

Ashland Lakeside



The Parish Council and the Steering Group are delighted to let you know that progress continues at Ashland Lakeside. The interior fit-out looks fantastic, and, externally, the ground has been landscaped and seeded, the footpaths have been completed, and the decking area will soon have railings along edges.

As we've previously mentioned, the building will have capacity for 50 people. We are hoping to be able to open the

doors by the middle of December, once all relevant building and safety checks have been satisfactorily completed. Initially, we plan to open the building as a drop-in space, so that Ashland residents can get to experience the facilities, at the same time as enjoying a cup of coffee. Depending on demand, it could become a 'warm space', to support those who are finding it increasingly difficult to pay the heating bills, as we move into the winter.

If you would like to make use of this facility, please get in touch with Katherine, the Parish Clerk, who can be contacted at clerk@simpsonashland-pc.gov.uk and let her know when you might like to use the building. Of course, any such arrangement will require volunteers to open and close the building, along with someone to remain in the premises when it is occupied. If you can help, get in touch with Caroline Vooght or another member of the Steering Group.

Details of how to hire Ashland Lakeside will be announced in due course, but if you have an event you're planning ahead for, let us know and we can advise on timescales in line with your plans.

Ongoing, Ashland Lakeside will require local residents to support the building, and we're always looking for people to join the Steering Group. The next meeting will be at Ashland Lakeside on **Monday 21 November at 6.30 pm** and everyone is welcome to come along.

For more information and regular updates, please follow Ashland Neighbourhood Watch or Simpson and Ashland Parish Council on Facebook, or email Katherine at clerk@simpsonashland-pc.gov.uk

● **Caroline Vooght on behalf of the Steering Group**



Simpson: then and now (and a reprise...)

This year's local contribution to Heritage Open Days 2022 took place in Simpson Village Hall over the weekend of 17/18 September. The 50-minute rolling PowerPoint presentation of photographs of Simpson, past and present, attracted a lot of interest and much positive feedback. There were over 120 visitors across the two afternoons – about half of whom lived beyond the village. The accompanying guided walk, led by Peter Barnes, attracted about 30 people on each day and provided more information on some of the properties which featured in the slideshow.

There will be a further opportunity to view the PowerPoint presentation on the afternoon of **Saturday 12 November** in the Village Hall, following the auction of Simpson memorabilia and keepsakes.

Grand charity auction

The success of *Simpson: then and now* prompted the idea of an auction of items associated with Simpson and the surrounding area in order to feed interest in and engagement with the local history. See the accompanying notice for further details.

The proceeds of the auction will go to fund for the ongoing repairs to St Thomas's Church (see p.12).

Grand fun charity auction of Simpson memorabilia & keepsakes
All proceeds to Simpson church repairs
In the Village Hall
Saturday 12th November
Viewing 2pm | Auction 3pm
Lots include Books | Maps | Photos
Postcards | Historic newspapers etc
associated with Simpson & surrounds
PAYMENT IN CASH ON THE DAY PREFERRED, PLEASE!

Followed by a re-run of
Simpson: Then and Now
(slideshow first shown 17th & 18th September
for the 2022 Heritage Open Days)
accompanied by a Q&A
Light refreshments available

Art at Old Groveway



Donald Takeshita-Guy



Sharon Paulger

During the first week in September, a group of Central St Martins MA Fine Art: Digital 2022 graduates and associates took over a house in Old Groveway for a pop-up exhibition. This was one of a series of interventions that the group have done in non-gallery spaces. The exhibiting artists were Fiona Carruthers, Dave Carruthers, Bobby Dowler, Laura Erviti, Jonathan Kearney, Esmeralda Momferratou, Donald Takeshita-Guy, Yumi Takeshita-Guy and Gigi Yuji Gao and myself.

The exhibition was in a house I inherited. I have always loved the design

of Old Groveway and can't imagine why anyone driving north along the V8 Marlborough Street, catching sight of the cluster of houses that appear as a sculptural form in the landscape, wouldn't be curious to see more. I wanted to use the exhibition to share the unique urban design of Old Groveway.

The empty house with its open plan, light-filled rooms and floor to ceiling windows was easily transformed into a gallery. Works were placed throughout the house, with some clever interventions including a video screen in the oven and an installation of reeds

emerging from the kitchen cupboards.

I was surprised how many visitors were not aware that these houses existed. Once inside they were torn between admiring the house and the art.

A review of the exhibition can be found here www.totalmk.co.uk/art/in-review-arthouse-exhibition-in-milton-keynes-was-both-beautiful-and-confro-nting?fbclid=IwAR3dm9S4zf1EvTV6l2QFfeovFmio6HVG9Pb0bL21rsaK99cl4Jtgc20P1l

● Sharon Paulger

Ashland litter pick

The most recent litter picking in Ashland was on Saturday 10 September, when we covered the lakeside, the Stadium pathway area and Yearlstone Square. Our tally included cigarette butts, takeaway packaging, bottles, drink cans, nappies and wipes, among other things. Our bags grew so heavy that we couldn't lift them without help. We appreciate that some of this rubbish is left by people visiting the lake or passing through Ashland but the overall picture would be improved if residents used the designated waste bins or, better still, disposed of their rubbish at home.

Volunteers from Ashland litter pick monthly over the summer and at other times, if the weather is favourable. Look out for announcements on the Parish Facebook page and on your emails.

Thank you to The Village Plaice for providing fish, chips and drinks to the litter pickers.

● Chichi Ezeh



Holly Weaver, her grandmother and Chichi Ezeh

Winterwatch at Ashland Lakes - Wigeon

This smallish duck is a winter visitor from Siberia arriving here anytime soon. Wigeon can be seen – and heard – at Ashland Lakes, where they divide their time between the water and grazing on adjoining grassland. Last winter saw upwards of 40 birds at Ashland. The male wigeon is blue-grey in colour with a red-brown head, a pale yellowish forehead and a black-and-white rear-end. The female is a rather drab brown-grey. Male wigeon emit a distinctive explosive whistle – whe-ooo; females make do with a low growl.



News from Simpson Garden Group

The Garden Group have been busy preparing the ground for the mini-orchard which will replace the herbaceous border opposite Simpson Village Hall. The very dry ground has posed a major problem, but we are very grateful for the excellent support by Stuart and Jenny Cameron and their cultivator, which lightened the load, considerably.

That enabled us to plant three apple trees (Cox, Ellison's Orange and Sunset) and a cherry (Burlat) – on Monday 24 October. Bulbs will be planted and the area around seeded with grass, so that the whole site will soon take on a new appearance. We are very grateful for the generous donations that enabled tree purchase.

The four heritage apple trees planted by the Garden Group on Hanmer Green in February 2021 are doing well.



The Garden Gang: [L-R] Stuart, Jenny, Jane, Wendy and Lena



Planting an apple tree



The Planting Team: [L-R] Brenda, Jane, Wendy, Steve and Lena

Thanks to Steve Bates, who undertook a daily watering programme during the drought to ensure their survival.

The beautiful knitted and crocheted flowers created for June's Platinum Jubilee have been carefully stored ready to be reused for the coronation of King Charles III on 6 May 2023.

Simpson Village has made a substantial contribution to Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth's Green Canopy Jubilee Memorial scheme and have ensured a lasting legacy for future generations.

Forthcoming attractions:

Tuesday 8 November at 8.00 p.m. in Simpson Village Hall.

Lighten the Load – Garden designer Maria Greenhill will give tips on how to design your garden to reduce its maintenance needs.

All welcome. Non-members £5.00.

Sunday 11 December at 4.00 p.m. **Simpson Christmas tree**

Join the Garden Group for mulled wine and mince pies, as we sing Christmas carols and switch on the tree lights.

As usual, the tree will be decorated. There will also be a box of wooden discs under the tree for you to decorate and hang on the tree.

● **Lena Bates, Jane Anderson, Brenda Ladd, Wendy Jordan**

20/20 vision



Before

For drivers turning right from H9 Groveway into Marshworth and Tesco Express, the view of traffic approaching



After

from the west has long been partially obscured by a tree extending above the central reservation. As of October, the tree

has ceased to be, thanks to the efforts of Councillor Charlotte Hall and the MKC Highways and Landscaping teams.

Opportunities for girls of all ages in Simpson and Ashland

Rainbows is a fun and exciting programme for girls aged 4 to 7. It's all about learning by doing - developing self-confidence, building friendships, learning new things and having fun. Girls get their hands dirty with arts and crafts, get in touch with nature and play games.

Brownies is about trying new things that teach girls aged 7 to 10 about themselves, their community and their world. Brownies introduces girls to a world of new opportunities, challenges and fun. Girls go along to camps, holidays, day trips and sleepovers. They get together with their friends at regular meetings, where they learn new hobbies, get creative, develop skills and have outdoor adventures. As well as trying activities in these meetings, girls choose from interest badges related to things they want to know more about.

Guides have an exciting and varied programme designed to inspire and

challenge girls aged 10 to 14. What you do in Guides is up to you, from taking part in lots of exciting activities at regular meetings, to special events and trips away. You will choose from different badges and awards which will help you learn new skills and try new challenges. You can do some of this on your own; others you'll do in groups in the regular unit meetings.

Rangers is for girls aged 14 to 18. It's all about taking the lead and finding new challenges. In Rangers you'll follow a programme of interest badges, skills builders and awards. You'll take part in amazing challenges, travel the world and develop skills across our six themes.

We have many Girlguiding groups in Milton Keynes. Go to www.Girlguiding.org for more information.

● **GirlguidingMK**

Cost of living support

The rising cost of food, fuel bills and other basic living needs is putting additional financial demands on everyone. For those less able to meet those demands, help may be available.

Milton Keynes City Council's website has information which may be of help - www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/benefits/cost-living-support

Also, look out for information in the

media and on the Parish Council's Facebook page.

The Parish Council, itself, cannot provide financial support but we may be able to provide some practical relief as the nature of needs becomes clearer. Look out for information on the Parish Council's Facebook page and noticeboards.

Introducing David Tucker – new Parish Councillor

I came to live in Simpson in 1981, when the BBC/Open University Production Centre moved to Milton Keynes from Alexandra Palace, and I have been here ever since. I had noticed a request in the Newsletter for people to consider joining the Parish Council and I decided to give it a go. I am still feeling my way into how it all works but hope to make a definite contribution to a small team who work very hard on the village's behalf.

Quiz and Concerts at St Thomas's Church

November

Saturday 12th at 7.00p.m.
Remembrance Concert & Bring and Share Buffet.

December

Saturday 10th at 7.00 p.m.
Quiz & Supper. Proceeds to Church Funds.

Friday 16th at 7.00 p.m.
Salvation Army Carols & Bring and Share Buffet.

Quiz places must be booked. For more details of any of these events, please contact Pat Hodges missquiz@sky.com

A lick and a promise

If you have bought postage stamps recently, you may have noticed that they have a barcode along one edge. Royal Mail has announced that, from 31 January 2023, 'regular' stamps without a barcode will no longer be valid. (However, 'special' stamps with pictures

on [e.g. commemorative issues] and Christmas stamps without a barcode, will continue to be valid.)

If you have some regular stamps without a barcode, there are two options:

- use them up on letters, cards etc before 31 January;
- exchange them for new, barcoded stamps (to the same value), through the Stamp Swap Out scheme. The step-by-step process for doing so can be found on the Royal Mail website www.royalmail.com/sending/barcoded-stamps

The swapping process is reasonably straightforward for those with access to the internet (and a printer). No



information is offered on the website concerning how to swap stamps for those without such access, although you may have received a leaflet from Royal Mail (see illustration) through your letterbox. Alternatively, this is an opportunity for residents with on-line access to offer help to those without, by printing off the necessary application form.

Note that stamps cannot be swapped at Post Offices (e.g. at Tinkers Bridge or Netherfield). However, the application form can be obtained from the Brinklow sorting office.



Sunflower Growing Competition

When the war started in Ukraine, I wanted to do something to help and support the people affected. My family and I chose to organize a sunflower growing competition. We did sunflowers because they are the national flower of Ukraine, and they are also a symbol of hope for Ukrainians.

There were two categories, children and adults. Each person that entered the competition received three seeds and a flowerpot which were sold at the Simpson and Ashland spring event in April. The aim of this competition was to grow the tallest sunflower, with the measurements taken from the base of the plant to the middle of the flower head. Over 60 people entered and we raised £261.

The winner of the children's competition was Melissa Hird, with a height of 1.39 meters, and the winner of the adult's competition was Eric Coles, with a height of 3.39 meters.

● Madison Eatwell



Remembrance Weekend 12 – 13 November

Saturday 12th at 7.00 p.m. Remembrance Concert & Bring-and-share buffet. For more details, please contact Pat Hodges missquizz@sky.com

Sunday 13th The service in St Thomas's Church begins at 10.30 a.m. At 10.50, the congregation will move outside and gather around the war memorial for a continuation of the service of remembrance and the national two-minute's silence at 11.00, followed by the laying of wreaths from the church, the Parish Council and local uniformed organisations.

All are very welcome, whether or not you come to the church.

Coffee, tea and biscuits will be available in the church, afterwards.

Simpson war memorial

When passing the war memorial during the past two or three years, you may have noticed that the names on the granite tablet were becoming increasingly illegible. The painting of the letters, last done in 2014 for the centenary of the start of World War 1, has suffered from the elements. This summer, the Parish Council commissioned H.W.Mason & Sons of Newport Pagnell, to restore the lettering. This time, a clear protective coating has been applied, in addition, which should extend the life of the work.

● Peter Barnes



Simpson war memorial – before

Remembrance Concert

Lest we forget...



Saturday 12th Nov 2022

at 7pm in

St Thomas's Church, Simpson, MK6 3AD

Bring and share buffet
Collection for Church Funds



Simpson war memorial – after

Ashland skiescapes... *from the lens of Lars de Wijngaert*



Patio party @ The Mount

On Friday 12 August, The Mount held a party to celebrate the completion of our new patio. There was cake and prosecco, a BBQ, line dancers and the famous Bletchley busker, Plucky Haggis. It was held to thank everyone for their fantastic efforts in raising over £3,000 over the last 18 months or so. We would especially like to thank Pat and Neil Hodges for hosting a quiz for us, everyone who came to the bring-and-buy sale last year, Philip Coppen for his kind donation and others, too many to mention, who bought raffle tickets and attended cake sales. We managed to secure a grant from Catalyst to buy some new furniture and as the pictures show, the residents are enjoying the new outdoor space.

● Karen Steeden



Enjoying a cream tea



Line dancers

New waste collection service in 2023

In Autumn 2023, Milton Keynes City Council will be replacing the existing collection of domestic waste /recycling in bags by a fleet of

wheelie bins.

There is the possibility of a 'Bins on Tour' event at Simpson Village Hall but, at the time of going to press,

details have yet to be confirmed. Please check the Parish noticeboards and website for updates.



There is a lot of information on the Council's website at www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/waste-and-recycling/new-waste-collection-service-2023 There, you will find answers to many frequently asked questions.

Simpson Village Hall

The Simpson Village Hall page on the Parish website has recently been developed. Go to www.simpsonashland-pc.gov.uk/simpson-village-hall for information about facilities, charges and availability and how to book.



What's On...

Tuesdays

Coffee & chat 10.00-12.00

Play card and board games, or just chat. Refreshments £2; optional raffle. Come along – we'd love to see you!

Wednesdays

Forever Green 10:30 – 11.15 am

Chair-based exercise for older adults £4 per session.

Evergreen Yogalates 6:30 - 7.30 pm

Yoga for older adults.

Thursdays

Cha Char Chimps 10.00 - 11.00

(see opposite page)

Simpson Village Hall

AVAILABLE TO HIRE
FOR REGULAR CLASSES TO ONE OFF EVENTS

We offer a bright space for up to 50 people.
With a fully equipped kitchen.
Wifi.
Accessible toilet and baby changing facility.

Hourly Hire Rate
£20 Standard Hire Charge
£15 for Charitable Organisations
£12.50 for Residents of Simpson and Ashland

Further info & online booking is available at:
<https://simpsonashland-pc.gov.uk/simpson-village-hall/>

Forever Green

Chair based exercise class for older adults
For everyone – all levels and abilities welcome
Move it or Lose it!

Come and have some fun, improve your sleep and better manage those aches and pains

Movement and exercise helps you:

- Improves your balance
- Increases your stability
- Reduces the risk of falling
- Aches and pains reduce
- Stronger bones
- Sleep better
- Flexibility improves
- Posture is better
- Muscle strength and tone increases
- Better blood pressure control
- Lowers risk of stroke
- Better blood sugar control
- Breathing is better

Join Shakila to get moving, feel healthier and happier
Wednesday 1st June
10.30am to 11.15am at Simpson Village Hall, Hamner Road, MK6 3AD
£4 per session
For more information call Shakila on 07752378878

Coffee Morning
In support of Willen Hospice

Venue: **Simpson Village Hall**

Date: **Saturday December 3rd**

Time: **10.30 - 12.30**

More info: **Coffee & teas**
Cakes & biscuits
Bacon baps & veggie rolls

RAFFLE

Willen Hospice needs to raise 14.7 million a year. 80% of a million to continue providing free compassionate care to local patients and their families.

Introducing Cha Char Chimps

Cha Char Chimps with me, Ruth, has a new show at Simpson Village Hall, MK6 3AD, every Thursday morning from 10.00 to 11.00.

What is Cha Char Chimps? The sessions are for pre-school children (0 to 4 years) and their accompanying adults. We sing and dance to mostly familiar songs, we use puppets, a parachute and plenty of bubbles. It is a fun way to start the learning journey. We promote language skills, co-ordination, co-operation, confidence, concentration, fine motor skills and much more.

As part of the session the adults are treated to homemade chocolate tiffin or a sponge cake with a hot drink, and the children a biscuit and a piece of cake. Please bring a travel mug and a beaker for your little one.

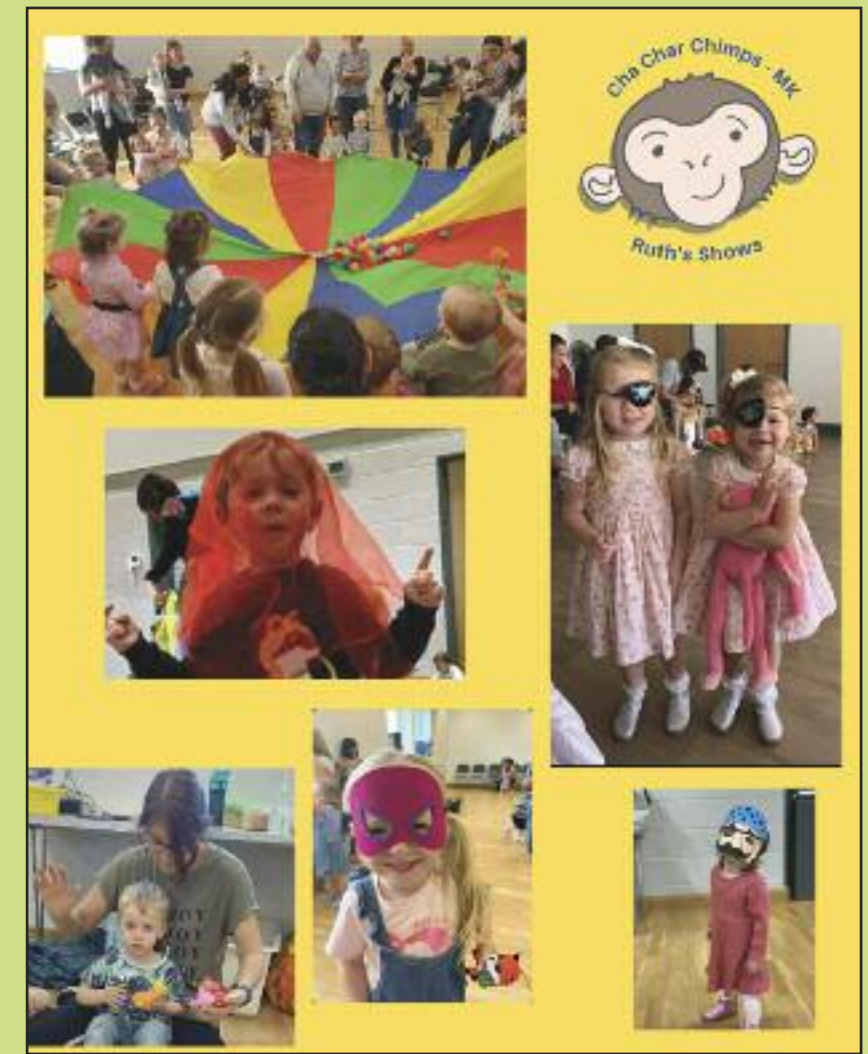
Our Christmas Shows, with Santa, are always a big hit and it's not long now until the big man makes a visit to us at Simpson Village Hall.

Sessions are pay-as-you-go by card or cash. You can also book on-line at <https://ccchimps.com/milton-keynes-booking-ruth/>.

Pop over to my Insta or fb page and give me a like or a follow.

<https://www.facebook.com/CCCMKRUTH>
<https://www.instagram.com/chacharchimpsruth>
Hope to see you there.

● Ruth Aguilar



Evergreen Yogalates

Come along to gently move your body, calm your mind and feed your soul

Wednesday at 6.30pm to 7.30pm with Shakila
Free first session on Wednesday 1st June at Simpson Village Hall, Hamner Road, MK6 3AD
Bring your mat, water and small cushion/towel

News from St. Thomas' Church

Observant visitors to the churchyard will have noticed that the window on the south side of the chancel has recently been boarded up. The crack had got so big that the window was no longer being held in place. Thankfully, we were able to remove the glass intact. We are now awaiting further investigations – costing several thousand pounds - which will hopefully reveal what is causing these ongoing problems and how they can be resolved.



Some local residents have kindly asked about donating money to the church - either for the building fund or for the upkeep of the churchyard. This is much appreciated. If you would like to make a bank transfer to either of these funds, please email treasurer@woughton.org to request the bank details. Cash or cheques (made payable to Woughton Ecumenical Partnership) can also be given to Rev Nicola Vidamour or any church member. Please place in an envelope and write on the front which fund this money is for. Donations can also be gift-aided. Philip Coppen is being sponsored to remove his beard and all monies raised from that will be going to the Building Fund!



All are welcome to our regular Sunday services at 10:30 am. Our Harvest Festival in September was followed by a bring & share lunch, with some home-grown entertainment. We also collected a large supply of produce for the Foodbank and are very grateful to those who contributed.

We are currently collecting money to support Angel Tree – an initiative which provides Christmas gifts for the children of prisoners. A member of our congregation volunteers at Woodhill Prison and recently gave a very moving and inspiring talk about her work, during one of our Sunday services.

Forthcoming events include:

Light in the Darkness – Saturday 29 and Sunday 30 October from 2-4pm. An opportunity to pop in and light candles for those who have died – recently or long ago.

Remembrance Sunday – 13 November. The service in church will begin at 10:30am and we will hold the usual act of remembrance at the war memorial from 10:50am. Coffee, tea and biscuits will be available in the church afterwards.

Christmas Services:

Carol Service – Sunday 18 December, 6pm

Christmas Eve Communion – Saturday 24 December, 11:30pm

Christmas Day All-Age Worship – Sunday 25 December, 10:30am

New Year's Day – Methodist Covenant Service at Christ the Vine, Coffee Hall, 10:45am (No service at St. Thomas')

We are looking forward to welcoming the children from the Charles Warren Academy who will be coming to the church for their nativity play and we are also holding a Christingle service for the local uniformed organisations.

● **Rev Nicola Vidamour (Minister) and
Iola Samuels (Church Warden)**



Simpson & Ashland Parish Council on Facebook

Are you a Facebook user? Become a friend of Simpson & Ashland on Facebook. Stay in touch, comment on and ask questions about what is going on in your neighbourhood. We also tweet! @SimpsonAshland



www.simpsonandashland.co.uk
clerk@simpsonashland-pc.gov.uk
07597 304 054 Twitter: @SimpsonAshland



This newsletter can be downloaded from the website – just scan the code

This issue of the parish newsletter has been edited by Peter Barnes and Dylan Jeavons.

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