

The Loop

September
2020

£1.00



Café B in the garden

After a few days of changeable weather we were lucky enough to have a lovely sunny morning for our first Café B since March! It was wonderful to see so many people, 25 in total, in Liz and David Watson's beautiful garden at 17 Biddenham Turn and the coffee and cake went down a treat!



We hope to do it all again on 15th September, 10.30am till 12 noon as usual, weather permitting.

To check it's going ahead, please contact Maggie Gardner on 346550.

Sunshine service

We are grateful to Kate Smith for this photograph of the first service at St James's after lockdown was relaxed.

Plans are to hold services at St James's on 6th & 20th September at 9.30am. If the weather is good the services will be in the churchyard, otherwise they will be in the church.



Peter's Picturehouse - September showing cancelled

As you may know, we were planning to restart Peter's Picturehouse in September with a showing of Bridge of Spies. This followed changes in government guidelines, and we had taken all the necessary steps to ensure full compliance with these.

Sadly, we have now concluded it will not be viable for the September showing to go ahead. Despite publicising the showing in the Loop, local notice boards and Covid groups, we have only had 5 places booked and so we will postpone our reopening until there is sufficient demand.

To help us decide when we can resume we are keen to gather further feedback, particularly your views about the environment and conditions needed for you to feel safe to watch and enjoy a film in the Village Hall. For example, you may wish to bear in mind that under current guidelines masks must be worn by all hall users.

Please contact either John or Marihelen Esam (contact details below), who will be very happy to talk to you about any concerns, or to receive an email. If possible, please get in touch before Monday 14th September.

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Rose Houghton

'The Loop' is published by the Parish Church of St James as a service to the communities of Biddenham and Great Denham
The editor welcomes contributions from residents and friends via email to
loopeditor@gmail.com

Letter from the Vicar



Dear All

In Exodus 3, we encounter one of the most mysterious stories in the Old Testament. It is the story of Moses' first encounter with the Hebrew God, Yahweh. In this story we find the beginning of a new kind of faith that acknowledged a singular God of all gods, who created the heaven and the earth and it was this God that called Moses to lead the people of Israel from slavery into freedom. The awakening of this great faith comes when Moses, caught in his own emotional turmoil, encounters a burning bush and out of the flames came the command, 'Take off your shoes. You are on Holy ground.'

These days it is difficult for many of us to understand what is meant by Holy ground. To Moses, it was about being in the presence of God. We are familiar with sacred places; churches, cathedrals, gurdwaras, synagogues and mosques. In Istanbul, last year, I recall removing my shoes before stepping into the majestic Blue Mosque, and I had to do the same in the vast Hindu temple complex in Madurai. It was there that I recall a worshipper screaming at me, because I had dared to take a photograph in one of the smaller temples, of which there are many, each with their own individual protocols of what can or cannot be done.

There are different types of sacred space, however. The New Testament deepens this perception by declaring our bodies as Temples of the Holy Spirit (1 Corinthians 6:16). This is reference, of course, to Christian believers who choose to invite the sacred Spirit into their hearts. Also in the Bible we have a much more inclusive narrative that gives the breath of God (Hebrew: Ruach) as the source of life in our world. Life itself is sacred and that deeper element of life, our inner selves, is also, at times, the sacred space of the Spirit (Psalm 103:1).

I used to teach Psychology to A-level students in a Yorkshire school, and the symbol of the science of psychology is the twenty third letter of the Greek alphabet 'Psi' (ψ). This is the first letter of the word $\Psiυχ\eta$, which we pronounce Psyche. Psyche is the Greek word for 'butterfly' and 'soul' and is the name that is given to the goddess of the soul.

Psyche, the goddess, is initially painted in Greek mythology as the younger of three mortal sisters, who is so beautiful that she can only be worshipped and not loved by any man. Aphrodite becomes jealous of Psyche's beauty, so she sends her son, Cupid (Eros) to fire his arrow at Psyche, so that she would fall in love with a monster. Disobeying his mother, Cupid falls in love with Psyche, and they eventually marry. It is only in the final act of the myth that Psyche achieves mortality by sharing with Cupid the Elixir of life.

Psyche is painted as a fragile creature, who experiences the painful trials of the soul. She is like a butterfly, always passed along by the breeze, always in danger, always at risk and always at the mercy of others. It seems to me that this myth provides us with a wonderful representation of our deeply fragile minds.

When this strange year is over, I wonder what the most significant issues will be. There will be so many casualties of this pandemic. The most significant legacy is likely to be a deeper impact on people's mental health. We can see this already. It is tragic watching people losing all this time in the Autumn of their years, those who have experienced rejection and loneliness, those who have not been able to properly mourn the death of loved ones, children and partners caught during lockdown in abusive homes and those who have quite simply not been able to cope.

I believe that people should, indeed, be alert. We should be alert to the deeper pain and brokenness that others feel, because the mental illness, which is a consequence of this lockdown, will take a long time to heal. When we meet, when we talk, when we listen, we must do it with sensitivity, gentleness, and empathy. We should take off our shoes when dealing with the human heart, because we are on Holy ground.

God bless.

Eric

CORONAVIRUS

SUPPORT NETWORK

Need local help? Ring 01234 815393 or email help@biddenham.org.uk.

Don't forget the Foodbank

IN THESE DIFFICULT TIMES THE NEED IS URGENT



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| Verger | Hilary Hurn | Tel 364251 |
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Location: Biddenham Village Hall

When: Thursdays (term time) 9.30am – 11.30am

Cost: £2 for up to 3 children. First visit free!

News update

Hi everybody. We hope that you and your families are all safe and well, and that you have been enjoying all the lovely sunshine we've been lucky enough to have over the last few months.



We wanted to give you a bit of an update on where things are with Biddenham Under 5s.

Louise and Melanie who together have helped to oversee the running of

this successful group over the last couple of years are both going to be stepping down after the summer. We were just starting to ask around the group looking for people who might like to take over the leading roles (or provide support for whoever does) when we went into lockdown. The plan was to hand over to other willing volunteers during the summer term. Unfortunately Covid has totally taken out the usual transition period.

We obviously have no return date yet, but please do drop us a message either on Facebook or to biddenhamunder5@gmail.com if you might be willing to help out when government guidelines enable us to reopen safely. We totally understand that circumstances may have changed by the time we have an opening date so wouldn't expect any firm commitment at this point, but it would be lovely to have an idea of who might be able to support us.

We very much want to continue providing a safe and stimulating place for parents and young children to socialise together within a village setting as this group has done for many years and we sincerely hope it won't be too long before we can meet once again.

Liz Hurford

Plea from St Mary's

I'm a resident of St Mary's and am active in our new community that is generally blossoming. We have a really lovely community spirit growing, in person (socially distanced!) and online in our two Facebook groups. We have lots of families with young children and also lots of dog owners. We have a bit of an issue with dog fouling however, and it's recently come to light that the culprits aren't even residents of our estate, but people who feel the need to walk their dogs here and leave their dog's gifts for us.

We know that most dog owners are responsible, with only a few who do not clear up after their dogs. Everyone is welcome to walk here but, if you do, please respect our environment and clean up after your dogs.

Kirsty Lister

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Looking towards the Green - but what have you seen?

A list in Dorothy Richards' history of the village published in 1991 of the then seventeen streets in the village includes The Green, known as The Grene in 1348, being part of Main Road, Gold Lane and Manor Road around the village green where the village sign stands.

In the 1920s, Dorothy says, the following houses were considered to have their address as The Green: Biddenham House, Horseshoe Cottage, Meadow End Cottage, Rose Cottage, The Old Vicarage, Dawn Cottage, The Manor House, and Green (Mannings) Farm which was where the bungalows now stand in Gold Lane by the path to the village pond.

Here in a painting by Cyril Pilgrim is a view looking towards the village green. But it's not quite as you see it today: we know from Dorothy's book this is how it would have looked, more or less, at some point between 1977 and 1987.



She writes about the two signs you can see on the green in the painting, one put up by Bedfordshire County Council in 1951 commemorating the Festival of Britain, and the other by the Parish Council in 1977 commemorating the Queen's Silver Jubilee. These two signs were replaced in 1987 by the then new village sign organised by the Parish Council and the Biddenham Society; and Dorothy says *'it is proposed to re-erect these two signs within the parish boundary.'* Were they or have they disappeared into the mists of time?

There is a similar style of sign, a bit battered, in Bromham Road near the junction with Biddenham Turn as you approach from Bedford.



There are three faded, incomplete illustrations on discs seemingly stuck on the sign. The one to the left includes '51' and looks like what remains of a Festival of Britain star, and the one to the right looks like what remains of the Bedfordshire County Council Coat of Arms, which coincidentally were officially granted in April 1951, the month before the Festival of Britain opened.



A Festival of Britain Star and coat of arms for comparison

The central disc lists ten years although some have lost their colour: 1959, 1961, 1968, 1971, 1972, 1974, 1978, 1983, 1984 and 1989.

Dorothy's book includes a list of dates, starting from 1971 and ending in 1990, of the village's success or otherwise in the Best Kept Village competition run by the Bedfordshire Association of Parish Councils. In 1974, 1978, 1983, 1984, 1988 and 1989 her list shows the village winning 1st prize. The disc on the sign includes 1972 which is not listed in Dorothy's book, which does though include 1988 which is not listed on the sign.

And 1988 and 1989 included on the sign come after the removal of the two signs from the village green in 1987 when the then new village sign was erected.

Is the Bromham Road sign one of the original two signs from the village green, with a later addition in the centre? Were such signs made in the 1950s in the way this sign is made? Is it a later sign made to mimic in part the original? Does the central disc relate to the Best Kept Village competition or some other notable years in the village's history? Can any longstanding resident throw some light on whether this is one of the original signs and, if it is, what might have happened to the other?

Cyril's painting also shows two small trees on the village green. But were two small trees there at some time during that decade? One current resident who lives close by and did during that period can't remember them.

An aerial view of the village green in a local newspaper in 1965 possibly shows, though it's hard to be sure, one of the two signs albeit in a different position than shown with the second sign in the painting. Does anyone remember if the first sign initially faced the road looking toward the grounds of Biddenham House? The aerial photograph doesn't show the two small trees on the village green as in the painting.

So were those two trees there on the village green at some point between 1977 and 1987? Could they have been planted when the second of the two signs was erected in 1977?

Can anyone resident then and still resident now throw any light on any of this? Better still does anyone have any photographs of the village green between 1951 and 1976 with just one sign in place, and/or between 1977 and 1987 with the two signs, and maybe even the two trees, in place? And a really long shot would anyone like to claim the honour of being the person in the painting walking the dog, if they weren't a touch of artistic licence!

Cyril Pilgrim painted other watercolours of village scenes in Bedfordshire and Buckinghamshire: I've seen photographs of two, one of Stagsden and one of Lavendon. But of Cyril himself I have found no other information. But maybe you know something of him?

So many questions: might you have some of the answers?

Peter Applewhite

Letter to the Editor

Thank you so much for keeping The Loop going through 'The Time of Covid', as I have heard historians call it. I really appreciate, as do many others, the time and effort that you, as the editor, have to invest to bring the production into fruition.

All contributors need a 'pat on the back' too but social distancing does not allow that so my heartfelt thanks to them as well.

Val Fitzhugh

Biddenham Cricket Club

Junior cricket dominates



We can report that in the month since 18th July a total of 13 matches have been played against other clubs (5 senior and 8 junior). In addition 5 junior practice games have been played across the age groups (under 11's to under 15's). 13 of the total of 18 matches have been played at Biddenham.

Across the junior age groups we have managed to include around 60 youngsters in the matches and the enjoyment has been shared by both the players and their parents who have attended the games.

The weather (until this week) has been very kind, but games are now being lost to the weather, but there is still the intention to play on into September as far as is possible. At the time of writing no dates for September cricket have been confirmed, however a list of forthcoming matches at Biddenham is posted at the entrance gates to the pavilion and field each week to inform everyone when the field is scheduled to be in use for cricket.

Thanks are due to the junior team managers Chris Spurgeon and Julian Krishna for the organisation that they have undertaken and of course David Watson for his care of the ground through the variable weather that we have had recently, especially the heat wave at the start of August.

The senior team has been taking part in an 8 team competition organised by Elstow CC and there will be a series of play-off matches in early September once the first round of games has been completed by the end of August. Hopefully these will signal a change of fortune for us as only one match has been won so far.

Finally thanks once again to Deborah Slade and her cleaning "team" who have made arrangements so that we can have limited, but essential, use of the Pavilion during training and matches.

Richard Fone

A reminder that club news, fixtures and results appear on the website at:

<http://biddenham.play-cricket.com/home>

Unfortunately the 100 club draw is currently suspended and there will be news about this in a future issue of the Loop.

Contact numbers:

| | | |
|----------------------|----------------|--------------|
| Chairman | Glenn Taylor | 07778 479479 |
| Cricket Secretary | Richard Fone | 07818 678697 |
| Junior Chairman | Chris Spurgeon | 07707 771606 |
| Club Welfare Officer | Maija Bissett | 589473 |

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This month in the garden

I was brought up in a war-torn and economical time to believe that "all things in moderation" was a good motto to live by. For most of my life the weather has behaved according to that principle where it followed the pattern traditionally associated with each of the seasons. We could expect that Winter would have its share of snow and ice and freezing days, Spring meant some warm days and April showers, Summer the occasional bout of heat but, generally, a mixture of wet and dry days that kept things on a pretty even keel while Autumn could bring lovely calm sunny September days and a colourful October.

Climate change seems to be altering all that with the weather frequently taking things to extremes. This summer has been a prime example with prolonged scorching heat followed by grey days and torrential downpours. Gardeners are increasingly wondering what we are supposed to do about it. Is it worth paying for lawn care when the grass will often be shrivelled up? Shall we grow runner beans if they are likely to be tough with hard beans rather than soft flesh or is it ethically right to use a sprinkler when water is a precious resource, sometimes in short supply? We all have to make our own decisions and, meanwhile, we have to make the best of the gardening style that we are used to.

September can be a month of vibrant colour. Dahlias are back in fashion and should be at their best. Most of the taller varieties will need staking and tying in and watch out for minor shoots that develop around the main stem (or stems). Cut these out so that the plant puts its energy into flower production and keep dead heading, not just cutting the dead flower head off but cutting the stem down to a pair of leaves where more flowers are likely to grow. Give them a thorough watering, perhaps once a week. Michaelmas daisies come into their own in September and October and won't need much attention beyond some tying

in and seeing that they get watered in dry weather.

The general answer to the question I raised above about the use of sprinklers is that it makes much better use of water and is better for plants if they are watered individually at the base rather than having water sprinkled over the foliage. When time is at a premium it is, of course, tempting to use a sprinkler. Water in the evening or early morning when water has time to soak in rather than evaporating. Plants in containers need watering much more frequently than plants grown in open ground, which generally means daily in hot dry weather. You can stop feeding container grown plants now. Containers will often be used on patios but they can be very effective dotted around a flower bed, hiding the pot where possible with the foliage of other plants and they are useful for filling gaps. They are also good for plants that need winter protection as they can easily be brought in under cover.

Thoughts will also be turning to next year's gardening and this is the key time for planting spring bulbs. You may well have already ordered on-line but there will be plenty of bulbs in shops and garden centres now. Look out for the less common bulbs beyond daffodils and tulips to add variety and a range of colours and height to the garden. Remember that planting tulips is best delayed until November to reduce the risk of disease and, even if there are snowdrop bulbs for sale, it is best to wait until you can get them 'in the green' after the flowering period when they establish much better. Bulbs naturalised in grass can look lovely. The best effect is achieved by throwing the bulbs randomly around the area where they will be grown rather than spacing them out evenly. Choose varieties suitable for naturalising and the general rule for depth of planting is two-and-a-half times the height of the bulb.

There will always be some general maintenance to do. Keep dead-heading flowers, annuals and perennials, and cut down the stems of perennials that have flowered. Cut off flowered seed heads of plants that self-seed prolifically and that can be a nuisance where you don't want them. Where you have harvested vegetable crops keep the weeds under control with regular hoeing when plants are small. Blanket weed may still be a problem in ponds and keep some areas of water clear by thinning plants or removing some of the oxygenating plants.

Jeremy Arthern

Andrew Charles

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Road verges

If all the road verges were managed according to Plantlife's guidelines (see plantlife.org.uk) instead of being frequently 'shorn' to within an inch of their life (as they are in this village) there could be 400 billion more wildflowers growing across the UK, providing precious habitats for our declining wildlife.

In the past I have recorded over 60 different species of flora on the piece of ground by the roundabout into Deep Spinney. It would be so easy to create a 'Conservation Corner' there. It would also save the borough some money and we may even find some bee orchids growing there in future.

Val Fitzhugh



Bee orchid



We have both positive and negative news to report this month.

The negative news is that on Tuesday 4th August the Fire Brigade were called to the pond site to deal with a fire at the western side of the pond in the far corner where the dovecot used to stand. We do not know whether this was started deliberately or the inevitable consequence of the careless use of matches or cigarettes, but we thank the two girls who alerted the emergency services.



You can see from the photograph that a reasonable area of ground was scorched, and nearby trees blackened, but no lasting damage and nature will recover. In the meantime, we are planning to fence this area off to prevent access to the back of the pond and disturbance to the ducks and moorhens



On a very positive note, the old wooden gate at the Gold Lane entrance to the pond has been replaced. The new metal gate having been provided by Bedford Borough Council, delivered to us by Bedford Highways Department and the installation carried out by volunteers from a local

walking group, ably assisted by our own Chris Jones and David Wilkinson, all on an extremely hot day. During the day, David even found the energy to do some repairs to the stone wall and trim the side of the hedge at the western end. The old gate was made from parts of an even older gate and will be securely placed alongside the new gate as part of the fence to show off its old fittings and ironwork, possibly made in the village blacksmith's forge. We thank the Council for their financial support, our volunteers for their labour and expertise and Paul Godden for masterminding the process. We hope that you like the result.

Equally as positive, is the fact that we have taken delivery of a new bench to replace the one that had to be dismantled earlier in the season, and we thank our Parish Council, who have



provided the bench in memory of Alison Southern, former Clerk to the Parish Council who sadly died earlier this year. We hope that you will all enjoy many contemplative moments whilst sitting here.

The water level has thankfully stabilised after the very hot period helped by the recent heavy rainfall. However, life under and on the water goes on and there will be a more detailed report on aquatic life next month. We are actively considering how we can deal with the encroaching reeds and rushes, but have not yet found a solution to this problem.

Finally, as a reminder, please treat the pond with respect. We are happy for everyone to enjoy spending time there, but please, please take your rubbish home with you if you come for a picnic. Although a bin is provided, the rubbish is removed by a volunteer and with the number of bottles, especially beer bottles, the rubbish needs sorting by hand prior to recycling, not a pleasant job!

The Committee has been working hard since lockdown restrictions have been partially lifted to try and restore the pleasing setting of the pond and to make positive improvements, but if you care about the Pond and wish to improve your green credentials, please consider either joining the Committee to help us, or becoming a Friend to support us financially. The process is very easy, just send an email to Jane Knight (details below) and a standing order form will be sent to you. The minimum contribution that we request is £5 per household, although we of course welcome larger subscriptions.

Stay safe and continue to enjoy the pond.

The Pond Team

Contact Details

| | |
|------------------------|------------------------|
| Chris Jones | chrisj49@gmail.com |
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Biddenham Parish Council

Our next meeting –
IMPORTANT INFO

The Parish Council meets every second Wednesday of most months. We very much welcome hearing from residents, there being a public “open session” near the start for anyone wanting to say something. Please call in and let us know anything concerning you about our village, or just listen. The date for the next full meeting is **Wednesday 9th September at 7.30pm.**

To participate, please ring **0208 080 6592** and then use your phone keypad to enter the code **524 544 164** followed by the # key. Calls are national rate, I’m afraid. We cannot stretch to a service where we pay for your phone call via a toll free number.

Alternatively, and at no charge, you can use a computer or tablet by accessing the Internet and carefully entering <https://zoom.us/j/524544164>

This information is provided on the village website at biddenham.org.uk.



Peter Chase
Chairman

Marriage

I’ve been married more than forty years,
In fact its sixty-two
It is a long time, I’m aware
Only given to so few.

It’s love, of course, that starts it off,
The ‘sex’ cementing glue.
But over time you realise
Not all you’re told is true.

What is the secret I am asked?
By many of our friends,
It’s compromise, of course,
Against the modern trends.

Sometimes my wife has all the say
At other times it’s me.
But most of the time we think alike
We compromise, you see.

For some the glue of sex remains,
That’s alright for some people,
But it’s not the most important thing
For cohabitating people.

The frailties of human kind
Can sometimes cause a strain
But love between the two of you
Can often soothe the pain.

It’s companionship and shared interests,
Shared values, honesty.
But ‘Forgiveness’ is the greatest test
That love will face, you see.

Life is a passage, long and hard,
Best shared with someone else.
So when you and your wife agree
You have Life’s purest wealth.

There was a time when ‘marriage’ meant
That sex could then take place.
And children brought up honestly
Not bringing down disgrace.

But Marriage is much more than that
It is the joining of two hearts and minds
Declaring to the world together
To face the best and worst of times.

For marriages that are arranged
Their actions can destroy or help love flow,
The principles are just the same,
Two hearts and minds together grow.

Although times change, as is the case,
Gay, Lesbian, straight, Transgend,
The values here before explored don’t change,
Love always will transcend.

Robin Salter

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stjamesquiz@mail.com

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To register and for participation details contact John
Barkas at stjamesquiz@mail.com

Biddenham History Society

The 1956 Biddenham Women's Institute Scrapbook devoted a page to Old Customs in the Village. A contributor wrote the following:

'The Harvest-Home or Horkey was one of the principal celebrations of the year and was eagerly looked forward to. When the last load of corn was gathered, it was decorated with ribbons and boughs, and dragged into the stack-yard. A cask of ale was broached. After their thirst was quenched, the labourers went home and returned to the farm later, washed and reclad and accompanied by their womenfolk. They sat down in the farm barn at about 6 o'clock to a large meal consisting of cold roast sirloins, hams, pork pies, pasties, pickles and sauces, tarts, jellies, cakes, biscuits and sweetmeats, washed down by ale, tea and home-made lemonade. The meal lasted a long time, as the guests did not, everyday, eat their fill. Speeches followed the meal and then the floor was cleared for dancing. The farmer and his wife danced with their employees in order of seniority. Fiddles supplied the music and dances like 'Three Meet' and Sir Roger were most favoured.'

How different from the harvest in 2020. A friend who farms in Bedfordshire texted me to say that she and her father were rushing to get in the grain harvest in mid-August as thunderstorms were forecast. They had no other help. We noticed that the grain harvest in the fields near the church in Biddenham was completed between 8.00am and 8.00pm one day in mid-August, again because storms were threatened. Harvesting is now a solitary job: one man per machine, cutting and threshing. There is no gathering of village labourers or immediate festivity. If there is a harvest supper, it takes place after the harvest and is led by the church and not by labourers and farmers. There may be food and drink but spontaneous country dancing has disappeared. The Covid crisis will have put an end to any gathering at all at least for this year, so we can but look back on the gatherings and jollity of the past with nostalgia.

As there are no History Society meetings in September and October, I would recommend a good read. Jon Smith's 'Distant Drums' is a beautifully presented compilation of the memories that residents of Biddenham sent to the Loop to mark the centenary of the end of the 1914-1918 War and the 80th anniversary of the start of the 1939-1945 War and the 75th anniversary of D-Day. It is well worth obtaining a copy from Jon and sharing the memories and recollections.

Kathy Fricker

Distant Drums



1914-18 1939-45

Biddenham Remembers

To buy a copy, priced £10, please email Jon at horseshoe50@btinternet.com.

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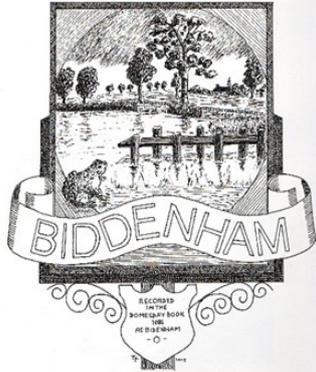
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The Biddenham Society



**56th Annual Lunch and AGM
SUNDAY 1st NOVEMBER 2020
12.30 pm In the Village Hall**

In view of the current uncertainty regarding holding large gatherings in confined spaces in the immediate future, it has been decided to CANCEL the 2020 Annual Lunch and AGM.

Instead, the society will publish a short 12 month report on planning applications received, identify objections made, and give the decisions of the planning authority. Residents will be able to raise questions on any issue by e-mail. The review will be published in the November issue of 'The Loop', and posted on parish council noticeboards.

Celebrating and preserving Biddenham's beauty and heritage

The Biddenham Society

You may be aware that Bedford Borough Council has released its Local Plan up to 2030 and is currently in a consultation period (ends 4th September). In this it states that, as a result of the Government's National Planning Policy Framework, it may need to make new allocations to provide up to 15,000 new houses to 2040. It provides a range of options and seeks comments on these.

The Biddenham Society will be responding to these options and the plan itself and will base its response on five specific areas of interest and relevance:

1. Policies will need to be agreed in the early stages of developing this plan and the Society requests that it will continue to be consulted on these.
2. Specifically, retention and enforcement of Policy 19 is necessary to avoid further encroachment of the green space between Biddenham and Bromham.
3. It recommends that Policy 19 should be expanded to include maintenance of the green space between Biddenham and Great Denham also, i.e. to protect the current Great Denham Golf course from being developed.
4. With reference to the recent change to freeing up the planning process, the Biddenham Society strongly urges the authority to classify the remaining undeveloped land west of Gold Lane, plus the Great Denham Golf Course, as protected areas under the proposed new legislation.
5. The Society recommends that there should be no further large-scale housing developments within a decent radius of Biddenham. Recent developments have reduced significantly the amount of green space in the surrounding area. These developments in the last 25 years include:
Deep Spinney – 350 houses built in the mid-90s
Great Denham – 1,600 houses built since the late 1990s
North of Bromham Road (West) – 500 houses built from 2017
North of Bromham Road (East) – 200 houses built from 2017
Gold Lane – 249 houses due to be built from 2021
North of Bromham Road Old Golf Course – 700 houses planned to start in the coming years

If you are interested in the plan and the papers please have a look at the relevant papers here - <https://tinyurl.com/BedfordLocalPlan2030>

Or feel free to get in touch with me.

Will Jenkin
Vice Chair
The Biddenham Society
will@jenkin.me.uk

Founded in 1965 by a group of concerned residents, The Biddenham Society remains committed to the continued preservation of the beauty, history, character and heritage of the village.

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Letter from Beirut

We are grateful to Edwin Martin for sharing this letter from his friend Tom in Beirut following the explosion.

This is a letter that I've sent to friends who have sent a thousand dollars:

The first evening after the disaster as I was driving home, I prayed: "Jesus, let me help one person!" Annie then got in touch with me as I was about to drive home and said that she had heard from friends that this lady was all alone in her damaged house, eighty-two years old. I told Annie that I was going down to see her, as I couldn't get through on the phone! I didn't feel like it, but by nine in the evening I was down and was able to find another side road to get past the military checkpoint stopping all cars driving from Corniche Nahr towards L'Electricite du Liban. The cars didn't move and with the road covered with glass I was happy to find a good place to park the car and walk in the darkness together with tens of others and passing all the cars. It's good that it was so dark that I couldn't see all the destruction.

The blaring sirens of ambulances dominated the eerie Stalingrad war-scenery and as there was yet another military checkpoint stopping us I took another side street in an area I know well. (After all this from the beginning I had been on the two-mile-long Armenia Street!) I took yet another side street and despite total darkness I saw a destruction that I hadn't anticipated. Yes, all of these shops with car-parts and garages manned with capable mechanics, car-electricians and all that I had needed over the years to keep my van going had during the last decade become a most fashionable area with restaurants, bars, pubs and bohemian shops and even libraries. Some residents had moved out as they couldn't adjust to the eternal jet lag generation who cannot sleep at night and cannot get up in the morning that was frequenting this area almost every night. But this old lady lived in the midst of it with a fashionable steakhouse just below and a pizzeria next to it. I saw the ugly skyscraper next to her house and there wasn't a single light, not even candle light. I entered her building and was shocked to see that the heavy iron-door had been blown away. I walked up the stairs filled with glass and debris and arrived at Shake's door on the first floor and hardly dared shock her by calling her name. She couldn't close her front door and could hardly open it. She was not only shell-shocked, she looked it, in the candle light. She started telling me what had happened and looking at the huge nine-foot book case that hadn't moved with another small bookcase that had collapsed I realised what a miracle it had been that, when she fell to the ground in the middle of that room, that huge bookcase hadn't covered her and killed her. How she had just turned the gas off in her totally damaged kitchen is another miracle! After a few minutes two young people, a girl and a boy, came to the door and asked if we needed anything, I realised that there is Grace in Hell.

I told Shake to come with me, which she resolutely turned down and then I promised that the next morning we'd come and help her out.

At midnight I went and visited two other families and saw more houses with open doors and doors that had been blown into oblivion and apartments with no doors at all, and with windows that were hanging on electric lines and trees opposite. One family I told to come to me and they put a few things together and joined me. After one night and two days their home is ready to be repaired. But in the whole area there is still not electricity and this area never used to have generators like our area, as people in Beirut only used to get three-hour cuts during the hours of the day.

The next morning we could see what had really happened in this area some five hundred metres from the blast. You have already seen the pictures! In a way I was happy that my iPhone didn't work as everybody before and after the explosion would tell me not to get close to the poisonous fumes in the area. Once Shake's home started looking like a damaged apartment, I realised that I couldn't do more, not having the "touch" to make it into a home. When I was trying to mobilise my exhausted body to carry down the debris to the pavement three beautiful young girls with masks came to the door and asked what they could do. I told them that I'd be more than happy if they could take the debris down. And in a moment all these bags were being carried down and the same girls got their brooms out and started cleaning the stairs. On the way down Armenia Street I was given food and I kept on crying till I got to my car seeing tens of young people cleaning the homes, shops, and carrying garbage! The most beautiful young people full of life turning something so ugly around so you can start believing in a beautiful future. (Yes, friends, me and my generation have given all these years of hell to this new generation. We have turned garbage-collecting into "fruitful" politics. May God have mercy on us!)

Yesterday we went back with a builder-carpenter, who will repair Shake's apartment! While there we met the neighbour with one arm showing us how young people had cleaned his home with less damage!

Wherever I have been I've been told about miracles as God has been very active once more in this City of disasters. Jesus gave me "the one" to be helped and there will be help for more poor people trying to find a way to repair what has happened!



What's On?

11.00am Sundays and 6.00pm Wednesdays: St James's church is continuing to hold services via Zoom so keep an eye on your email for details.

September

Sun 6th September Service at St James's 9.30am, see page 1

Wed 9th September Biddenham Parish Council meeting via Zoom 7.30pm Details of how to join the meeting are on page 8

Sun 13th September Service at All Saints, 9.30am

Tue 15th September Café B, 17 Biddenham Turn, 10.30-12noon, see below

Sun 20th September Service at St James's 9.30am, see page 1

Sun 27th September Service at All Saints, 9.30am

October

Sat 24th October 7.30pm Friends of St James Zoom Quiz Night, see page 8

Some classes are restarting at **Biddenham Village Hall**, see the website <https://biddenhamvillagehall.org.uk/>

Biddenham Pavilion is open for bookings.

Café B... 

Weather permitting we will be serving coffee and cake in the garden at 17 Biddenham Turn on **Tuesday 15th September** between 10.30am and 12.00 noon.

To check it's going ahead, please contact Maggie Gardner on 346550.



A new campaign called *Safety in Neighbours* has been launched by Neighbourhood Watch to remind people to be alert to burglars operating where they live.

Hall Booking Details

Biddenham Village Hall

From the Village Hall website you can check availability on the diary, look at the facilities and fill in a booking form. Contact details for regular events are also there. www.biddenhamvillagehall.org.uk

Church Barn

Contact the Booking Officer, Jan Burns on 344019 or janburns@gmx.com if you would like to hire the barn. Smaller than the Village Hall, it is ideal for a small party or meeting.

Pavilion

The hall is available for children's parties, anniversary lunches, christening receptions, meetings etc. We can also hire the small upstairs meeting room which has tea and coffee making facilities.

Booking enquiries to biddenhampavilion@hotmail.co.uk or Debs Slade on 07808 579330.

Great Denham Community Hall

www.greatdenhamcommunityhall.co.uk



The Friends of St James
- the charity which helps conserve the church, churchyard and barn for future generations

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Treasurer

Peter Leverkus
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**Welcome Packs for
New Biddenham Residents**
Contact Richard Church Tel: 214805

The Loop

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All **October** articles, preferably by e-mail in Word format, to loopeditor@gmail.com or to 22 Day's Lane and adverts to 3 Queen's Close (cj.sugars@talktalk.net) by **Wednesday 23rd September** please.



The views expressed in 'The Loop' by various community groups do not necessarily represent the views of St James's Church or the Parochial Church Council.