



Wilstead NEWSLETTER

including Parish Council News

November 2025

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

KEECH HOSPICE



Santa's Coming to Wilstead

Santa and his sleigh will be seen visiting streets in Wilstead on **Friday 12th December** from approximately **5.30pm-8.00pm**.

All donations collected will be in aid of Keech Hospice, our local hospice for adults and children.

We are also looking for volunteers to help collect on the evening. If you would like to join our team on the night, please register at: <https://register.enthuse.com/ps/event/Bobsleigh2025>



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Royal British Legion Remembrance Day March Sunday 9th November

Assembly will take place at Wilstead crossroads at 10.30am for 10.45am parade to the village memorial.

A service will be held outside prior to the 11.00am two minutes silence followed by the internal church service . All are welcome.

Poppy donation points will be situated through the various outlets in Wilstead and Wixams.

WILSTEAD VILLAGE CHRISTMAS TREE SWITCH-ON

FRIDAY 28th NOVEMBER
VILLAGE CROSSROADS
6.30pm

Will our tree still be the
best in Bedfordshire?

Come and meet
Santa and listen
to the school
children singing
carols.

Your Co-ordinator is:

Wilstead Primary School

The leaves are turning in our forest school and the mornings are becoming chillier at Wilstead Primary School, but we have lots to look forward to as Christmas approaches! Over the next few weeks we will be busy with crafting and carols along with the normal school business of teaching and learning.

This month, KS2 are excited to be submitting 500 word stories to the BBC competition as well as visiting Whipsnade Zoo to support their learning in Science. Year 3 will be visiting the Wilstead bowls club and KS1 will be beginning to learn their lines for the annual nativity performance. We are also enjoying our continuing partnership with the English National Opera, and will be submitting our compositions at the start of December.

While the weather may be grey, our children are still out in their Forest school whatever the weather, and we continue to smile, learn and play!

Mrs Webb

Deputy Headteacher
Wilstead Primary School



Wilstead Women's Institute

Our members celebrated our 95th Birthday Party with a meal of a mixed salad, turkey, ham, and quiche with new potatoes and fresh fruit salad or strawberry gateaux all prepared and served by the committee.

Our entertainment for the evening was a Magician and ventriloquist who had us laughing so much we thought we would burst. This year all members were given a 2026 diary with pen that had WILSTEAD WI printed on it. We had a fabulous evening only made possible by our committee shopping, making up the food, serving and of course washing up, so well done and thank you to all of you.

Our next meeting is on **Thursday 6th November** with Helen Close talking about Witchcraft. All are welcome, we start at 7.30pm in the village hall.

Our trip to see the Christmas lights in London is now fully booked.

Karen Cook | President
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Wilshamstead Parish Council

Major Gas Main Replacement Works Update

The Parish Council having been advised that there will be gas main replacement works taking place on Bedford Road towards the roundabout and down along Cotton End Road as far as Ivy Lane, have at the time of writing been informed that the work will be commencing on site on 10th November 2025. Please note at present, the Parish Council have not seen any formal notification of the associated road or traffic management plans for the duration of the works. It is usual, and expected that signage giving advance notice will be in situ in advance of the works starting.

It does mean there is likely to be significant disruption caused to traffic flow and access in the village for the duration of the works. The Parish Council do believe that traffic management signals will be in place whilst this project is ongoing.

As and when more information is known from Cadent, the Parish Council will update the Wilstead community via this Newsletter, the Parish Council website and noticeboards along with social networks.

Planning Application For Up To 149 Houses At Duck End Lane

The Parish Council have engaged and employed the services of an experienced planning consultant to provide professional support in putting forward more technical and robust challenge to the local authority to the current planning application at Duck End Lane. The comprehensive document will be submitted as additional objection comments and representations being made by the Parish Council to the local authority.

This application remains being considered by the local authority, with a planning application number 24/01566/MAO Outline application with all matters reserved, except access, for the erection of up to 149 dwellings and associated works at Land On The East Of Duck End Lane.

Continued on page 4 >>>

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>>> Continued from page 3

To submit additional comments of your own please send them to planning@bedford.gov.uk.

To view the additional comments made by the Parish Council these will be available on the Bedford Borough Council planning portal at www.bedford.gov.uk/planning-and-building-control/planning-applications/search-plans

Village Improvements Update

As usual there continues to be a number of items going on behind the scenes at the Parish Council on a number of different local matters, below is just an example of some items being worked on:

- Continued maintenance work at Huckle's Meadow to enable this area to be accessible to the community for all to enjoy
- New benches due to be installed across some village locations to improve the seating provision
- Marking of Remembrance with poppies displayed on street columns, donation to British Legion and attendance at Remembrance service
- Installation of additional festive lighting on street columns in the village
- Reporting a range of highways matters to the local authority Highways Helpdesk
- Follow up liaison with local authority enforcement team regarding a hazardous tree
- Support with local facility looking to improve and enhance space for community use

Have You Thought About Joining The Parish Council...?

It is a great time to think about joining the Parish Council, which currently has Councillor vacancies and the Council would be very interested to hear from residents who want to get involved and have their say on village matters, you might:

- Like to see improvements to your local area
- Or have an interest in improving certain local provisions or services
- Have ideas on enhancing the village environment

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- Want to be involved, when Bedford Borough Council allocate new housing through the Local Plan process
- Maybe are really concerned about traffic and highways safety in the village.

The Council really would like to have greater representation to make sure your voice is heard. There is also lots of support available for new Councillors as well.

If you are interested in taking a more active role in the village, supporting with parish improvements and have ideas on how to help move Wilstead forwards, then the Parish Council would really like to hear from you. Do please make yourself known to the Clerk, Lizzie at: office@wilsteadparishcouncil.org

Contacting The Parish Council

The best way to contact the Parish Council is to email Lizzie (the Parish Clerk) at: office@wilsteadparishcouncil.org

Alternatively, you can call 01234 743152 or write to PO Box 1548, Bedford, MK44 5AX

Please note the Parish Office (at the rear of the Village Hall) is open most Mondays, 9am to midday. It is worth ringing in advance to ensure it is open.

It is always more interesting to attend a Parish Council meeting in person to see what goes on and understand the range of items covered in trying to move improvements for the Wilstead community forwards. Dates and the agenda are advertised on the village noticeboards, with meetings usually on a Monday starting at 7pm in the small hall at Wilstead Village Hall. (Head to the left-hand side of the main hall building and you will see the door open which is where the Parish Council will be). Everyone is most welcome to join us, with next meeting scheduled for, **24th November**, and **5th January**.

Also please remember to view regular updates published on local matters through the Wilstead Parish Council website, do visit www.wilsteadparishcouncil.org to see the latest news and helpful information.



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Wilstead Pre School News

Well the first half term has been a very busy one! All the children have now settled really well into Pre School and are embracing all that it has to offer. It has been wonderful getting to know all our new families and it was lovely to have so many join us for our stay and play sessions.

This half term we will be learning about the season of winter, arctic animals/countries and all the celebrations coming up which of course means our fantastic Christmas nativity. Always an afternoon never to be missed!

Speaking of Christmas please **DO JOIN** us for our annual Christmas Bazaar **Saturday 6th December** Wilstead Village Hall 12-3pm.

It will be an afternoon of Christmas magic for all the family to enjoy. We have some lovely stalls selling Christmas gifts/cards, lots of games and craft for the children to enjoy, delicious turkey baps all washed down with some mulled wine! And of course our wonderful Father Christmas. To book a slot please phone Pre School 01234 742546 or email admin@wilstead-preschool.co.uk. Please book early to avoid disappointment! Please do come along and support us, it will be lovely to see you there.

On **Saturday 7th March** we will be holding our quiz night at the village hall. As always a fun quiz and entertaining evening awaits you. Bring your own nibbles £5 per person to enter, bar available. To book a table please contact Pre School or 07948 565992.

Can I give a special thank you to Mrs Benton and her granddaughter who have knitted and donated some wonderful story sacks for the children to enjoy. They really are just beautiful (my favourite is The Tiger Who Came To Tea!) The children have absolutely loved watching the story come alive with our new knitted friends! Thank you so much for all your hard work it really is appreciated.

Looking forward to seeing you all at our Christmas Bazaar **Saturday 6th December** 12-3 at the village hall.

Julia.

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Come and join us for a walk. We walk every Saturday afternoon approximately 6 miles and Saturdays twice a month in morning for approximately 12 miles - or try our "Ramble" on first Saturday morning each month - slightly shorter, slower pace.

Please note change of start time for afternoon walks - Winter start 13:00.

REGULAR OCTOBER WALKS

1st NOVEMBER AM "Ramble", Wilstead, 4.5 miles,
PM Wilstead, 6.5 miles

8th NOVEMBER AM Potton, 13 miles
PM Swineshead, 6 miles

15th NOVEMBER PM Stagsden, 6.5 miles

22nd NOVEMBER PM Ravensden, 5 miles followed by **AGM**

29th NOVEMBER AM Bradwell Abbey 12 miles,
PM Harrold, 6 Miles

For our latest walks program visit www.ramblers.org.uk/go-walking/ramblers-groups/north-bedfordshire-group.

Please bring a drink, snack or lunch as we always have a break.

For more information on our walks telephone:

Margaret Sawyer | 07780 933729 Facebook: **North Beds Ramblers**
www.ramblers.org.uk/north-bedfordshire



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All Saints Church United in Faith. Welcoming All

The services have been planned as follows for **NOVEMBER**:

Sunday 2nd November | 11.00am

Sunday 9th November | 11.00am

Remembrance Service preceded at 10.45 with a ceremony at the War Memorial for the Laying of wreaths in memory of those who gave their lives in two World Wars and after.

Sunday 16th November | 11.00am

Sunday 23rd November | 11.00am

Sunday 30th November | 11.00am

We are unable at this stage to say whether the services will be Morning Praise or Holy Communion. It is dependent on the availability of clergy.

The Soup and Pud Lunch was very successful. There were 5 different sources of soup and some delicious puddings.

In November we return to 10.30am on **Wednesday 19th November** for our Coffee Morning and on **Wednesday 17th December** there will be a Christmas themed Coffee Morning again at 10.30am. These will be in the Chapter House.

Looking further ahead we are planning our usual Christmas Tree Festival and Autumn Extravaganza. This will be on **Saturday 29th November** from 12.00 onwards.

There will be the usual stalls plus a Hamper Raffle and delicious refreshments.

Robert Heley

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Wilstead Players

It is with regret that I have to announce that the final curtain has come down on Wilstead Players!

Wilstead Players have been entertaining people living in Wilstead and the surrounding area for well over fifty years. Many of the actors living in the area took part in plays of all genre – comedies, tragedies and classical – including pantomimes and music halls. Not forgetting revues and the very successful murder mystery dinners.

The decision was made at a recent Extraordinary General Meeting when it was decided to dissolve The Players. This was prompted by events taking place over the last few years. There was difficulty in selecting the right plays for our audiences, the lack of actors coming forward to take part, together with insufficient backstage support personnel to assist. But above all our audiences were reducing in numbers.

All in all, we were an aging society, with aging audiences and insufficient younger people coming forward to tread the boards and support The Players. Unfortunately, it is the trend in lots of areas and lack of audiences do not make a successful organisation.

All it remains now is to distribute the assets including costumes, properties, scenery and lighting, which is being undertaken by a caretaker committee and to thank everyone for their support over the years.

**Chairman's last words on behalf everybody...
...it has been great fun!**

Colin West

Chairman | November 2025

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Save the Date

Wilstead Senior Citizens' Annual Tea Party

Wednesday 14th January 2026



The Trustees of the Wilstead Endowed Charities warmly invite all our senior residents (that's everyone aged 60 and over) to this year's Annual Tea Party. **Wednesday 14th January 2026, 3.00pm** Wilstead Village Hall

There will be plenty to enjoy, delicious afternoon tea, entertainment, a raffle, and a special performance by the children from Wilstead Primary School.

And to start things off in style guests will be welcomed with a complimentary glass of Prosecco or Bucks Fizz on arrival.

Further details will be included in future village newsletters and displayed on the noticeboards, but for now, please save the date!

We look forward to seeing you there for another fantastic community afternoon.

Hands On November

The Garden Club will be having a practical activity at their meeting on Tuesday 18th November. With seasonal refreshments we are sure creative ideas will give amazing results. To set us on the right track, Dot will be giving us a starting idea. She brought some items that would be useful to bring to the meeting. If you wish to come to this meeting and are not a regular member and want to know what to bring, please contact us. Entry will be £3 as usual with an optional raffle

Our October meeting was the annual quiz. Mary promised that it was easy but it was still tricky. The discussion of the answers between the 31 members was quite animated and very good natured. As usual there were no prizes but everyone had fun. Between the quiz rounds members were able to enjoy a range of delicious cakes made by Viv and ably served by the kitchen ninjas. Also a sign up sheet for the Christmas meal was circulated, payment is due at our November meeting, so let us know if you missed the quiz and want to come.

We look forward to seeing you at our meetings.

Wilstead Garden Club Committee
wilsteadgardenclub@hotmail.com



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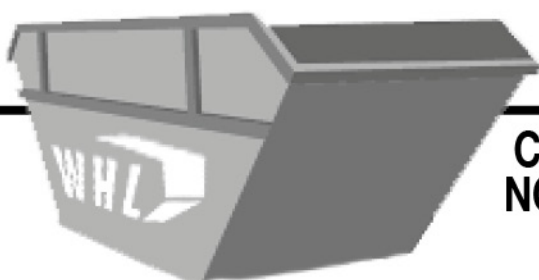
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News from the Pews

In October our listening and sharing group, Ready to Share" met in HeBrews Café in church to explore the theme of Sharing: Ourselves. We listened and shared ideas about being our natural selves, how our Christian beliefs affect our life choices and help us to be kind and sincere towards others in our world.

Our next meeting is on **Tuesday, 11th November**. Doors open at 1.45pm for a 2pm start. Hot drinks and cakes will be served. Everyone welcome. Our topic is **"Ready to Share: Our Challenges"**. We finish at 3pm prompt. Please contact us if you would like further information.

We were happy to welcome our local village residents to our café on the day of the village jumble trail. Our cakes, biscuits and lollies were very popular with the young people who enjoyed showing their adults around our beautiful church.

Saturday, 29th November will be our "Christmas Tree Extravaganza" with craft stall, fancy goods, home-made treats, grand raffle and our ever-popular chocolate tombola! Hot lunches and light refreshments will be served in the Chapter House. This is a wonderful opportunity to come together in your village church, have fun, and meet people. We look forward to welcoming you.

If your group are including a Christmas Tree we are setting up on **Friday, 28th November** from 10am.

Sunday, 30th November at 3pm is our **Advent Carol Service**, featuring well-known carols, readings and poems and, of course **Christmas jumpers, bobble hats and antlers!** Afterwards, **HeBrews** will be serving mince pies, drinks and other seasonal treats. A great way to begin our journey to Christmas! Café Tin donations go towards our Team charity, "Embrace the Middle East."

Please contact us at the address below if you would like to have a chat with a local Minister, a Home Communion, Baptism, Confirmation, or a Wedding. We are available to discuss funeral arrangements.

Helen Harbron-Aplegarth

Lay Minister | Elstow Team

Elstow Team Ministry

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Milton Keynes National Trust Association



Are you a member of the National Trust? Even if you aren't, you can join our local association in Milton Keynes that arranges visits to National Trust properties and places of special interest, lectures, holidays, and social events. Money raised through our activities are used to support National Trust projects.

We meet once a month on the first Thursday of each month from 2.00pm to 4.00pm at Oak Tree Centre, Wallinger Drive, Shenley Brook End, Milton Keynes MK45 7GZ, and scheduled lectures (£3 for members and £4 for non-members) include:

6TH NOVEMBER 2025

Kate Wills, *The Fallen Choristers*

The story of how the Kings College Cambridge Nine Lessons and Carols came about. The King's College Cambridge Nine Lessons and service was established in 1918 by Eric Milner-White to bring more imaginative worship to the college after World War I. While the service format originated at Truro

Cathedral in 1880, Milner-White adapted it for the King's College Chapel, intending to offer comfort and a spiritual connection to the community after the war. The first service took place on Christmas Eve 1918 and has been broadcast on the radio since 1928.

5TH FEBRUARY 2026

Paul Rabbitts FRSA FLI

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5TH MARCH 2026

Alan Biggins

On foot through the intelligence zone. He is a local author who has studied how Bletchley Park and other localities invented and used radar to listen in to German war plans and contributed to us winning WW2

In addition, the association members have informal "Coffee and Natter" morning meetings held at different locations each month with details provided via e-mail.



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Wilstead Village Hall

Following our appeal for volunteers to give some time to support Ben the caretaker and the Committee with small jobs in the Village Hall, we would like to thank Pat, Jim and Lynda for doing so. Already they have helped us with drain clearance and gardening.

Have you ever wondered what groups hire the hall regularly which you could join in with?

- **MONDAY** – Over 60s Table Tennis (not for beginners), Art Club, Yoga
- **TUESDAY** – Pilates and Chair Pilates (see advert in Newsletter), Garden Club (monthly), Martial Arts
- **THURSDAY** – Stay & Play (young children & adults), Ladies Craft and Natter, Wilstead WI (monthly)
- **FRIDAY** – Pilates (see advert in Newsletter), Sunshine Club (for senior citizens) or Community Café (drink, cake and chat for all ages)
- **SUNDAY** – Elstow Table Tennis Club

For further information about any of these, please contact Angela (contact details below).

Don't forget that we still need new faces on the Committee with fresh ideas about how to run the Hall. Many of the present committee will probably retire next year, so now is a good time to join us and learn how the hall works. No Committee next year means NO hall for local people to use!

A reminder that to find any information about the hall, T's & C's, rates of hire, hall availability and to make a booking via the On-line Diary etc., please visit: wilsteadvillagehall.co.uk.

We would greatly appreciate potential hirers using the online booking system and NOT emailing the Admin team, run by volunteers.

Barbara Seamark | Chairperson
seamarkbarbara@gmail.com | 07709 573475

Angela Fosbrook | Secretary
fosbrookangela@gmail.com | 01234 294692

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This newsletter is published by Wilstead Neighbourhood Watch, part of Bedford & District NW Association, in close co-operation with Bedfordshire Police.

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

Wilstead & Wixams



COMMUNITY ART GROUP

We're in the month of Remembrance and so our painting this month is of poppies. They look spectacular in colour if you could see them. If you're interested in art and would love to try out your talent, why not join us? Your first session is free and, if you decide to continue and become a member, it will be £3 a session when you're able

to come. We meet in the Village Hall on Mondays from 2pm-4pm. We don't meet on Bank Holidays. Our group has members of all abilities, using a variety of mediums. You might like sketching in pencil, charcoal, pen and ink, or painting by numbers. You can also paint in watercolour, acrylic or even oil. Meeting in the large hall makes it a safe space to work in and we are well spaced out. May I remind members and new people that we do have a small variety of art resources for your use so, if there is anything you haven't got or would like to experiment with, we may be able to help. If you need it, several of our members will help and encourage you in whatever your artistic endeavours happen to be.



Poppies by Jacquie

Enquiries:

Michael Bradley

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revmichael14@outlook.com



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Wilstead P3 Footpath Group

Meetings

The next meeting of the Footpath Group will be in the Village Hall, small hall, on **Saturday 29th November** at 10.00am.

Come along if you are (or might be?) interested in helping to keep an eye on the 11 miles of Public Rights of Way (both Public Footpaths and Public Bridleways) in and around the village and report on any problems you come across. You will be made welcome!

Footpath Work

As normal any problems highlighted at the meetings will be addressed and any work required to rectify them, and making the path easily walkable again, will be organised. Assistance of Bedford Borough Rights of Way team may be requested should there be problems too large for the Group to tackle.

Walks

The 4-5 mile October walk was around Ampthill starting in Ampthill Park and going through the Park and along the top of the escarpment to the top of Kings Wood. This section of the walk gave great views north over the countryside towards Bedford.

From Kings Wood the route went back to Ampthill along field edge paths and through Ampthill Cemetery!. The optional post walk refreshments were found at The George, Maulden.

The remaining 2025 walk will be on **Sunday 23rd November**. Meet at Whitworth Way car park at 10.30am. The route has yet to be checked and finalised (possibly Rowney Warren or Chicksands Wood) so keep an eye out for posters on the Village noticeboards at the Village Hall and Crossroads.

There will also be the traditional New Years Day morning wander along the Footpaths and Bridleways around the village. Again keep an eye out for details / posters on the Village noticeboards and in future Newsletters.

Nigel Jacobs

Wilstead Footpath Group | 01234 400733

Newsletter

DEADLINE

For any copy, new advertisements or changes to existing advertisements

Friday 21st November

The next newsletter will be published on Friday 5th December.

Please send items and articles for inclusion in the Wilstead Newsletter to our dedicated email address:

wilstead.newsletter@gmail.com

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

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PC Vito Napoli	101
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Borough Councillor, Graeme Coombes	07815 302318
Borough Councillor, Marc Frost	07825 304080
Neighbourhood Watch Central Office	01234 842043
Wilstead Good Neighbours	07807 408928

Who's Who:

Neighbourhood Watch, Wilstead.

Advertisements & Accounts

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Wilstead Players' History

In 1970-1 when the Whitworth Way area was being developed a lot of young people moved into the village and a like-minded group of them got together and decided to form an amateur Drama Group and so the Wilstead Players was formed.

The group went from strength to strength staging a wide range of productions from serious plays such as 'The Crucible' to the more light hearted comedies of Alan Ayckbourne with Revues, Pantomimes and Olde Tyme Music Halls occurring along the way. Productions with large casts were always favourites as they involved more members and brought more of their friends and relatives into the audience. Murder Mystery evenings were also popular as they also included a 3-course meal (did people come for the drama or for the meal?)

The Players also entered Drama Festivals often winning trophies.

In order to attract young players the society held Saturday morning sessions for Juniors led by a professional drama coach. As well as productions the Players also had an active social side with after show parties (they were fun) barbecues (with burnt sausages) and quizzes. When the new village hall was built the fact that there was an active drama group meant that the players were involved with its design and now Wilstead has one of the few village halls in the area with a usable stage and wings.

Unfortunately as time passed the membership aged and dwindled. People travelled further to and from work and worked longer hours and it became increasingly difficult to attract new and younger members. Most of the founder members had passed on or moved away. Eventually it was decided at an Extraordinary General meeting to bring down the curtain for a final time after 54 years.

Who knows what the future may hold. With more people now working from home maybe they will want the social interaction, friendship, love of theatre and joy of treading the boards that an amateur drama group can provide and maybe a village drama group will rise again.

Chris & Mark Haines
Members since 1972