



Wilstead NEWSLETTER

June 2020
including Parish Council News

PUBLISHED BY WILSTEAD NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH, PART OF BEDFORD & DISTRICT NW ASSOCIATION

HELP SAVE Herrings Green Farm

Herrings Green Activity Farm and Bird of Prey Centre on Cotton End Road are appealing for urgent help to feed animals and keep the centre running.

The farm is home to more than 200 birds and animals, including plenty of new additions as they are in the midst of a baby boom. The farm offers family-friendly fun days out, where visitors can learn to handle and fly birds of prey and meet an array of farm animals.

It costs £800-£1,000 a day to feed and care for the animals at the centre which attracts visitors from the local area and beyond.

The family run centre relies on visitor admission and pre-bookable activities to keep the centre running. Since it's unclear when the centre can re-open it is facing an increasingly uncertain future.

Help save Herrings Green Farm and donate at:

www.justgiving.com/crowdfunding/herringsgreenfarmandbirdofpreycentre

There is also an Amazon Wish List set up; you can gift essential items including food:

You can also buy an experience to look forward to, visit: **www.birdsofpreycentre.co.uk**

Crime Information for Wilstead

The latest Crime Recorded List received covered the period 1st April to 28th April. There were details of 1042 recorded crimes but none listed for Wilstead.

It is possible that incidents may have been reported but have yet to appear on the list as investigations have not been completed by the police.

Crime Recorded for nearby villages:

Cardington 2, Cople 2, Cotton End 1, Shortstown 16 and Wixams 10

There is a **Vehicle Crime Update** from **PSCO James Dancer** on page 2 of this Newsletter. In addition, **Lara Curtaigne, Force Crime Reduction Officer** has issued **Serious Crime – Rural** published on page 8.

The FCRO report, **Vulnerable People and Distraction Burglaries**, on page 15 contains important information and guidance. If you know of a vulnerable neighbour or have an elderly relative please discuss the advice given in this particular report.

We have been made aware and reported incidents of a male recently calling along Luton Road and Cotton End Road attempting to discuss 'building and roofing repairs.' In one case, having received no response to knocking on the front door, a male was found to have entered the occupied property by the rear entrance. Fortunately, the householder was able to get the male to leave.

For further details of any of the above reports please contact Wilstead Neighbourhood Watch.

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Your Co-ordinator is

Vehicle Crime Update

Since 1st March, there has been an increase (compared to the same period in 2019) in **Theft From Motor Vehicle** offences. The increase is from 53 to 60, which is a 13% rise.

Interfering with a Motor Vehicle also saw an increase from 9 to 36, a 300% increase. This may just be due to an increase in reporting and the vigilance of residents.

However, **Theft of Motor Vehicles** has seen a decrease from 20 to 8, which is a 60% drop.

All residents should think about their vehicle security. This included ensuring that it is locked when left, not leaving anything inside especially in view and parking in well-lit areas.

PCSO 6753 James Dancer

Bowls Club News

The Green Chairman and his gang of loyal helpers are working hard cutting the green to have it ready to play on by **Monday 1st June**.

But it will be to members by appointment only for roll ups, keeping their distance and using separate

jacks and mats, with members of their own family. All playing members will receive a set of instructions, which will also be displayed on the notice board.

Unfortunately we cannot have any spectators to watch at present.

Our Club House will stay closed for the time being, we will be waiting for Government and Bowls England guide lines before we can proceed further.

We hope everyone keeps well and stays safe, and hopefully soon we can start to get back to normality.

Jean Ward, Secretary

Mobile Library Service During Pandemic



Did you know there is a 'virtual library' available for library users whilst the Mobile Library is off the road.

To access the site, go to

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All Saints Church News

The Church still remains closed for any services at all and is likely to be that way for some considerable time. The date given by the Prime Minister of **Saturday 4th July** to reopen places of worship must be taken with extreme caution as there will be many practical difficulties to overcome.

We had a 'Zoom' meeting with Deanery and Diocesan representatives particularly in relation to financial considerations. The Diocese is not able to give parishes a 'holiday' period for our Quota payments which are for the payment of clergy stipends. They are encouraging us to pay as much as we are able.

Our current years Quota payment is £21,000 to the Diocese. Thanks to the support we get from the village from our fund raising events, the Advent and Easter Fairs, the Summer Fete and the monthly Coffee Mornings plus collections from services, the regular givers and Gift Aid - we usually manage to reach most of that amount in the year. However without these events - and the latest casualty is the Summer Fete which will not be held this year at the end of June - we shall be unable to meet our target this year.

The Diocese are not able to help us as they too have their expenses and they do not get any help from the Government or the Church Commissioners except for a small contribution.

Any donations you might like to give to help the church that you might have given during our Fund Raising events would be very much appreciated. **Donations can be given to The Vicar, Janet Brooks or myself.**

We do have a Parish Giving Scheme in operation whereby you can make a monthly contribution by Direct Debit. An application form for this can be found on:

www.parishgivingscheme.org.uk and you can complete the form on line. I do have some application forms at my house if anybody isn't on line.

Thank you to all the people who regularly contribute in this way.

Robert Heley

All Saints Church Website

The Parish Church has a new website which can be found at

allsaintswilstead.org

Stephen, the Vicar, is uploading weekly reflections on what would have been the weekly readings in church.

It is a new site, so if there is any information Wilstead residents would like to see added to the site, please let them know.

Alison Randall, Churchwarden

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Wilshamstead Parish Council

Parish Council Meetings

The Parish Council have now held their second online meeting. As well as Parish Councillors a member of the public was also at the meeting and engaged in the Open Forum agenda item.

Planning applications are being discussed by Councillors and Parish Council comments are being submitted as usual to the Local Authority. A number of other local matters are continuing to move forwards, such as Longmeadow Drive play area improvements, having a Christmas Tree at the main crossroads over the festive period and improvements being made to the Village Car Park.

The Parish Council will continue to hold their scheduled meetings in June and July using Microsoft Teams, given there is no certainty of when a venue maybe able for hosting a public face-to-face meeting in a safe environment. If this changes then the Parish Council will of course notify residents.

Any resident who wishes to join a Parish Council meeting please be assured it is straight-forward and we can offer assistance with this if you need, please just contact the Clerk.

Financial Support for Village Facilities And Groups

The Borough Council notified the Parish Council that village facilities that would be financial impacted during the lockdown period would potentially be eligible for some Government grants. Both the Village Hall and Jubilee Centre applied for funding and were awarded a grant of £10,000 each towards supporting the facility during this period.

There are a range of opportunities available for organisations in the Parish who may require assistance during this challenging time. It is worth making contact with the Funding Administrators if you have any questions as they wish to provide assistance where possible.

Support grants from Bedford Borough Council:
<https://www.bedford.gov.uk/social-care-health-and-community/public-health/coronavirus/coronavirus-business-advice/business-support-grants/>

Bedfordshire Coronavirus Emergency Fund:
<https://www.blcf.org.uk/category/grants/>

There are lots of grant opportunities on the Bedfordshire and Luton Community Fund website so do go and have a look.

If you wish to talk through your situation with the Parish Council then please do not hesitate to get in touch with the Clerk or a Parish Councillor.

Parish Office

Please kindly understand the Parish Office will remain closed while the Village Hall is closed. As and when this changes, the Parish Council will alert residents. However, in the meantime the Parish Council wish to thank residents for their understanding during this time and to remind everyone to stay safe and follow the government guidelines.

Bedford Borough Council Services at Present

Another reminder that the Borough Council's website continues to be updated with the latest information about Coronavirus, and the services they are offering. As the transition out of lockdown moves forwards the Borough Council services are also changing, so it is really worthwhile to visit the website and see the latest information on public transport, library services, recycling, green waste or tidy tip services.

<https://www.bedford.gov.uk/social-care-health-and-community/public-health/coronavirus/>

Parish Council Website Reminder

The Parish Council are very pleased with its stand-alone website, which is being updated with useful information and will act as a central resource for all Parish Council related items and associated documents for members of the public to understand fully what the Parish Council does. It is worth taking a look at the site as we would welcome input and feedback. The site is being added to in the coming months so do keep an eye on it:

www.wilsteadparishcouncil.org

Contacting The Parish Council

As previously advised, the Parish Council office is not open at present, so the best way to contact the Clerk is via email on

clerk@wilshamsteadparishcouncil.org

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Village P3 Footpath Group

Meetings

The May meeting was cancelled though members of the Group submitted reports on the paths they had been allocated. These reports showed that the vast majority of the paths around the village are easy to use and well marked. There are a few places where vegetation is starting to grow over the paths and hopefully the group will be able to tackle these in the next few weeks.

There were one or two problems where the Group need the help of the Borough including the bridleway gate on Wilstead Bridleway 14 near Medbury Farm. This is a heavy metal gate which has dropped on its hinges and needs to be lifted to close it.

The next scheduled meeting is on **Saturday 18th July**. There is obvious uncertainty regarding such face-to-face meetings so perhaps we will try a virtual meeting. Hopefully we will be able to confirm this in the next Newsletter.

Coronavirus and Exercise

With the good weather and people being encouraged to take exercise, many people are going out from the village into the surrounding countryside. There are many farm tracks in the fields around the village but a lot of them are not Public Rights of Way and should only be used with the landowner's permission.

Please stick to those paths which are way marked as Public Footpaths and Public Bridleways.

Only walk along the Footpaths, identified by yellow waymark discs on yellow topped posts, and walk, ride or cycle along the Bridleways, identified by blue waymark discs on yellow topped posts.

There are no byways in the Parish so there are no paths which allow motorised vehicles.

In addition there is permissive access to Wilstead Woods and its paths via the Carriage Drive which meets Cotton End Road between Whitworth Way and Chapel Lane (go through the gap at the side of the big gates).

If you want a map which shows the paths in the Parish and how some of them connect with surrounding villages please contact the number on page 7.

Seasonal Vegetation Cut

Some of the Footpaths and Bridleways around the village have had their first Seasonal Vegetation Cut (SVC). This has been undertaken by the Borough Council and there will be a second cut later in the year.

Each Parish is allocated a certain length of paths that is cut i.e. not all paths are cut. These cuts help clear the paths but the vegetation doesn't stop growing in between, so if you do have problems going along a particular path then please contact the number below and the Group will try to mow/trim any particularly difficult areas.

Footpath Work

The group has taken advantage of the good weather to do some repairs to the furniture on the paths as part of members' daily exercise. Five broken way-mark posts have been replaced and a couple of posts have been added so that the Footpaths and Bridleways can be easily followed.

We know that there are a couple of areas not included in the SVC that are becoming overgrown and we will be looking to tackle these soon.

Footpaths across the A6

The footpaths which go across the A6 from Longmeadow Drive and Bedford Road to Houghton Conquest provide a 4 to 5 mile circular walk. The A6 verges have been cleared so visibility is greatly improved but take care when crossing the road.

The four promised '*Pedestrians Crossing*' warning signs have yet to be installed at the side of the A6 near where these paths cross.

Walks

The May walk was cancelled because of the virus. It is uncertain as to when we will be able to walk as a group again.

In the meantime for those who would like a bit of a longer stroll through the countryside there are good links to Cotton End & Cardington, Elstow & Bedford, Wixams, Houghton Conquest & Ampthill, Haynes and Chicksands using the Footpaths and Bridleways around the village.

Please keep an eye on the Village noticeboards and the Newsletter for the dates of future walks.

Nigel Jacobs

P3 contact 01234 400733

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Jackie's Gardening Blog

the Last Installment



Over the weeks before planting out could be started, I was able to cover 75% of my vegetable plot with cardboard, scraping back the compost mulch, laying the cardboard and spreading mulch back over it. I left one bed as 'normal' with no cardboard, just mulch, to see how much difference the cardboard made to the weed growth.

The weather during May was really good, and I tentatively started to put out my veg plants. I wasn't too worried about spinach, chard, beetroot and lettuce, because they have a high tolerance to temperature change. However I kept the runner and french beans in the greenhouse. I'm glad I did, because there was one night that was rather cold indeed.

By the last week in May the beds were bursting with plants. Lettuces were being given away to friends and neighbours, as there is a limit to how much we can eat! Also being harvested was rainbow chard and spinach, two of our favourites.

The most amazing thing was, the weeds didn't appear! The amount of time saved by not weeding meant I had time to plant things out at the optimum time, and also sow more seeds, ready to replace crops we had consumed.

Although there isn't much difference in the bed without cardboard in terms of weed infestation, I did notice the compost was quickly incorporated into the general soil there, and the heavier clay type soil came to the surface. Of course, bindweed makes its way up to the surface, but because the ground is soft and moist, it is easy to gently pull out, getting as much root as possible.

Of course, being at home so much this Spring has helped. There have been no days out in Bedford or weekends away, and two holidays were cancelled. Therefore the garden has had my undivided attention. It has been a blessing, having something positive and useful to do.

The water butts ran out in the second week in May, so unfortunately the hose has been deployed. I prefer rainwater but have no choice, as I grow so intensively in the small plot, lack of water would be a disaster. However, we are water metered so I don't feel quite so guilty.

So if you are walking past my house this summer, have a look and see how things are progressing.

Happy Gardening!

Jackie Lloyd

Serious Crime – Rural Villages

There has been an overall decline in Serious Acquisitive Crime in the north rural villages in Bedford Borough since 1st January. Serious Acquisitive Crime includes all burglaries, vehicle crime and robbery.

Over 44 beat codes (53 villages in total), burglary has gone from 28 in January to 11 in April. Of those 11, 6 occurred in 'residential non-dwellings', ie, sheds, garages and outbuildings. Of the 4 residential dwellings, the offenders did not gain entry into 3 of the properties. There was one attempted burglary of a business premises.

Vehicle crime has seen a slight decrease and has been more common in the larger, commuter belt areas. Residents are reminded to empty their vehicles of all property and, where possible, park on a drive or in a garage. **Remember to set the car alarm and immobiliser and double check it has activated by testing the door handles before you walk away.**

Lockdown has undoubtedly played a big part in the reduction of acquisitive crime but, with recent talk of exit strategies and life going back normal, this is a good time to start thinking about reviewing home security and keeping crime down.

Many hardware stores and online suppliers are able to deliver target hardening products.

As well as checking home security, what about building on those connections made with neighbours and join a watch scheme (or even set one up).

For those using heating oil, you may have taken advantage of the very low fuel prices and filled your tanks up. Please take a minute to consider your tank security.

If you see a crime in progress or there is serious risk to a person or property, call 999 immediately.

To report a past crime or a person or vehicle in suspicious circumstances, call 101.

You can also report a crime at:
www.bedfordshire.police.uk

There is also a live web chat service available by clicking on the green button at the bottom of the Bedfordshire Police home page, and you can access lots of other crime prevention advice on this site.

2484 Lara Curtayne, Force Crime Reduction Officer



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Art News



Another month of 'Lockdown' has passed by and browsing through our group WhatsApp we haven't been idle!

Many of our members have a variety of talents and gardening seems quite popular along with taking lots of photos of plants and gardens as inspiration for art in the cold dark months of winter.

Myself being unable to do much gardening have painted some wire sweet pea supports in some bright pastel hues - hopefully enhancing the plants natural colours! I also noticed that the two trellises we have are looking a bit weather beaten. I decided that a lick of paint may be in order to enhance them, so with the help of my better half armed with brush and some garden paint a pastel two tone effect is under way.

What has been especially noticeable is the support as a group for each other including help with online shopping bookings, plant swapping (observing social distancing) or just being there on the end of the phone for a chat.

Keep safe and well everyone.

Linda & Michael,
villagehallart@gmail.com

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New Neighbourhood Watch Website Launched

After what felt like a long wait, we are proud to announce our new website is launched.

We would like to thank all those supporters who helped get us to launch day including our funders, our staff, our members, our partners, and Oyster Design.

Our new website offers inspiring advice and resources to strengthen communities and reduce crime. It contains burglary prevention advice, domestic violence support, cybercrime advice, links to a crime map in your area and much more.

Crucially the website also contains relevant advice and information in response to COVID-19 on looking after yourself and others, supporting communities and being aware of COVID-19 scams and related crimes.

But don't take our word for it... have a look for yourself...
www.ourwatch.org.uk

Neighbourhood Watch Our News May 2020

From Seeds of Friendship - *The Growth of Wilstead Garden Club*

We are using this time to give you some knowledge of how the Wilstead Garden Club came about. We often just accept that something exists and carries on without given thought to who were the movers and shakers that make it happen. Read on if you want to know.

As often happens, things develop through friends meeting and throwing different ideas to each other. In the Garden Club case Jackie Lloyd and her friend Jane Wren both had an interest in gardening and the village community. Both ladies were keen to build the communities that now make Wilstead a special place to live. We also believe many a glass of wine was consumed.

Jane Wren was very engaged in the more formal aspects of the village, being a parish councillor and involved in the development of Jubilee Centre. She was also interested in the graveyard, allotments and other community spaces as well as the village Flower and Produce Show. At school she had learnt Latin and had developed a passion for plants. She would challenge herself and her mother-in-law to answer the questions on 'Gardeners Question Time' before the panel.

Her friend Jackie Lloyd was similarly interested in starting a social club aimed at people who enjoyed plants and gardening, even if it was only a window box. Her interest came from enjoying hopping over the wall of their garden to join her father on his allotment. Her interest remains mainly with vegetables and unusually her current front garden is the 'allotment' as that is the best place to grow her crops.

In August 2007, a casual conversation over a bottle of wine produced the live seed for the Garden Club to grow from. The first meeting was in Jackie's house in September 2007, about 10 people came. Jackie gave a brief talk about seed collection, very apt, and the best way for the club to develop.

In October 2007 there was a brave decision to move to the Village Hall and word had spread, about 25 people came to chat and see what was going on. For the next 3 years the club continued to develop with talks by members, plant swaps and garden visits and this has morphed into the successful club we have today.

More about how things changed since those beginning next time.



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Wilstead WI

The editorial team of this Newsletter have asked me if I can write a piece under the WI banner for this month's edition and, having let them down last month, I feel I should make more of an effort. The problem, of course, is that all WI meetings, events and trips have been had to be postponed indefinitely and we really don't know when we'll be able to restart them.

Consequently this article will be less about the WI and more of a very personal view of our current situation. If you were hoping for something light hearted, you can stop reading now.

A few days ago I ventured out of my cocoon – otherwise known as my house and home – and walked over to a friend's house to deliver some flour I had purchased online from a flour mill. We talked for a while, reminiscing about a former colleague who had recently died, and maintaining a safe two metre-plus distance.



I then went for a long walk through Wilstead Wood with my husband, politely greeting but then avoiding anyone who came our way. Back home again, I got out the yeast I bought on eBay and started making bread.

This is our life now, and it would all have been completely unthinkable a few months ago. Back then I looked forward to getting out of the house to go to WI meetings and meet friends. Now I'm nervous about going beyond my front door and leaving that safe, virus-free cocoon. Everything is done remotely now. Contact with other WI members is maintained by phone, text, email, Facebook, WhatsApp or whatever method they have available.

Of course, our personal lives aren't the only things that have been turned upside down. I'm writing this on Thursday afternoon, looking forward to standing on my drive at 8pm to Clap for Carers, bang some pots and catch up with my neighbours.

If this pandemic has taught us anything, it is that the most essential contributions to the smooth running of our lives come from the people we usually take little notice of and who have been



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underappreciated for far too long. So tonight my applause will be for all of them: the doctors, nurses and hospital staff who are caring for the sick; but also the carers, supermarket staff, shop keepers, posties, rubbish collectors, cleaners, delivery drivers, bus drivers, farmers, and so on and so on.

And I'll also be clapping for the army of volunteers who are showing us just how strong the community spirit is in this village. So many people are pitching in (not just WI members) to help with delivering prescriptions, shopping for the vulnerable, keeping in contact with those who are isolating, sewing scrubs or face coverings and much more.

This spirit of togetherness is heart warming and life affirming, but will it last? What happens when (or if) the Covid-19 threat has been neutralised? Will we look out for our neighbours the way we do today? Will we still feel as protective of the most vulnerable in our society? Will we remember the vital roles played by **all** our essential workers? Or will we just go back to the way things were before?

I think we should make a resolution to not let that happen. Let this kinder and fairer society that has emerged in the past months be the lasting legacy Covid-19, and a fitting tribute to those we have lost.

Leah Batham

Wilstead Annual Flower Produce & Handicrafts Show

We regret to announce that due to the COVID-19 virus threat the Show has been cancelled for this year.

This has been a great disappointment for the Wilstead Flower & Produce Association as we have already put in a good deal of work in order to make it a success.

Hopefully, the situation will have eased by next year and it will be considered safe to go ahead. We will, via the Newsletter keep you informed of the new date for next year, and the new schedule will be posted on the village website in late March 2021.

Thank you for your support in past years and keep well.

Linda & Ken Cook



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Wilstead Website
can be found at
www.wilsteadvillage.org.uk

How Wilstead Celebrated VE Day 75th Anniversary

As have so many special occasions this year, the celebrations for the 75th anniversary of Victory in Europe Day were a muted but joyous affair.

With encouragement from Government and organisations such as The Royal British Legion, we held a 2 minutes silence on our doorsteps, to honour those who suffered and died in that dreadful conflict.

Then after listening to Mr Churchill's broadcast on our TV's and radios, we held tea parties in our front garden or in the street, sang along to Vera Lynn, and, obeying social distancing rules, chatted and laughed with our neighbours.

The evening was rounded off with a broadcast by Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth, on the television and radio.

The weather was so kind to us that day, it was as if it were trying to compensate for the fact we couldn't all be with our nearest and dearest on that day. In some ways, the separation was similar to that endured by the families of service men and women who were involved with that conflict, and who were still abroad, serving King and country, striving to make this a safer world for us all.

We own an enduring debt to our Armed Forces, both in wartime and peace.

Lest We Forget.

Jackie Lloyd

Pictures of VE Day 75th Celebrations

The Wilstead Village Webmaster is compiling pictures of the village celebrations for VE Day 75th celebrations.

If you have any you would like to contribute, please send them to:

www.wilstead.web@ntlworld.com

There are some pictures already, and these can be seen at:

www.wilsteadvillage.org.uk

Thank you

Wilstead Webmaster

Vulnerable People and Distraction Burglaries

Although lockdown restrictions are starting to ease, there are a number of elderly people and vulnerable adults in our community who still have to observe self-isolation at home. With fewer neighbours at home during the day, opportunist thieves will see these residents as an easy target for distraction burglary.

Bedfordshire Police are asking for your support by encouraging your vulnerable relatives, friends and neighbours to take extra care when answering the door to people they do not know. Please remind others of the advice below:

- **Where possible, only answer the door if you know a member of your family**, a friend, a carer or a pre-arranged tradesperson is visiting.
- **If you have an unexpected caller, use your door chain when answering the door** or speak to them through a window. Ensure any other doors to the property are locked before you answer the front door.
- **If unsure of the visitor's identity, always ask for their ID first and telephone the company they are purporting to be from.** Use the telephone number listed in your local directory or provided independently by your service provider.
- Many service providers, when they are making the appointment with you, are happy to arrange for their representative to use a password of your choosing.
- **Never agree to any work that the caller claims needs to be done to your home.** It is okay to say no and turn the person away. If you are able, report the incident to the Police on 101 with as much detail as you can provide.
- **Even if the person at your door gives you a convincing story** as to why they need to enter your house, if you were not expecting them, turn them away immediately and report it to the police on 101.

You can also report suspicious incidents by visiting the Police online reporting system at:

www.bedfordshire.police.uk

and clicking on the green button in the bottom right hand corner.

2484 Lara Curtayne
Force Crime Reduction Officer

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for any copy, new advertisements or changes to existing advertisements

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Please Note that requests for NEW ADVERTS and Advert Changes should now be sent to **Maxine Hendry**, as should Payments.

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Date and venue to be advised of the next co-ordinators' meeting.

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Fraudulent Agent Fee

There has been a number of reports relating to a fraudulent email claiming to be from Bedfordshire Police Legal Department and demanding payments for an 'Agent Fee'.

The emails asks for payment using an Amazon Gift card or PayPal.

You are urged not to act on any demands in this email and instead report it to:

**www.actionfraud.police.uk
or by calling 101.**

Here are some tips which can help you spot a fraudulent message. **The Police will never ask you to:**

- make payments using Amazon Gift Cards or PayPal
- transfer funds for a 'covert investigation'
- move your funds to a different account for safety reasons
- reveal your password or login details

For most up to date news on recent fraud and scam trends, visit Action Fraud.

Gosia Grabezak, Beds Police

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