CMK Life

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CMK Town Council Newsletter | Summer 2023

TACKLING PARKING PROBLEMS DURING CAMPBELL PARK EVENTS

Over the past few years there has been an increase in events being held in Campbell Park, which has caused a strain on parking. Residents have shared concerns about the often-random parking arrangements for the different events, which can put parking pressures on residential areas. The Town Council raised this issue with The Parks Trust, who are responsible for events in Campbell Park. It was established that larger-scale events, such as Pride, are likely to have signage directing cars to the city centre parking, however, it is too costly to do this for smaller-scale events, such as community festivals.

To remedy this, The Parks Trust has decided to purchase cones to block off residential and prohibited areas, and the Town Council will be purchasing temporary signage for The Parks Trust to use to ensure attendees are directed to appropriate event parking.

Town Councillor Peter Lightfoot, who represents Campbell Park, said: "We hope that purchasing signs will relieve some of the impact for local residents, especially as there will be dozens of events in the park this year. We welcome your feedback on the plans and any suggestions you may have too."

Wheelie bins or sacks? New waste collection starting in September

Households across Milton Keynes have now started to receive their wheelie bins, which will be used for waste collection from September. Eligible properties will each use four bins: black (general waste), black with blue lid (plastic, metal and glass), black with red lid (paper and cardboard), and green (food and garden waste). The black and green bins will be collected weekly, with recycling collections being on alternate weeks.

The Town Council has been working with the City Council to establish a solution for CMK properties unsuitable for wheelie bins, such as apartments and townhouses. Households should have received letters stating what collection type they will receive, and also had the opportunity to request a review if they believe their allocation is unsuitable. Generally, apartment blocks with communal bins will continue to use them as normal and townhouses with limited access will be receiving sacks. Townhouses, such as those along North Thirteenth Street, will get black sacks (general waste), blue sacks (plastic, metal and glass), red sacks (paper and cardboard). These properties will also have the option to get a green wheeled bin for food and garden waste. Similar to the wheelie bins, the black sacks and green bins will be collected weekly while blue and red sacks will be collected on alternate weeks. For those receiving wheelie bins, they are currently being delivered by the City Council, and the sacks will be delivered sometime in August. Households should continue disposing of their waste as normal until w/c 28th August, when they can use their new waste collection method ready for collection w/c 4th September.

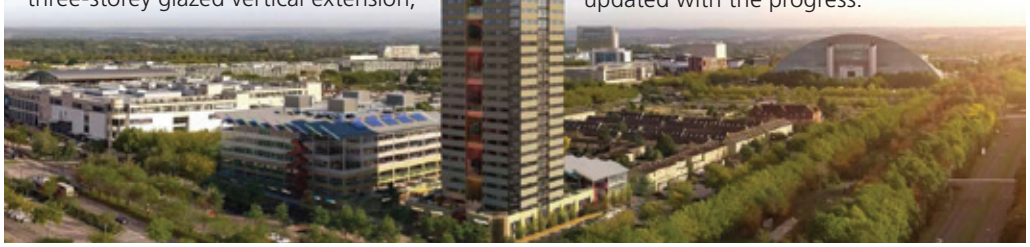
You can find out more about the wheelie bins and changes to waste collection, and request a review, by visiting tinyurl.com/Wheelie-Bins.

Progress being made on MK Gateway

This summer, residents can expect to see increased levels of activity at Saxon Court as the site is prepared for redevelopment. Developers Socius says that drainage and removal works have commenced to make way for the £190m MK Gateway project, with construction starting later this year.

MK Gateway is set to repurpose the former City Council offices together with the creation of two new buildings. The city's tallest building, to be called the Village, will contain 288 build-to-rent flats. Modernist Saxon Court will also be revamped with the addition of a three-storey glazed vertical extension, housing 17,000m² of workspace including co-working spaces and an innovation hub. There will also be a café, community facility, and a public square.

Councillor Andrew Thomas, Chair of the Town Council's Planning Committee, says: "We can expect to see lots of movement around Saxon Court, especially when construction begins later on the largest mixed-use development to be proposed in CMK for more than a decade. We will be working with the developer to make sure that disruption is kept to a minimum, and will keep residents updated with the progress."



Station Square Seat

If you've visited MK Central Station recently, you may have noticed some changes. The Modernist Glade, a temporary public art exhibition and architecture installation at Station Square, has started to bed in – the wildflowers are in bloom and new artistic benches have been installed. A handful of bright yellow benches are dotted around the front of the train station, with the functional artwork further enhancing the appearance of the gateway to the city. The benches were funded by S106 developer contributions from the development of 100 Avebury, a new state-of-the-art office block just opposite the square.

Town Council Chair, David Stabler, says: "While the Modernist Glade will only remain at Station Square for two years, the Town Council welcomes the installation of the functional artwork, as it can be moved around the city centre to be used and enjoyed by residents and visitors in the years to come.

Let's get social

The Town Council has started to share regular news, updates and events on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram.While we had a social media presence before, we are now posting daily due to the ever-changing nature of CMK.

Follow our social platforms, highlighted below, to keep up to date with all the latest goings on. You can also find out more about the Town Council by scanning the QR code.

cmktowncouncil
@CMKTownCouncil
@CMKTownCouncil

SCAN ME

An ever-changing skyline

For many years we took pride in being able to tell the detractors of Milton Keynes that we had no buildings taller than the tallest tree. This turned out to be an urban myth, and the phrase was never captured in planning policies. As a result, CMK has become partial to proposals for ever-taller residential towers up to 34 storeys high. There are tall buildings under construction at Bowback House, the old tax offices, and the city's tallest building will soon be built on the site of Saxon Court. Developers have also shared initial plans for tall buildings in the place of the former Jaipur restaurant and Bank House, by the side of the quiet Bouverie Square. Additionally, proposals are being prepared for the site of The Point and next to the canal in Campbell Park for buildings of over 20 storeys.

While the Town Council welcomes interest and investment from developers, the main concern lies around the rapid growth of residential accommodation and lack of social infrastructure. Hundreds, if not thousands, of households are set to move into CMK over the coming years, yet we do not have a school or doctors' surgery within the parish boundary. This is likely to put pressure on the already-existing services and become an inconvenience for our residents, who will have to travel further afield to access them. This is all while the surge of 'build-to-rent' properties, often consisting of one to two-bed flats with minimal amenities and parking, could put additional strain on already-stretched residential parking elsewhere in CMK.

Town Councillor, Philip Murphy, says: "The Town Council has been urging City Council planners to reconsider its approach to major developments in CMK, which we believe will put immense strain on already-stretched services. We will continue to advocate for more infrastructure in CMK and keep residents updated with any upcoming schemes that we feel could impact the area we call home."

CMK could be home to the city's 'greenest neighbourhood'

Initial plans for the city's latest community have been unveiled, with developers pledging over 1,500 homes on unused land adjacent to Campbell Park. The development, called Campbell Park Northside, will cover the derelict stretch of Silbury Boulevard, with the first phase being the land from the canal to Overgate. This land, which has existing roads and parking in place, could be completely transformed into a bustling development of private and affordable homes, alongside a local centre, green spaces, community and mobility hubs, and more walking and cycling links.

Developer Urban Splash and landowner Milton Keynes Development Partnership (MKDP) have shared their ambitions to build the city's so-called greenest neighbourhood in the next 10 to 15 years. The vision shows a mixture of apartments and houses in various sizes and a planning application for phase one could be lodged this year, consisting of four apartment blocks, a play area, café, large parking and mobility hub, and over 1,500sq of landscaped open space.

Urban Splash held a consultation event in April and will hold another in CMK soon. They are seeking residents' feedback on the plans, which will completely change the look and feel of the area, and the Town Council encourages you to have your say. Full details of the plans, including photos, can be found at www.campbellparknorth.com

Follow CMK Town Council on social media to keep up to date with the latest developments on Campbell Park Northside.

Concerns about initial plans for theatre car park

Over the past eighteen months, the Town Council's newsletters have covered the uncertain future of the empty MK Theatre car park. In 2021, Milton Keynes City Council made it clear that the site should be redeveloped and the Town Council had productive discussions with the City Council. We stated that any future development should have entertainment and arts benefits due to its location in the 'arts quarter'. Subsequently, a formal planning document, outlining planning guidance to prospective developers, highlighted this alongside the need for an active and community-focussed ground floor. The City Council document, known as a Development Brief, called for a residential-led mixed-use development to increase footfall and social value.

Recently we have been made aware that an established 'build-to-rent' developer has acquired the land from the City Council to build 255 flats. Packaged Living, which built The Almere on Avebury Boulevard, has secured the 1.23-acre site and is expected to commence local consultation prior to submission of a planning application in due course. While the information currently available is limited, the developers say the scheme would be sustainable and have a 'market-leading design'. Despite the City Council's original push for a ground floor with a strong leisure and community focus, there has been no mention of this in the developer's communication so far, although details are yet to be released of the scheme.

Councillor Andy Thomas, Chair of the Town Council's Planning Committee, says: "This development is a prime opportunity to bring more people to the area due to its location as part of the Gallery and MK Theatre district. However, The Town Council is concerned that the initial plans omit the importance of community and cultural space and appear not to address the ambitions of the City Council's own

planning document. We hope that the future planning application will remedy this, and capitalise on the wonderful opportunity to create a bustling and active space at the heart of CMK. It should be remembered that Milton Keynes is still a young city yet to be fully developed, with the complete range of community and cultural facilities enjoyed by established cities of similar size remaining to be achieved."

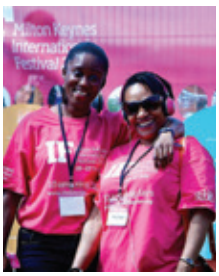
The Town Council welcomes your thoughts on the initial plans, and you can contact us via email at clerk@cmktowncouncil.gov.uk

Campbell Park to become Festival Central

The city's popular International Festival is making a return this summer, with a varied programme being held the 21st to 30th July. Milton Keynes' open spaces and venues will be transformed by live music, theatre, comedy, cabaret, exhibitions, and events – and the heart is right here in CMK. Campbell Park will become Festival Central, welcoming unique exhibitions and events including a pyrotechnics show (Les Commandos Percu) and a poignant attraction, complete with curiosities and mechanical animals, highlighting animals at risk of extinction (the UK premiere of Carnivale). Outside of Campbell Park, there will be exhibitions at Fred Roche Gardens, the centre:mk, the MK Rose, and even in residential areas. You might see parkour, street acrobatics and a flash mob at your doorstep!

"Some of the world's most exciting artists invite you to discover new ways of looking at the world and the challenges we face," explains Monica Fergusson, Festival Director and Chief Executive of the Stables. She adds: "Ideas of belonging underpin this year's Festival, connecting us as we navigate our way through our history, our day-to-day living, and our future."

To find out more about the International Festival and the upcoming events, visit ifmiltonkeynes.org.

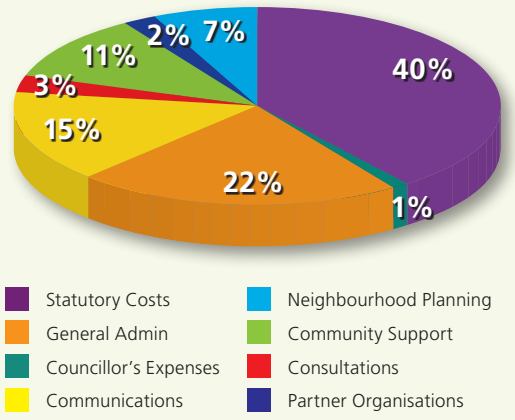


How your parish taxes were spent

The Town Council has once again agreed not to increase its parish taxes, known as parish precept, this year. The decision to maintain the taxes at the same rate for the fourth year in a row was taken in response to the rising cost of living and financial challenges that our residents will no doubt be facing over the next 12 months.

Our parish taxes remain amongst the lowest in Milton Keynes and your volunteer councillors will continue to strive to deliver value for money while seeking to improve CMK for residents and visitors alike.

The below chart shows a breakdown of how the parish taxes were spent in 22/23:



Introducing your new City Councillors

Above: *New ward councillors, Martin Petchey (left) and Darron Kendrick (right).*

In May this year, Milton Keynes City Council held local elections which meant that a third of its ward councillors were up for election. This had an impact on CMK especially, as the resignation of a former councillor resulted in two vacant spots in CMK Ward (while other wards across the city only had one).

CMK Ward is a Labour safe seat, and this was reflected in the recent election. Labour's Martin Petchey and Darron Kendrick, who are both long-standing parish councillors on Campbell Park Community Council, joined incumbent Labour Councillor Moriah Priestley in becoming City Councillors for CMK Ward. Councillor Petchey is a former Mayor of Milton Keynes and has been involved with the City Council for decades, and Councillor Kendrick has been a member of Campbell Park Community Council since 2009.

While CMK Ward covers the majority of our parish, Campbell Park is actually in a separate ward called Campbell Park and Old Woughton (CPOW). Incumbent Councillor Paul Trendall (Lib Dem) held his seat during May's election, meaning that there are two Lib Dem Councillors and one Conservative representing the ward. Councillor Nana Oguntola (Lib Dem) and Councillor Charlotte Hall (Cons) continue their three-year terms.

The City Council is the local authority for all of Milton Keynes, and the CMK and CPOW Ward Councillors represent you on it. The City Council provides most of the services for residents, such as street lighting, road repairs, refuse collection, social services and council housing.

CMK Town Council is the parish council for the city centre area, representing over 4,000 residents. The Town Council focuses on influencing the City Council and other bodies to deliver better services and to make better decisions for local residents, including planning applications, responses to consultations, and public transport and parking matters.

This year The Town Council also welcomed a new councillor. Anurag Jain now represents East CMK Ward, and he and your other CMK Town Councillors are below:

Campbell Park
Rebecca Kurth and Peter Lightfoot.

Central Milton Keynes East
Anurag Jain and Philip Murphy.

Central Milton Keynes West
Andre Brady, Andrew Thomas and David Stabler.

All MKCC ward councillors' email addresses are:
firstname.surname@milton-keynes.gov.uk

All CMKTC councillors' email addresses are:
firstname.surname@cmktowncouncil.gov.uk

However, we still have a vacancy to join the Town Council and would like to hear from anybody who would consider joining us. If you are genuinely passionate about making CMK a better place to live and work, and have a few hours to spare each month, then please get in touch. Please note that this is a voluntary role. There are qualifying requirements to satisfy, but if you want to learn more about becoming a Town Councillor, please contact Town Council Clerk, Paul Cranfield, at clerk@cmktowncouncil.gov.uk. We look forward to hearing from you.

Electra's ready for the summer

Having carried over 2,500 guests last year, Electra, the all-electric community boat, was in need of a Spring service. Following extensive maintenance and freshening up, Electra has been craned back into the Grand Union Canal and is now offering cruises for the summer season. There are a mixture of long and short cruises happening throughout the week, with a choice of morning or afternoon slots. The firm-favourites, including cream teas and fish and chips, have returned, alongside partnerships with local food suppliers.

CMK residents with an MK9 postcode are entitled to a 10% discount on their booking - enter the promo code 'MK9202310' when booking at *www.bmkwaterway.org/electra*

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David Stabler: david.stabler@cmktowncouncil.gov.uk

Campbell Park Ward:
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Rebecca Kurth: rebecca.kurth@cmktowncouncil.gov.uk

CMK East Ward:
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CMK LIFE is published by CMK Town Council (CMKTC), which is the parish council elected by residents living in the City Centre and Campbell Park. CMKTC is independent of MK Council and is not affiliated with any political party. Any opinions expressed in this publication do not necessarily reflect the views of CMKTC. Contact us on 01908 766176.