

# Meopham Mercury

The Meopham Parish Council Newsletter No 11

Winter 2015/2016

*If you wish to make a contribution to this publication, please contact the Parish Office.*

## **KEEPING IT SAFE THIS CHRISTMAS**

In the countdown to Christmas millions of people living across the UK will go online to buy presents for friends and family, search for holidays, book tickets for a big gig or send an electronic Christmas card. What many do not realise is the hidden threat we now face from criminals online. They are targeting internet shoppers with scams which, on the surface promise to save them time and money, but in reality only deliver festive heartache and misery. Tens of thousands of people sadly fell victim to an online fraud in the weeks leading up to last Christmas and even more are at risk of suffering the same fate this year – being left hundreds, and sometimes even thousands of pounds out of pocket with no presents to give on the big day and their electronic devices corrupted with a computer virus.

In 2014, 74% of all adults have purchased goods or services online, and this December around 50% of UK citizens are expected to use the internet to buy more than half of their Christmas presents. However, buyers need to be aware that fraudsters are looking to take advantage of this massive demand by creating bogus websites to advertise counterfeit goods and services that are often poor quality/unsafe, or items that will never be delivered.

Top tips to protect yourself :

- If possible use online retailers/brands you are aware of and trust. For major brands always

go to the official website to find a list of authorised sellers.

- Check the delivery, insurance, warranty and returns policy.
- Be especially careful when purchasing expensive items.
- Make sure you have adequate anti-virus software that will enable your computer to flag any untrustworthy sites.
- Always use recommended methods of payment rather than transferring money direct to a seller. In addition, when purchasing from Auction sites:
  - Research the seller before you bid. If available, check their feedback but be mindful this can also be falsified.
  - Be cautious when buying from sellers abroad or private individuals. If you are in any doubt, back out of the sale.
  - If you are collecting what you have bought, take someone with you or let someone know where you are going.

## **Telephone scams**

- Cold call scams typically involve fraudsters deceiving people into believing they are speaking to a police officer, a member of bank staff, or a representative of another trusted agency, such as a government department.
- Usually the fraudster will convince an individual that they have been a

victim of fraud, and will ask for personal and financial information in order to gain access to their account.

### **Beware giving bank details**

Never disclose the following details:

- four digit card PIN to anyone, including the bank or police
- full password or online banking codes
- personal details unless you are sure who you are talking to

### **Top tactics to watch for**

Another variation of a phone scam involves the fraudster persuading people to transfer money to other accounts or to hand over cash directly to a courier.

The fraudsters are known to encourage people to hang up and call their bank to verify the legitimacy of the call.

However, a phone line can stay open for up to two minutes, so the fraudsters remain on the line and play a dialing tone to trick the individual into thinking they're calling their bank.

In fact, the fraudsters are still connected and the individual is not speaking to their bank, but is still connected to the scammers.

To ensure you don't fall prey to this type of phone scam, remember that in no circumstances would your bank or the police ask you to take such actions. These types of requests will only come from a fraudster.

### **What to do if you're scammed**

Action fraud is the UK's national fraud and crime reporting centre. It provides a central point of contact about fraud and financially motivated internet crime.

It offers an online reporting tool or you can call and speak to an advisor on **0300 123 2040**.

Also report any scams to the Police though not on 999 as this is for Emergencies only.

Some of the older scams will also no doubt resurface, remember if you didn't buy a Lottery ticket in Outer Mongolia then you probably haven't won it despite what the email may say !!

### **OVER 60s**

There is a vast array of activities available to all ages within the village and a guide has been produced highlighting those that are aimed mainly at the Over 60s, though a lot of the Clubs & Societies are for all ages. Copies of this extremely informative guide are available in the Parish office

### **WASTE COLLECTION BY GRAVESHAM BC AT CHRISTMAS**

There's no garden waste collection service from 21 December 2015 to 3 January 2016

## **Christmas and New Year Bank Holidays**

<b>Normal Collection Day</b>	<b>Revised Collection day</b>
Monday 21 December 2015	Monday 21 December 2015
Tuesday 22 December 2015	Tuesday 22 December 2015
Wednesday 23 December 2015	Wednesday 23 December 2015
Thursday 24 December 2015 (Christmas Eve)	Thursday 24 December 2015 (Christmas Eve)
Friday 25 December 2015 (Christmas Day)	Monday 28 December 2015
<b>Normal Collection Day</b>	<b>Revised Collection day</b>
Monday 28 December 2015	Tuesday 29 December 2015
Tuesday 29 December 2015	Wednesday 30 December 2015

Normal Collection Day	Revised Collection day
Wednesday 30 December 2015	Thursday 31 December 2015
Thursday 31 December 2015	Saturday 2 January 2016
Friday 1 January 2016	Monday 4 January 2016
Monday 4 January 2016	Tuesday 5 January 2016
Tuesday 5 January 2016	Wednesday 6 January 2016
Wednesday 6 January 2016	Thursday 7 January 2016
Thursday 7 January 2016	Friday 8 January 2016
Friday 8 January 2016	Saturday 9 January 2016

### **CHRISTMAS TREE LIGHTS CEREMONY**

The Annual Carols and switching on of the Christmas Tree lights will take place at 8.00pm at Meopham Green on Wednesday 16<sup>th</sup> December. Mulled wine and mince pies will be served after the carols in the Cricket Pavilion.

### **MEOPHAM PLAYERS**

Late October saw The Players successfully perform Sir Alan Ayckbourn's Snake in the Grass at The Village Hall, which was thoroughly enjoyed by all that attended.

Regular monthly meetings, **which are open to all**, continue on the first Wednesday each month at 8.00pm at the Village Hall, and provide the opportunity to meet in a very relaxed environment and get involved in all manner of things theatrical.

The Players recently celebrated their seventieth anniversary with a dinner at Bartellas.

### **CELEBRATING THE QUEEN'S 90<sup>TH</sup> BIRTHDAY**

MPC are planning to hold a tea party in the parish to celebrate the Queen's 90<sup>th</sup> birthday for anyone in the village who is 90 years old in 2016. If you know anyone in the Parish who is due to celebrate this milestone birthday next year, please contact the Parish Clerk with their details.

### **MEOPHAM MEDICAL CENTRE HEALTH AND WELL-BEING WALKS**

Every Thursday from Meopham Medical Centre, at 2:00pm

The Meopham Medical Centre are hosting weekly walks, short local routes for those that are just getting into walking or who would like to be a little more active. The routes will vary as the group progresses.

For more information contact:  
The Meopham Medical Centre 01474 814288

### **PARISH COUNCIL MEETING DATES**

Parish Council meetings are due to take place at 8pm in the Windmill unless otherwise stated:

Agendas are published in advance on our website, social media and the noticeboards in the parish.

- 15/12/15** FULL COUNCIL MEETING (Cricket Pavilion) 7.30pm
- 19/01/16** Planning & Projects Ctte
- 09/02/16** Environment & Amenities Ctte
- 08/03/16** Administration & Resources Ctte
- 05/04/16** FULL COUNCIL MEETING (Meopham Village Hall) 7.30pm
- 10/05/16** Annual Parish Meeting (St. John's Centre) 6pm
- 10/05/16** Annual Council Meeting 7.30pm

## **HOW TO CONTACT MEOPHAM PARISH COUNCIL**

You can contact us in the following ways:

- Call into the Windmill - we are usually open 9am-12 noon Monday to Friday
- Telephone - 01474 813779
- E-mail at [clerk@meopham.org](mailto:clerk@meopham.org)
- [www.meopham.org](http://www.meopham.org)
- Twitter - @meophamPC
- Facebook - "Meopham Parish Council"

Samaritans	0845 7909090
Consumer Direct	08454 39 2837
Trading Standards Hotline	03000 412000
Citizens' Advice Bureau	01474 361239

Kent County Council	03000 41 41 41
Kent Highway Services	03000 41 81 81
Gravesham BC	01474 564422
Flytipping (24 hours)	0800 80 70 60
Graffiti Hotline	01474 337000
Floodline	08459 881188
Library	01474 814636

## **YOUR PARISH COUNCIL MEMBERS ARE:**

### ***Hook Green & Nurstead Ward***

Sue Gofton  
Rosalie Knott  
Jo McTavish  
John Ogden (Vice Chairman)

### ***Camer & Meopham Green Ward***

Sheila Buchanan (Chairman)  
Peter Hasler  
Douglas Powell  
Barbara Wade

### ***Culverstone & Harvel Ward***

Max Bramer  
Dawn Bramer  
Anthony Leyshon  
Peter Howard

## **OTHER USEFUL CONTACTS:**

### ***Neighbourhood Team:***

PCSO Jo Hartley 101  
E-mail:  
[gravesham.neighbourhood@kent.pnn.police.uk](mailto:gravesham.neighbourhood@kent.pnn.police.uk)  
Non-emergency Dial 101  
Emergency Dial 999

### ***Community Warden:***

Mandy Cason 07977 981931

Kent Police Crime Reporting 101  
Crimestopper (anonymous) 0800 555111  
Victim Support 0300 303 0156  
Antisocial behaviour 01474 337000  
Community Safety Unit 01474 337528  
or 01474 337070

## **NOTICEBOARDS IN THE PARISH**

Please would residents not remove or cover meeting dates, agendas or any other MPC information on our noticeboards. This information is published for the benefit of all residents. Thank you.

Please contact the Parish Office should you wish to place a poster on the noticeboards in the parish to obtain a number. We would request that notices are A5 size. Notices without an MPC number will be removed.

## **MERRY CHRISTMAS!**

The Chairman, Councillors and office staff at Meopham Parish Council would like to wish all parishioners a very Merry Christmas and good wishes for 2016.