



# Mepal People

VILLAGE NEWSLETTER

FEBRUARY/MARCH 2011

## SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST:

- Needleworkers needed
- Fens talk date announced
- How a Fish Supper can help others!
- Contribute to Mepal People

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## Mepal and Witcham CE (VC) Primary School

Our Spring Term has started as busily as ever with all our children beginning new Topics for the term including: The Green Cross Code, Pirates, Journeys and The Tudors. We all enjoyed a recent visit from a Theatre Group who performed Aladdin for the whole School - it was full of songs, cheering, clapping and the occasional boo as well! In two week's time we welcome another Theatre Group to the School who will present "the Strange case of Calculating Mr One" - a theatrical experience which will develop the children's mental maths

skills.

We certainly do have a busy term ahead especially as 2011 is the 200<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the National society and effectively the beginning of mass education in England with churches and church schools leading the way by several decades!



In order to celebrate we have been asked to

produce a quilt square which will be sewn together with squares produced by all the other schools in the Diocese of Ely.

We are excited by this project and would love to enlist the support of any skilled needle workers in Mepal. If you would be able to spare a couple of hours to support a small group of our children to create our quilt square we would love to hear from you. Please contact the School office on 01353 778300. In the next edition we hope to share with you pictures of our completed square. We look forward to hearing from you.

## Congratulations Sarah!

You may have noticed the retro appearance of this edition of the newsletter. This is because our Designer in Chief, Sarah Holmes, had a baby girl, China Rose, on 27<sup>th</sup> December and Sarah is therefore rather

preoccupied at the moment! We are sure you would like to join us in sending many congratulations to Sarah and her husband, Chris. Normal service will be resumed as soon as possible!





# Mepal Line Dancing Club

Following our recent successes at The Gables, Mepal Line Dancing Club was invited, early in the New Year, to give a demonstration at Salem Court retirement home in Chatteris. Many of the residents joined in and their enthusiasm more than made up for any lack of skill. It was great to see them having so much fun!

Our weekly classes on Tuesday mornings and Thursday evenings are attracting more and more members from both Mepal and neighbouring villages. If you think you might like to give it a try please call Allen Sallis on 01353 775302 for more information. The two charity dances we have held in the Village Hall so far have been a great

success. Next time we have agreed to support our members from Somersham and will be holding a charity line dance in the British Legion Hall at 8.00 p.m. on Friday 25th March 2011. Tickets are £3.00 each. Please call Allen Sallis on 01353 775302 if you would like to join us or for further information.



**To hire the Hall** contact Jenny Sparrow 778895 : Local Community Groups:

Occasional Bookings £10 per hour, Regular Bookings £6 per hour daytime, £8 per hour from 6 pm onwards.

Private Parties: £75 plus cash deposit – Mepal residents £100, others £200.

Bookings by Commercial Organisations:

regular - by arrangement, occasional £15 per hour.

## Village Hall News

At the time of writing this, the Committee hasn't met since the last "Mepal People" appeared, and there isn't a great deal to report. We are delighted that Mike Petty will be coming on Friday 1<sup>st</sup> April to give another of his inimitable illustrated talks, this time on the history of the Fens from 1600 to the present day. The

electrical systems in the Hall have recently had their regular check and at the same time we have had a new "PIR" light installed outside the main entrance doors. After dark this comes on automatically when anyone approaches, so people opening up the hall for an evening event in winter, or locking up

afterwards, won't now have to fumble for the keyhole.

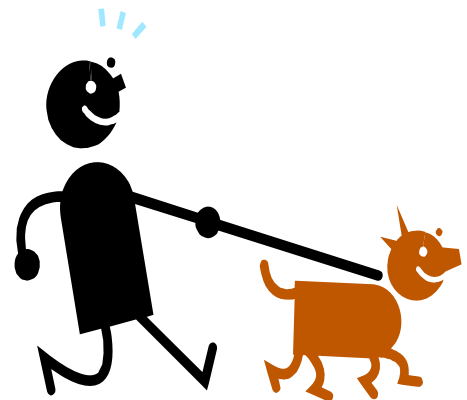
**Don't forget the regular Tombola evenings - see Diary Dates. Sessions start at 7.30pm!**

Chairman – Allen Sallis – 775302 Vice-Chairman – Gordon Reid 775150 Treasurer – Jenny Sparrow – 778895 Secretary – David Stazicker – 778129 Members – Ernie Barlow, Monica Crane, Paul Driver, Roy Harknett, Louise Titmarsh and Rosemary Wells.

## Letters to the Editors.....

We have received several letters from Mepal residents showing concern at the amount of dog poo still being left on Mepal's paths and pavements by those few irresponsible dog owners who haven't recognised the need to keep our village clean. Not only is it unsightly and unpleasant it does present a serious health risk to both humans and animals.

May we pass on the heartfelt plea from these correspondents to all dog owners to keep Mepal a poo-free zone.



Enjoy walkies, but remember your doggy duty!

# MEPAL PARISH COUNCIL REPORT OF ACTIVITIES TO 31<sup>ST</sup> JANUARY 2011



**Councillors:** Mr Mike Stacey (Chairman), Mrs Elizabeth Stazicker (Vice-Chairman), Mr Ron Slough, Mr Mark Newstead, Mr Glenn Drew, Mr Tony Pleasance, Mr Allen Sallis

**Correspondence to:** Sally Shipley, Clerk, 50 Chestnut Way, Mepal, Ely, CB6 2YR  
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Email: [mepalparishcouncil@msn.com](mailto:mepalparishcouncil@msn.com)  
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**Setting of the precept for 2011/12:** at the Full Council meeting in January, the Parish Council resolved to set the final precept figure at £30,270 for 2011/12. This equates to an increase from 2010/11 of £3.82 per annum on the council tax of a band D property. The increase is largely due to the removal of the recycling credits by the District Council.

**Dog Fouling on Mepal Recreation Field:** would all dog owners please remember that whilst the walking of dogs on the recreation field is now permitted, they should remain on a lead at all times and be kept to the perimeter of the field. The Parish Council has been made aware of an increase in dog fouling on the field; please remember that children play here and this is posing a serious risk to their health and well-being. Should the situation not improve, then the Parish Council will consider whether to re-impose a ban.

**Laurel Close Memorial Gardens:** the Parish Council has approved a request from the 75<sup>th</sup> NZ Squadron Memorial Trust for some works to be undertaken to the Memorial Garden in Laurel Close. These will include the addition of a second seat within the garden and also improvements to make the area more wheelchair friendly.

**Recycling:** the latest instalment of credits from the recycling site has just been received from East Cambridgeshire District Council. For the first two quarters of 2010/11 we have received £570.90. As mentioned earlier in the report, the District Council has decided to withdraw this scheme from the end of this financial year. We await further details.

**Consultations:** over the last two months, the Parish Council has considered the following consultations; East Cambridgeshire District Council consultation on the Draft Supplementary Planning Document – Development Contributions & Planning Obligations. Cambridgeshire Community Services NHS Trust consultation on becoming an NHS Foundation Trust. No representation was made to either consultation on this occasion.

**Planning:** since the last report, there have been no planning applications for the Parish Council to consider. The Parish Council has received notification from the District Council's Trees Officer that permission has been granted for work to be undertaken to trees subject to a Tree Preservation Order at 7 Bridge Road, Mepal.

**Next Meeting:** the next meeting of Mepal Parish Council will be on Monday 14<sup>th</sup> February 2011 at 19:30 in Mepal Village Hall. Everyone is welcome to attend and should you have any items of local concern then you may address the Council at the Open Forum.

## COMMUNITY EDUCATION WITCHFORD VILLAGE COLLEGE

### Floristry in 2011

#### Beginning March

Floristry Advanced, Tuesday evenings

Floristry Beginners, Wednesday evenings

### Day Schools

#### Saturday 19<sup>th</sup> March

Dressmaking Refresher Workshop

Glass Jewellery Making

Indian Cookery

Mosaic in a Day

Make a Silver Ring

Introduction to SAGE

Emergency First Aid

Level 2 Food Safety in Catering

For further information please email

[scook2@witchfordvillage.cambs.sch.uk](mailto:scook2@witchfordvillage.cambs.sch.uk)

Telephone: 01353 664468

[www.witchfordcollege.co.uk](http://www.witchfordcollege.co.uk)



*“Hold a Fish and Chip Supper to help spinal cord injured people live full and independent lives.”*

### Great British Fish and Chip Supper – Friday 20<sup>th</sup> May 2011

Want to do something different? Want to raise money where you live or work? Want to eat Fish and Chips, while raising money for charity? Hold a fish and chip supper on Friday 20th May 2011 whilst raising awareness of spinal cord injury and supporting SIA's information and support services. You can hold a fish and chip supper in your own home, at work or hold a larger supper at your local community centre.

For more information or request a fundraising pack call Elizabeth Wright on 0845 678 6633 xtn 229 or email [fishandchips@spinal.co.uk](mailto:fishandchips@spinal.co.uk) or visit [www.spinal.co.uk](http://www.spinal.co.uk)

## Cambridge Cancer Help Centre

Cambridge Cancer Help Centre is there for anyone suffering from or caring for someone with cancer, or who has lost someone to cancer. We can offer support and understanding.

Taking that first step to visit us may not be easy, but once you step through our door you will be assured of a warm and friendly welcome. The Centre also welcomes families, carers and friends.

Many of the people there will have experienced what you are going through.

Why not pay us a visit? We are open on Mondays from 10.00am to 1.00pm and Tuesdays and Wednesdays from 10.00am to 4.00pm, or telephone us on 01223 840105 and speak to our Co-ordinator, Ann Dingley

You will find us at The David Rayner Centre, Scotsdales Garden Centre, 120 Cambridge Road, Great Shelford, Cambridge, CB22 5JT.

*“We can offer support and understanding”*



## Our Neighbourhood Panels point the way

Neighbourhood Panels, which began in 2007 with a pilot in Soham, have helped to bring about a range of local improvements for local people. The success has been down to parish, District and County councillors as well as managers from the 'partner agencies' - including: health, environment, transport, police, anti-social behaviour, housing and children's and young people's services - working together.

Feedback on the actions taken is reported on at the next Panel, although most local actions are taken within days of the meetings. Some of the impacts of the actions include:

- Reduction in fly-tipping;
- Reduction in 'green laning' (4x4s driving along droves/by-ways)
- Production of action plans to combat dog fouling;
- Reduction in levels of crime;
- Reduction in reported acts of anti-social behaviour (ASB);
- The introduction and work of the Speedwatch scheme across the District – a reduction in the numbers of recorded speeding vehicles;

I hope that you will be able to come along to the **next Panel meeting in Witcham Village Hall on Monday, 21<sup>st</sup> March at 7.00 – 9.00pm** – you will be very welcome !

**If you are unable to attend**, but would like to raise an issue of concern, please contact Cllr Elizabeth Stazicker or contact Alan Williams, Neighbourhood Panel Coordinator, on 01353 – 665555.

For further up-to-date information on the East Cambs Neighbourhood Panels and the current Neighbourhood Profiles, use N in the A-Z section of the East Cambridgeshire District Council website: [www.eastcambs.gov.uk](http://www.eastcambs.gov.uk)

### And Finally.....

**Every issue we, the Editorial team, encourage readers to submit articles telling us about their interests, experiences etc, and every issue we sob into our keyboards as nothing materialises. So here's a starter to get your literary juices flowing!**

About twenty years ago down in Cornwall my big sister continually nagged me to get involved with the barbershop chorus she had joined. I explained time & time again that I couldn't sing but in the end went along, just to shut her up. I was told to stand with the ladies singing the low notes and my life changed forever! Ok, that is the abbreviated version, but essentially true. In the intervening years I have been a member of three choruses and two quartets and sung at venues such as the Birmingham Symphony Hall, Willingham WI, Dublin Helix, Chatteris Salvation Army Hall, Gateshead Sage, Mepal Sports Field..... just a small selection!

I can't tell you the immense fun and pleasure singing gives me, and how it has enriched my life. If you get the opportunity to have a go (especially those of you who insist you can't sing) grab it with both hands. You have absolutely nothing to lose and could gain so much.

Footlights Quartet has "gigs" in Cambridge and Over in February, we will be travelling to Northampton and Birmingham in the next few months and our first website is under construction. Do get in touch if you'd like to know more.

**Thanks for reading this - now it's your turn to write something!**

**Barbara**