

Mepal Matters

The newsletter for Mepal

May/June 2023



www.mepalparish.org

Village Hall News

We accepted the offer of funding to continue opening the Hall as a Warm Hub on Mondays until the end of April but reduced the hours to 10.30 am – 12.30 pm, because virtually nobody had been taking advantage of the facility outside those times. Thanks again to all who have volunteered to run these sessions through the colder months of the year, as well as to Cambridgeshire ACRE for the organisation and to the original providers of the funds. We were particularly pleased that the sessions served to host the meeting about the future of the Prior's Field GP surgery and the visit by the NHS Covid and flu vaccination team.

All of you except fairly recent incomers will recall the annual Produce and Craft Show as a highlight and one of the best-attended regular village events. Although entries of garden and allotment produce declined over the years, craft items amply made up for this, and the Show ceased not for want of public support but because there were no longer enough people willing and able to undertake the work of organising it. A small financial balance remained, and this was entrusted to our Committee to hold in the hope that the Show or something on similar lines might be revived in the future. More recently the family of the late Sandy Jackson, one of the stalwart long-term organisers of the Show, entrusted us also with the collection of prize trophy cups, many bearing the names of villagers who had donated them in past times. Significant numbers of you have moved into Mepal since 2019 and we wonder whether there might now be enough volunteers to organise an event, ideally as a regular feature, that could make use of these assets.

The defibrillator outside the Post Office and Shop is unfortunately now past its sell-by, and we are joining with the Parish Council in sharing the cost of a new one, which will be installed on the outside of the Hall. It's vital that everyone knows where it is to be, because every second counts in the sort of medical emergency that a defibrillator is designed to deal with.

To celebrate the Coronation of His Majesty King Charles III in May, we shall be serving a Royal Cream Tea between 3.00 and 4.30 pm on Bank Holiday Monday 8th May. We are pleased to announce that on this special occasion refreshments will be FREE OF CHARGE. Supplies will of course be limited, so don't leave it too late to turn up, because when it's all gone, it's gone.

Our public Annual General Meeting will be on Wednesday 10th May starting at 8 pm. As usual, this is your opportunity to hear about the work of our Committee during the past year, to ask questions, and also to volunteer to join our Committee. We have been fortunate in the past two years to recruit some new members,

but others have resigned after making valuable contributions to our work, and we can always do with more.

Chairman: Allen Sallis, Treasurer and Bookings Clerk: Lynne Woodward: 776272 LDSWoodward@hotmail.co.uk, Secretary: David Stazicker 778129 david.stazicker@gmail.com Other members – Tim Bosson, Alan Fayers, June Sallis, Lesley Sculthorpe.

Revd Canon Mark Haworth

Dear Friends,
It is still Eastertide of course, and we continue to celebrate Jesus Christ's Resurrection each day, and not only Sundays all through the year; giving thanks for New Life in its many manifestations.

I would like to thank the parish for playing their part in the richness of Lent, Holy Week and Easter not only in St Mary's Mepal, but also across the group in Sutton and Witcham, notably the services, the Lent Group, and close liaison over pastoral matters. The 'season' culminates 40 days after Easter on Ascension Day, Thursday 18th May, when we join in an evening service at Sutton at 7.30pm; 50 days after Easter being Pentecost (or as we know it more locally Whit Sunday), May 28th, when we will be having our usual 4th Sunday services.....0930 Holy Communion and 1130 Family Service.

In addition, we have continued a time of baptisms/christenings, and Confirmations, alongside the laying to rest of loved-ones, in this parish notably so, across what the Church now calls 'life events', which many of us know as 'the occasional offices', where we meet people at their point of need, and blessing.

We had a good Annual Easter Vestry and Parochial Church Meeting on March 26th, the first of my run of them across all my villages, and prayers are now invited both for the work of the new Parochial Church Council, and the wider Ely Deanery (of which we are the westernmost parish) at the start of a new triennium, 2023-2026.

I continue to rejoice at the social events in this village in which the church proudly plays its part for 10 months every year; long may such community collaboration continue, not forgetting our Church school.

Over the Easter holidays, I very much hope that you enjoyed time with family and friends, as I did, including some time away in other pastures, old and yet in this resurrection season, seen with new eyes through those with whom we have been able to share time. Nothing ever stands still, and nor should it if we believe in God's good purposes and providence for us
With every blessing,
Mark

St Mary's Parish Church

Interim Priest-in-Charge: Rev'd Canon Mark Haworth.
For enquiries regarding baptisms, weddings and funerals please contact the churchwardens: Elizabeth Stazicker 01353 778129 eliz.stazicker@gmail.com or Lesley Sculthorpe 01353 777367 lesleysculthorpe@gmail.com

Church Annual Meetings: At the Parishioners' (Vestry) Meeting held on 26th March Elizabeth Stazicker and Lesley Sculthorpe were re-elected to serve as churchwardens for the coming year. At the Annual Parochial Church Meeting the following were re-elected to the Parochial Church Council (PCC): Jo Hamilton (Secretary), Jane Edmenson (Treasurer), Wendy Smith and John Carey. There are two vacancies remaining. Elizabeth Stazicker was re-elected as St Mary's representative to the Deanery Synod and Lesley Sculthorpe will continue to represent the church on the Village Hall Management Committee.

Sunday May 7th: All are invited to St Mary's Church at 10.30am for coffee & cake to celebrate the Coronation, and if you wish to stay for the service at 11.30am prayers will be said for King Charles III and Queen Camilla.

Plant Sale: Our annual Plant Sale will be on Saturday May 20th at the Village Hall at 12.30pm - a good time to call in for coffee and our hot sausage snacks as well as for our large selection of plants. If you can contribute plants for the sale please bring to the Hall at 12 midday; if you would like us to collect from you please contact Jo on 01353 778871. It's helpful if you can label your plants - there are sometimes ones we can't identify!

Thank you to all who support events at St Mary's- our fundraising is vital to keep a church presence in Mepal. For full details of Sunday services and all our events please see the Diary Dates page and notices at the church and at Mepal Stores.

Friendship Club

We had a busy time at the club over the last couple of months. We have been out for meals and in for afternoon celebrations. Whilst making our easter table decorations, some of our ladies brought easter bonnets in that they had made and there were some excellent ones; it was hard to choose a winner.

We celebrated 20 years since the Friendship club started with an afternoon tea. It's hard to believe it has been going so long, and it is still going strong now, which is great.

I would like to thank those members who help every week with setting up and making tea's and looking after our members throughout the years.

We have the Air ambulance visiting us on May 31st, open to all the village so please come along and enjoy a cup of tea with us. Take a look at our dates to remember to see what's on each week.

Further funding secured to support impacts of the energy crisis

Local charity, PECT, in partnership with Cambridgeshire ACRE are to continue free energy advice service to households in Cambridgeshire (Fenland, Huntingdonshire, East Cambridgeshire, Cambridge City).

After the cold weather we have experienced over the last few weeks, and the rise in energy costs, we are all feeling the pinch when it comes to our energy bills.

Residents can benefit from an advice call or a home visit with an experienced energy advisor. They will be able to share tips on how you can save money on your energy bills, access financial support, improve your home efficiency and reduce any energy debts.

They are also delivering training to front-line workers to help them support residents with basic energy advice and where to direct help.

Nikki Dekker, Energy Lead at PECT comments, *"At the moment support like this is much needed. We hope we can continue to help households save money, be comfortable and warm in their homes, and also reduce energy use or make sustainable changes that have a positive impact on the environment. With Cambridgeshire ACRE and the support of local frontline workers, this service will make a difference to many households in the community."*

"We are so pleased to be able to continue our collaborative work with PECT to support households across the County through the ongoing cost-of-living crisis. Working together we will provide the information and resources that households need to stay warm and healthy, whilst helping them to reduce their bills and deal with any outstanding energy bills," says Kirsten Bennett, Chief Executive of Cambridgeshire ACRE. *"This kind of support is needed now, more than ever before and we are grateful to the Energy Redress scheme for entrusting us with further funding to help those most in need."*

The project, named CHES (Cambridgeshire Home Energy Support Service), has already been running for around 2 years and the current funding will ensure the project can continue until December 2024.

To refer yourself or someone else for support, fill out the form on our website*: www.pect.org.uk/energy-advice.

*Residents outside of the area eligible for support will be referred to other services that are applicable in their region.

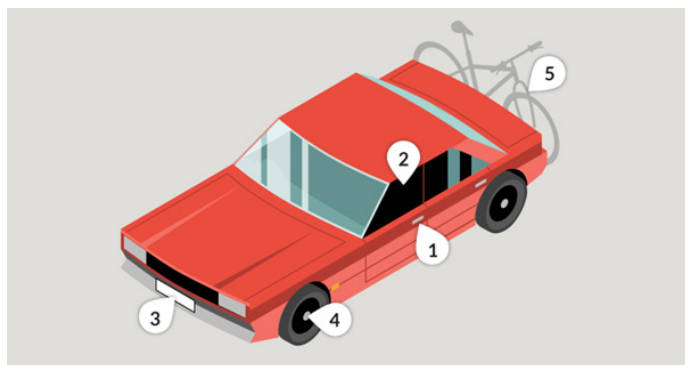
If you are a frontline worker, send us an email at energyadvice@pect.org.uk to find out more about the service and how you can get involved.

Prevent theft from a vehicle

Those of you who follow the Mepal People Facebook Group may have read at the end of March the news that a car thief was spotted in the village on security and doorbell cameras. Unfortunately, a number of Mepal residents lost belongings to this thief so we have been asked to share some advice from Cambridgeshire Police on how to prevent theft from your vehicles.



Having your car broken into and losing your things to thieves can be very distressing. Here are a few simple steps you can take to keep your vehicle, and what's in it, safe.



1. Always lock it

Fuelling up or popping back into your house to get something are perfect examples of how easy it is to turn your back for a moment and forget your vehicle is unsecured. So get into the habit of locking your vehicle even if you're only going to be away from it for a moment.

If your vehicle has wing mirrors that fold in automatically when locked, make sure you lock it properly. Criminal gangs are looking for vehicles like these where the wing mirrors are still out because it is clear to them that the vehicle has been left unlocked.

2. Close windows and the sun roof to prevent 'fishing'

Leaving windows and the sunroof open invites fishing for items through the gap by hand or with, say, a bent coat hanger, which could also be used to unlock a door for them to get in. Thieves can be ingenious. Don't give them the opportunity.

3. Secure your number plates with tamper-resistant screws

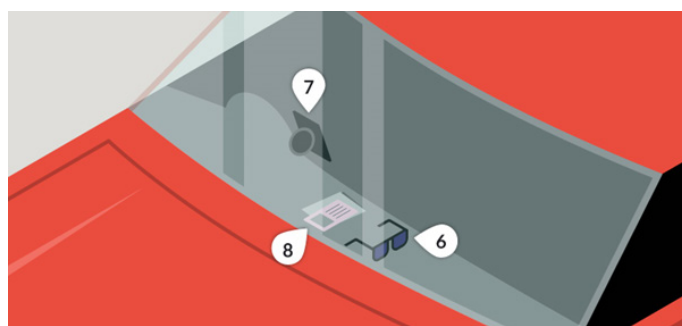
The easiest way to change the identity of a stolen vehicle or avoid speeding tickets and parking tickets is to fit stolen number plates. Using security screws to attach your vehicle's number plates makes it harder for thieves to get your number.

4. Fit locking, anti-tamper wheel nuts to secure alloy wheels

Stolen wheels are valuable, either as parts or for their scrap value. Using locking wheel nuts reduces the risk of your vehicle's wheels being stolen.

5. Secure anything that's on the outside of your vehicle

Anything left on roof-racks, tailgate racks, holiday top boxes or in tool chests are easily stolen when the vehicle is parked. The use of cable locks, padlocks and self-locking tools chests, which are secured to the vehicle, makes them more secure, but still, don't leave things in them if you can avoid it. For further information and advice, visit: <http://www.soldsecure.com/>



6. Take it with you or hide it

Your mobile phone, coins for the car park, sunglasses, packs of medication or other items that can earn quick cash are irresistible to the opportunist thief. Remember, the cost of replacing a window is often much more than that of what's stolen. And it should go without saying that wallets, handbags, purses and credit cards should never be left in an unattended vehicle.

7. Hide electrical items and leave no clues

Leaving sat nav mounts, suction cup marks on windows or cables on view gives it away that you have left a Sat Nav, smartphone or other device in your car. Even if they can't see the Sat Nav or iPad they might still break in to see if it's stored in the car, out of sight.

8. Tool theft from vans

Vans are often targeted by thieves for the tools stored inside. If you have to leave tools in a van overnight, it's a good idea to mark them clearly with your name / company name and address using paint pens and seal with a clear lacquer spray. Alternatively, you can use a variety of other property marking systems. Items that are clearly marked are less desirable and more difficult to sell on.

Consider using a lockable cabinet within your van to store tools – a number of security rated products are available. Small cameras are also designed to record inside vehicles. Visit <https://securedbydesign.com/> for more details.

You can also take photographs of items of value, make a note of the serial numbers and consider registering them online at a property register site.



9. Park in well-lit and busier areas

It can take less than 30 seconds to break into a vehicle. Parking in well-lit areas and busy streets increases the chances of a thief being seen, so they'll probably steer clear.

10. Take your documents with you

Having a vehicle's registration and insurance documents could let a thief pretend to be the owner. Which means they could sell it on quite easily. So, never leave any documents in the vehicle.

11. Choose your car park wisely

If possible, always try to park in well-lit and staffed car parks or those with a Park Mark safer parking award. To find one, simply check out Park Mark: <http://www.parkmark.co.uk/car-park-finder>

Catalytic converter theft

The precious metal in catalytic converters has led to an increase in their theft. Find out what catalytic converter theft is and what you can do about it: <https://www.cambs.police.uk/cp/crime-prevention/keeping-vehicles-safe/catalytic-converter-theft/>

Mepal Walks

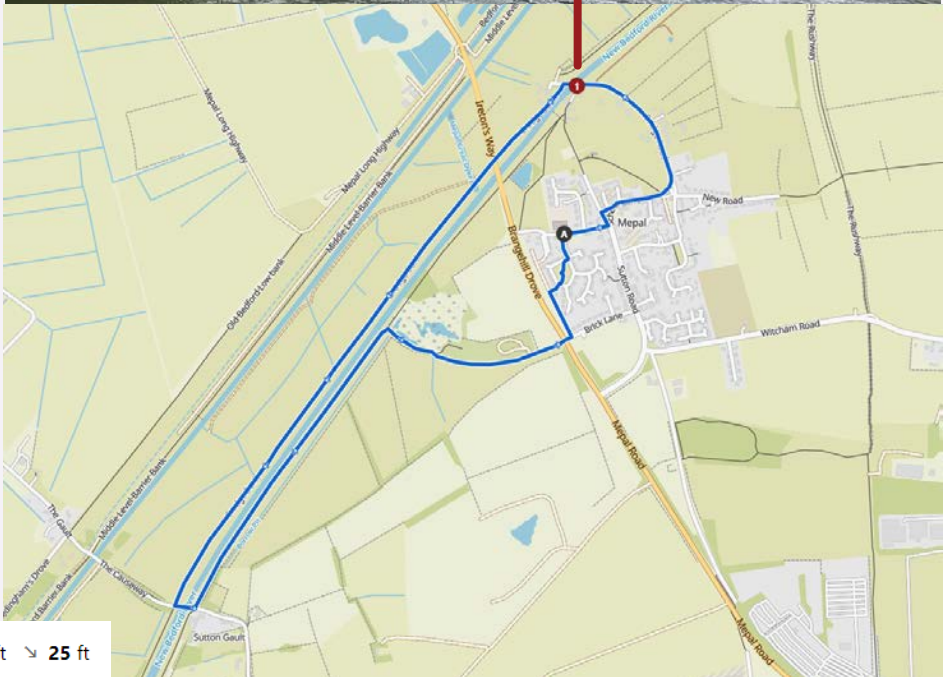
A proposal to the editor last month suggested we run a series of short feature articles with details of the different walks you can go on around the area.

The Parish Council website has a section on Mepal Way and Walks in Mepal that can be found at: www.mepalparish.org/directory/mepal-way-and-walks-in-mepal/

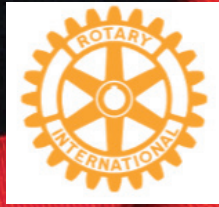
In this issue we feature the Three Pickerels bridge loop from Mepal. Check the July 2023 issue for the Three Pickerels bridge loop from Sutton.

Three Pickerels Bridge loop from Mepal

This 3.12 mile loop is an easy hike suitable for all skill levels with accessible paths.



Easy 01:17 3.17 mi 2.5 mph 25 ft 25 ft



The Rotary Club of Ely Presents



The London Welsh Male Voice Choir

**In concert with
Waterbeach Brass**

Concert in aid of



Arthur Rank Hospice Charity

making every moment count

**7.00 p.m. Saturday 13th May, 2023
Ely Cathedral, The College, Ely CB7 4DL**

Doors open 6.15 pm Concert 7.00 pm

**Tickets £30, £20 and £12.50 available from
Box Office: 01353 660349**

<https://www.elycathedral.org/events/london-welsh-male-voice-choir>

Parish Council News

Who are your current Parish Councillors?

The up-to-date list of your Parish Councillors is always available on the Parish Council Website, so please take a few minutes to look us up!
www.mepalparish.org/parish-council/councillors/

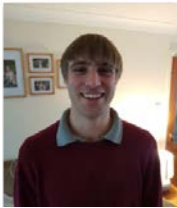
Mepal Parish Councillors



Brian Rollason



Lorna Williams



Jack Hickman



Sam Knightley



Jim Stewart

The Parish Council elections will be held on 4th May and we can now confirm that for Mepal, this will be an uncontested election and that Brian Rollason, Lorna Williams, Jack Hickman, Samantha Knightley and Jim Stewart will be duly elected as your Parish Councillors. This will leave two casual vacancies that can be filled by co-option. The Chairman for the forthcoming year will be elected at the annual meeting of the Parish Council that is scheduled to be held on Monday 22nd May at 18:30.

At the Annual Parish Meeting held on 11th April 2023 in the Community Pavilion, only one member of the public and County and District Councillor Lorna Dupre were present. Chairman Brian Rollason presented his annual report and detailed the achievements of the previous 12 months. Hard copies of the annual report were made available at the meeting and will also be available at the annual meeting of the Parish Council. Details of meetings can be accessed here: www.mepalparish.org/parish-council/meetings/. A digital version of the annual report can be accessed on the website via www.mepalparish.org/parish-council/finance/ and if you would like a hard copy of the report you should contact the Clerk.

At the end of the Parish Council Meeting that followed the Annual Parish Meeting, Chairman Brian Rollason thanked Councillor Lorna Delaney for her valuable input and ideas over the last year as Lorna had decided that she would not stand for election and so this would be her final Parish Council Meeting as a Councillor.

Old Mepal Road Highways gravel piles

You may have noticed that after a huge effort by one of the parishioners, the County Council have now removed the waste gravel on the old Mepal Road. This will make a huge difference to the area and we would just remind dog walkers using this route to please remember to pick up all dog poo and use the bin provided at the entrance to the road.

Vandalism

Unfortunately we need to report that graffiti in the Laurel Close Playpark has meant that we have had to clean and repaint some areas. We are also increasingly receiving reports of children and young teenagers choosing to ignore the signs clearly stating that the storage containers should not be climbed on. They have black anti-climb paint on the top, so please make sure your children understand that it is not safe to try to climb on the top to sunbathe! If your child comes home covered in black marks, please make sure you talk to them and get them to change their behaviour. Please note that we provide the CCTV footage to the police and report all incidents, so we ask the community to work together to educate young people that this behaviour is not acceptable.

The noticeboard on the Playpark has not yet been repaired after the previous vandalism smashed the front, but is on the to-do list to re-instate its use; for now we just have a smaller board on the front of the Pavilion.

No Defibrillator located outside the Mepal Stores

You may not be aware but the Village had two defibrillators (one at the pavilion entrance and one at the village shop which was an older unit). They are both registered on the Circuit, a national scheme that monitors registered units.

At the Parish Council meeting on 11th April a resolution was passed to work with the Village Hall Committee and replace the unit with a new model in a heated cabinet and to install it on the outside of the Village Hall as a matter of urgency. On 12th April, the unit at the shop was removed to use in an emergency to save a life, but we did not get any warning message from the Circuit (where the two units are registered) and only found out when the Clerk took a message on a non-working day from the East Anglian Ambulance Service.

We are working as fast as we can to get the new improved unit in place, but for now please be aware that there is no longer a working unit outside the shop, but the one at the Pavilion is still available.

You should always call 999 in any situation that involves cardiac arrest, and they will direct you to the nearest available defibrillator if appropriate.

DIARY DATES

May

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|-----------|---|---------------|
| Weds 3rd | Friendship Club Bingo, Book/Jigsaw Swap at the Village Hall | 10:00 |
| Sun 7th | St Mary's Parish Coronation Coffee at Church | 10.30 |
| Sun 7th | St Mary's Parish Eucharist | 11:30 |
| Mon 8th | Royal Cream Tea at the Village Hall | 15:00 - 16:30 |
| Wed 10th | Friendship Club Meal at club, Jacket pots | 10:00 |
| Sun 14th | Mepal Market at the Village Hall | 10:00 - 12:00 |
| Sun 14th | St Mary's Holy Communion | 11.30 |
| Weds 17th | Friendship Club Trip to Bury | 10:00 |
| Sat 20th | St Mary's Church Plant Sale at the Village Hall | 12:30 - 14:30 |
| Sun 21st | St Mary's Parish Communion | 11:30 |
| Mon 22nd | Annual Meeting of the Parish Council at the Mepal Pavilion | 18:30 |
| Wed 24th | Friendship Club Bring and Buy at the Village Hall | 10:00 |
| Sun 28th | St Mary's Parish Pentecost Eucharist at Sutton | 10:30 |
| Weds 31st | Friendship Club Visit by Air Ambulance at the Village Hall | 10:00 |

June

| | | |
|-----------|---|---------------|
| Sun 4th | St Mary's Parish Eucharist | 11:30 |
| Wed 7th | Friendship Club Bingo, Book/Jigsaw Swap at the Village Hall | 10:00 |
| Sun 11th | St Mary's Parish Holy Communion | 11:30 |
| Tues 13th | Full Parish Council Meeting at the Mepal Pavilion | 18:00 |
| Wed 14th | Friendship Club Quiz at the Village Hall | 10:00 |
| Sat 17th | Friends of Mepal & Witcham Primary School Summer Fete | 11:00 - 15:00 |
| Sun 18th | St Mary's Parish Eucharist | 11:30 |
| Sun 25th | St Mary's Parish Holy Communion | 09:30 |
| Sun 25th | St Mary's Parish Morning Service | 11:30 |
| Wed 21st | Friendship Club Meal at Seasons | 10:00 |
| Wed 28th | Friendship Club Sangria and snacks at the Village Hall | 10:00 |

St Mary's Church Plant Sale



On Saturday May 20th
12.30 - 2.30pm
at Mepal Village Hall

Bedding plants, perennials
& summer vegetable plants.

Call in for coffee
and a 'hot sausage snack!'

All funds raised in aid of St Mary's Parish Church

Mepal Market



Market Dates for 2023

Jan - No Market
March 12th
May - 14th
July - 9th
September - 10th
December - 10th

Please contact Evelyn at
mepalmarket@gmail.com

**FRIENDS OF MEPAL AND WITCHAM
PRIMARY SCHOOL**

SUMMER FETE

17th June 2023
11am - 3pm

Artisan Pizzas * Face Painting *
Ice Cream Van * Bar * Tearoom *
Grand Prize Draw * Bouncy Castle *
Stalls * Live Music * Mepal Bake Off *
Birds Of Prey Display * And More

FREE ENTRY
COME AND JOIN US ON MEPAL AND WITCHAM SCHOOL FIELD

Parentkind
Member Association

Mepal Parish Council:
Clerk: Karen Peck - 01353 741066
Chairman: Brian Rollason Vice Chair: Lorna Williams,
Councillors: Sam Knightley, Jack Hickman, Jim Stewart



A Mepal Parish Council Publication
Send articles to: mepalmatters@mepalparish.org

Next copy deadline: 16th June 2023

We rely on a team of volunteers to deliver the 475 copies,
please let us know if you can help distribute.