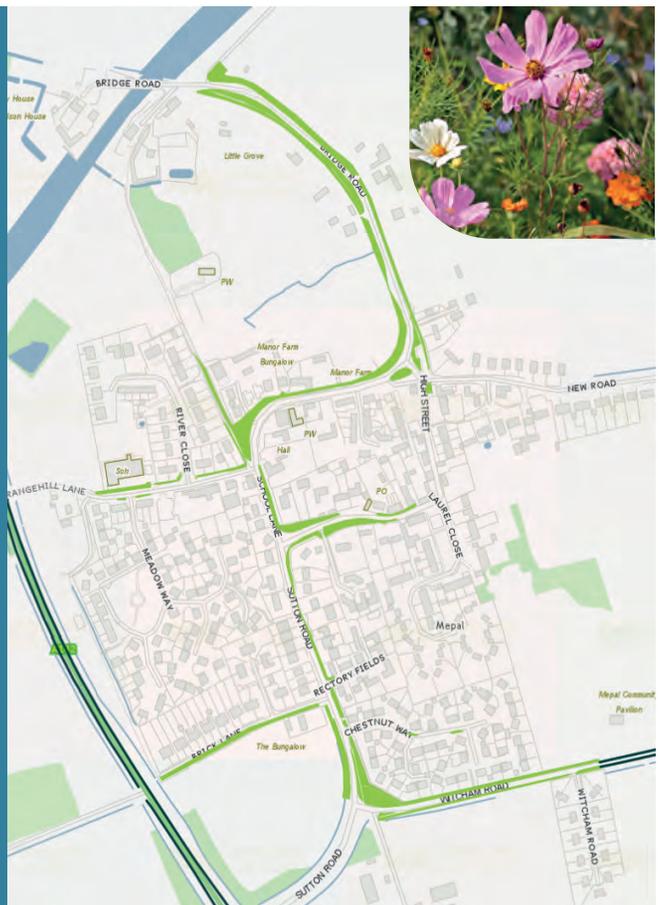
Have you managed to grow anything bigger? Let us know!



Your village needs you!

The Parish Council work hard to get the best value for money for Mepal residents. We are currently assessing all of the areas we are responsible for to ensure we are meeting your expectations (within our budget). We have started this process by obtaining the map pictured to the right from Cambridge County Council in relation to grass cutting. We understand that a number of residents may have wanted to plant (or even did plant) wildflowers in some areas, but these were cut without notice.

We would really love you to contact the Parish Council via our new website www.mepalparish.org to let us know if there are any areas you would like to see planted as wildflower verges and we will do all we can to accommodate this.



Useful Contacts

Medical

Sutton Priors Field Surgery	01353 778208
NHS Direct Online	111.nhs.uk
Please only call 111 if you cannot get help online	
Sutton Pharmacy	01353 778024
Ambulance	999 in an emergency only

Utilities

National Grid (If you smell gas)	0800 111 999
UK Power Networks	Call 105
Anglian water leak report	0800 771 881

Financial

HMRC	0300 200 3300
Universal Credit	0800 328 5644
National Debt line	0808 808 4000
Business Debt line	0800 167 6026

Food and Supplies

Mepal Post Office	01353 778275
Milk and More	0345 606 3606
Plumbs Diary	01223 893033

Other

East Cambs District Council	01353 665555
Cambridgeshire County Council	0345 045 5200
Care Network	01954 211919
Age Concern	0300 666 9860



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