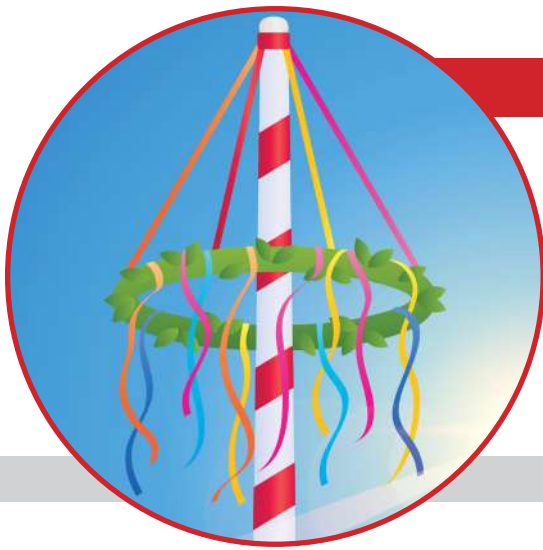


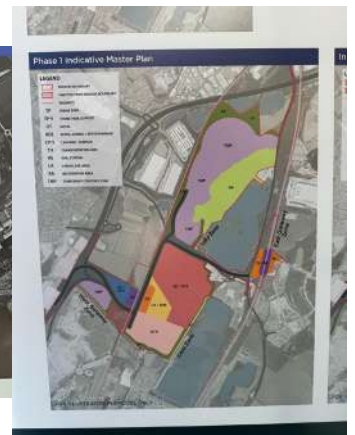


WIXAMS NEWSLETTER

An Independent Newsletter covering all parishes across Wixams • newsletter@wixams.org

Universal Studios consultation process has begun

Universal Studios held two public events in April for local residents, businesses and the wider community. Here is a selection of the information provided at the events.



WIXAMS EVENTS TEAM PRESENTS

**WIXAMS
Summer
Party**

SATURDAY 29TH JUNE 2024
12PM - 6PM

LAKEVIEW VILLAGE HALL
BROOKLANDS AVENUE, WIXAMS,
BEDFORD, MK42 6AB

CRAFT STALLS, FUN FAIR, PERFORMING ARTS,
FOOD & DRINK (BAR FOR THE ADULTS) AND
MUCH MORE....

NO DOGS ARE ALLOWED AT THIS EVENT

MORE INFORMATION AT WIXAMSEVENTS.UK

INTERESTED IN SPONSORING THIS EVENT?
CONTACT US AT HELLO@WIXAMSEVENTS.UK
FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT OUR SPONSORSHIP PACKAGES

USEFUL NUMBERS

999 - Emergency

Where there is a risk of:

- Personal injury
- Loss of life
- Crime in action

101 - Non emergency

- Reporting a crime that is no longer in progress
- Giving information about a crime
- Contacting local police officer
- Getting update reported crime
- Suspicious incidents

• Wixams Parish Council	07386 904950
• Lakeview Village Hall.....	07544 853633
• Lakeview School	01234 741653
• Wixams Tree.....	01234 608960
• Wixams Academy.....	01234 608950
• Houghton Conquest Lower School	01234 740202
• Welcome (Wixams Co-Op).....	01234 740404
• Portu Gallo's.....	01234 741116
• Lakeside Fish & Chips.....	01234 743942
• Wilstead Tandoori	01234 740904
• Wilstead 9th Kitchen.....	01234 740413
• The Red Lion	01234 402446
• The Woolpack.....	01234 742318
• NHS Direct	111
• Wilstead Pharmacy.....	01234 740609
• Bedford Hospital.....	01234 355122
• Doctors - London Road.....	01234 266866
• Doctors - Houghton Close	01525 300898
• Doctors - Greensand	01525 631390
• Doctors - Oliver St	01525 631395
• Doctors - Wootton.....	01234 762500
• Dentist - Cranfield.....	01234 752515
• Scotts Vets.....	01234 742423
• BPHA Customer Service.....	0330 100 0272
• Bedford Borough Council	01234 267422
• L&Q Estates.....	01926 339339
• Wilstead & Wixams Good Neighbours Scheme	07807 408928
• Wilstead Post Office	01234 740210
• Seasons Garden Centre	01234 741909
• Houghton Conquest Parish Council	01234 270016
• Houghton Conquest Post Office	01234 740208
• Stewartby Parish Council.....	01908 397959

Wixams Parish Council



At the April Parish Council Meeting held on 16 April 2024 the following items were discussed.

The Clerk reported that she now had a contact for the land of the abandoned houses on Dane Lane and is trying to find a resolution with the landowner

Updates from Delegated Committee Meetings

Community

Michael Rollins from the Community Garden and allotment representative attended the meeting to explain the project objectives are to provide a community event area, where locals can celebrate festivals and display things. The Youth group may be interested. It is proposed that there could be changeable walls to display arts etc. Also consideration for a hardstanding area for tables and chairs for events. It is proposed that there will be a gazebo type of building with a roof – funds permitting. There are three proposed phases: Tidy up the community garden with raised beds and annuals, remove grass and finally phase 3 a full plan implementation.

A small greenhouse 4x4 metres has been gifted which can be used for propagation. There is space on the allotment for this. The Committee agreed that a working group will be set up, involving volunteers from the Residents Association, Michael Rollins.

Youth Engagement Survey – The Youth Group were contacted regarding a youth survey and a few volunteers are interested in getting involved. The Youth Group feedback was that more is needed for teenage youth groups, particularly for age 14 upwards. The park is too young for the teenagers. It was agreed that the survey will be ready by the AGM and a youth stall will be included in the AGM.

Festive Lights 2024

- It was agreed that a Working Group be formed to plan and discuss where the festive

lights should be placed. The lights are for all religious festivals throughout the year.

Annual Parish Council AGM – It was agreed that the AGM would be held on Friday 31 May for the annual Parish Community Meeting from 17.30 to 19.30 followed by the AGM – 19.30 to 20.00

It was agreed that the format would be the same as last year and invitations would be sent to planners, developers and builders so that they are available to talk directly to residents. The event would be published in the Newsletter, noticeboards and FaceBook to be updated.

Meeting Frequencies – It was agreed to change the day/ recurrence of the Community Committee monthly meetings to enable a better attendance to the first Thursday of the month.



Wixams Parish Council Annual General Meeting Friday 31st May 2024

Wixams residents and other members of public are all welcome to attend the Wixams Parish Council AGM

This will be hosted in two parts

Part 1 - 17.30 - 19.30 Community Market Place Lakeview Suite

Come and meet your local Parish Councillors and your local community groups and find out more about what they do and how you can get involved. Also a great opportunity to get an update on whats happening across Wixams.

Part 2 - 19.30 - 20.30 Wixams Parish Council AGM Meeting Swan Room For more information email: clerk@wixams-pc.gov.uk



Councillor Rebecca Hares

Central Bedfordshire Independent Councillor

Section 106 Deed of Variation Sport Provision

Almost 12 months ago L&Q submitted a Deed of Variation for their Section 106 provision for Sport and Leisure that went out for consultation.

The current S106 for Wixams Sport and Leisure requires the provision of 2 x 3G pitches, 4 x senior grass pitches, 4 x junior grass pitches, 2 x mini pitches.

Following the 2023 consultation, L&Q have adjusted the proposal and are now intending to provide 2 x 3G pitches, 3 x senior grass pitches, 2 x junior pitches and 2 x mini pitches. This proposal would leave a shortfall of 1 x senior and 2 x junior pitches.

This latest proposal proposes 1 x senior and 1 x junior pitches to be located on the area of land circled in yellow.

The land circled in brown is currently a park with earth mounds, benches, paths and young trees. If the brown land is to be used for sports pitches then the site would have to be cleared and flattened and all the spoil removed by lorry.

I'm seeking a steer from residents as to their preferred option so that I can make sure that I'm representing your views appropriately.

The options are:

1. The proposal is taken forward as it stands, with a shortfall in pitches and 1 x senior and 1 x junior pitch being provided on the yellow land. The park on the brown land is retained.

Shortfall of 1 x adult and 2 x junior pitches.

2. The brown land is utilised to provide 1 x senior and 1 x junior pitch and the land circled in yellow is used for informal recreation. This option would allow layout adjustments for the allotments, giving more room for the tennis club.

Shortfall of 1 x adult and 2 x junior pitches.

3. Both the brown and the yellow land are used to provide pitches.

No shortfall, but there would be no informal recreation on the yellow or the brown land

4. Both the brown and the yellow land are used for informal recreation. The brown land is retained as it stands.

Shortfall of 2 x adult and 3 x junior pitches.

Concerns for options 2 and 3:

The layout proposed for the land circled in yellow would be too cramped to allow the pitches to be shifted to avoid erosion from use and would be in close proximity to the houses, with no buffer between them.

Concerns have also been raised about the proximity of the pitches to the ditch in terms of preventing balls going into this area, emphasising the cramped nature of the

proposal.

Management concerns that it may be difficult to operate a two-pitch site in isolation from other facilities

Increased lorry movements to remove the volumes of soil from the land circled in brown.

Concerns regarding option 4:

The shortfall of provision is significantly less than the original requirement.

Please comment on my FaceBook page – Councillor Rebecca Hares your preference as soon as possible and encourage family and friends to feedback into this also and share to all Wixams groups you're a part of!



WIXAMS RESIDENTS' MEETING

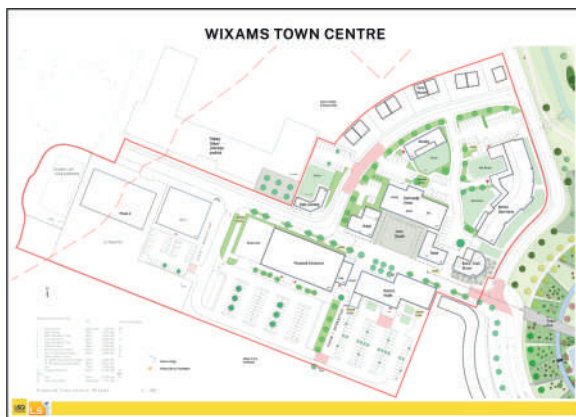
28TH MAY AT 7PM

At our next meeting there will be an update on the **latest plans for the town centre** from LSP Developments. Mayor Tom Wootton will also be at the meeting with updates from Bedford Borough Council, and available to answer questions from the community. All four councillors for Wixams have been invited too.

Come along to the May residents' meeting to find out the news on:

- GP surgery
- Town centre plans
- S106 changes to sports and leisure facilities
- Wixams railway station
- Universal Studios
- Pedestrian crossings

You can also meet our committee and find out more about how we are working on behalf of residents.



Town centre plan from 2022



Tom Wootton, Mayor of Bedford Borough



🕒 7 pm

Tuesday 28th May

Main Hall

Lakeview Village Hall

residents@wixams.town



Wixams Community Group

www.wixams.org/community-group



Free
entry!

WIXAMS JUMBLE SALE & TRAIL

SUNDAY 12TH MAY

Free
refresh-
ments!

Indoor Jumble Sale

1pm - 3pm

Lakeview Village Hall
Brooklands Avenue, MK42 6AB

£5 per table | £10 per craft table

Jumble Trail

1pm - 3pm

Get your map from Lakeview
Village Hall after 12:30

Maps £1

To be featured on the map £5



TO REGISTER AND FOR MORE INFO GO TO
WWW.WIXAMS.ORG/JUMBLE-SALE

All proceeds go to charity



POKÉMON CLUB WIXAMS



We're currently helping some parents in Wixams to set up a Pokémon club and more volunteers are needed. It takes a team of dedicated volunteers to get a new club off the ground, so if you can spare just a few hours a month to help out please get in touch:

pokemon@wixams.org

For more information please visit:

www.wixams.org/pokemon-club



Wixams Walkers

www.wixams.org/wixams-walkers

The Wixams Walkers group is part of the national Wellbeing Walks scheme. It's aimed at all ages and abilities and gives an opportunity for residents to get some exercise, meet people and to explore parts of Wixams that they might not yet have seen.

Healthy body

Walking is good for us. It can help us stay healthy.

Healthy mind

Walking can help cope with things like stress, depression and anxiety.

Meet new people

Get to know other people in Wixams and make new friends.

No need to book, just turn up! Each walk is about 1 hour long at a leisurely pace. Well behaved dogs are welcome.

Time:

Every Saturday at 11 am

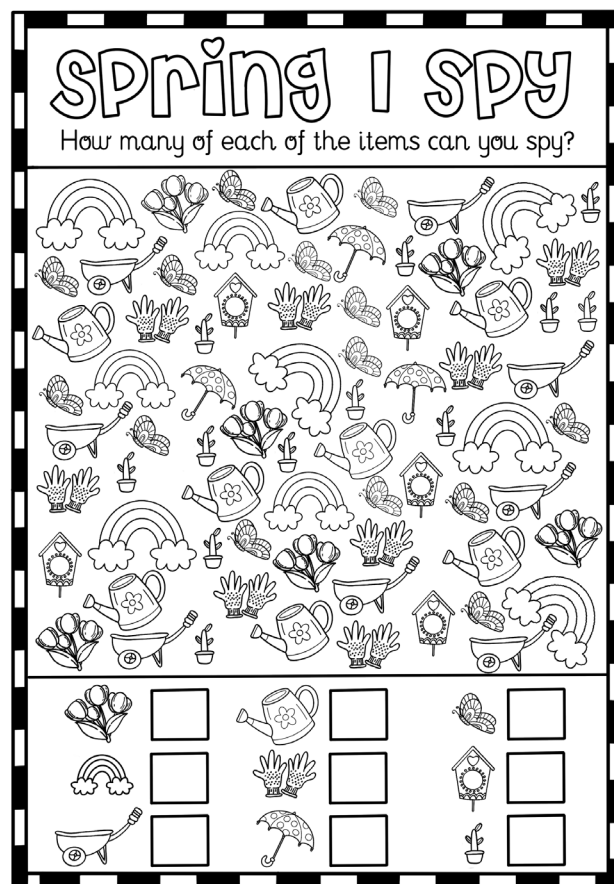
Meeting Point:

Bedford Road, in front of Seasons Garden Centre



YOUTH CORNER

by Ellie



www.kidspuzzlesandgames.co.uk

WIXAMS
NEWSLETTER

DELIVERERS NEEDED

Love reading this Newsletter?

Got time to spare to deliver the Newsletter?

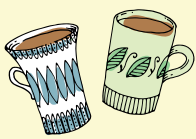
We would love to hear from you. We are currently looking for help delivering to:

- Avocet Road
- Green Lane (to childrens Park)
- Harrier Leys
- Firecrest Terrace
- Goldfinch Gardens
- Robins Heath
- Southern Cross to Willow Grove entrance
- Linnet Lane
- Swift Way

In addition Wixams is growing daily and new Roads are popping up all over and we want to reach as many people as possible so please get in touch.

If you aren't able to commit regularly we would also like to hear from you if you are prepared to be a stand in deliverer to cover Holidays.

Please contact Barbara Matthews newsletterdistribution@wixams.org



Wixams Community Café

The Wixams Community Café is open weekly and for just **£2 each** (kids under 5 go free) you get unlimited tea, coffee, squash, biscuits and cakes.

Everyone is welcome so why not pop in for cuppa and a natter?

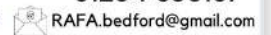
Tuesday mornings

10:30 am to 12:00 pm

Swan Room, Lakeview Village Hall



Bedford Branch
93 Ashburnham Road
MK40 1EA
01234 350107



ARMED FORCES & VETERANS
BREAKFAST CLUBS

2nd Sunday of the month

Doors open 10.45am

Breakfast served at 11am

£5 per person

To include:

**Full English Breakfast, Toast,
Tea/Coffee and Juice.**

All Welcome

Booking required by the Thursday before please

Please advise of any dietary requirements in advance

Note: November will be after the Remembrance Service in town



WIXAMS VIXENS WI

Say farewell, adios, au revoir

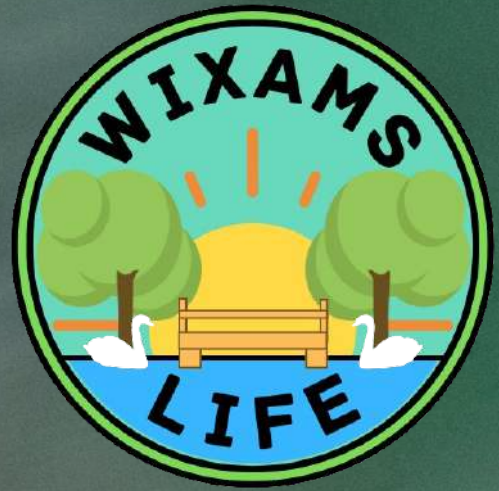
It is with great sadness that we announce that Wixams Vixens WI have reluctantly made the decision to close with immediate effect.

The WI previously closed in February 2020 prior to the COVID pandemic and as we all emerged from lockdown there was an interest in re-forming the WI. A meeting was held to discuss this and in October 2021 the WI re-formed. To begin with this was very successful and we had a lot of new and old members coming on board and enjoyed many different speakers including flower arranging, chocolate tasting, mocktails and of course the famous Christmas Wreath Workshops that were always very popular.

Sadly the number of members has reduced and it is now no longer viable to continue. We would like to thank those that have supported our events and we wish you all the very best.

MAY 13th - 19th

Mental Health Week



Editorial By: Nick Edwards @ Wixams Life

Movement & Mental Health: A Path to Well-Being

Mental Health Awareness Week, observed from May 13th - 19th, invites us to explore the powerful connection between movement and mental well-being. This year's theme, "Movement: Moving for Our Mental Health," encourages us to recognize the impact of physical activity on our minds and emotions.

The Connection Between Movement and Mental Health

Scientific research consistently highlights the positive effects of exercise on mental health. When we move our bodies, several neurotransmitters come into play:

- Endorphins: These natural mood boosters are released during physical activity, reducing stress and promoting feelings of happiness.
- Serotonin: Exercise increases serotonin levels, which contribute to improved mood and overall well-being.
- Dopamine: Movement triggers dopamine release, enhancing motivation and focus.

Beyond the chemical reactions, movement positively influences stress management, cognitive function, and emotional resilience.

Barriers to Physical Activity

Despite the benefits, many face barriers to regular exercise. Common obstacles include time constraints, lack of motivation, physical limitations, and societal pressures. Recognizing these challenges is the first step toward overcoming them.

Overcoming Exercise Stigma

Let's dispel myths about exercise. You don't need to be an athlete to benefit from movement. Every form of activity counts, whether it's a brisk walk or a dance session in your living room.

Creative Ways to Incorporate Movement

Here are some practical ways to infuse movement into our daily lives:

Neighbourhood Walks: Take a leisurely stroll around your local area. Observe nature, breathe deeply, and let your mind wander.

Dance Breaks: Put on your favourite music and dance in your living room. It's an instant mood lifter!

Chair Exercises: Even while working or watching TV, engage in simple seated exercises to keep your body active.

Gardening: Tending to plants not only benefits your garden but also calms your mind.

Joining group activities not only promotes movement but also fosters social connections.

Group Fitness Classes: Whether it's yoga, Zumba, or outdoor boot camps, exercising with others adds motivation.

Participate in local sports teams or leagues. The camaraderie and shared goals enhance mental well-being.

Charity Walks/Runs: Engage in events that support a cause. The sense of purpose and community uplifts spirits.

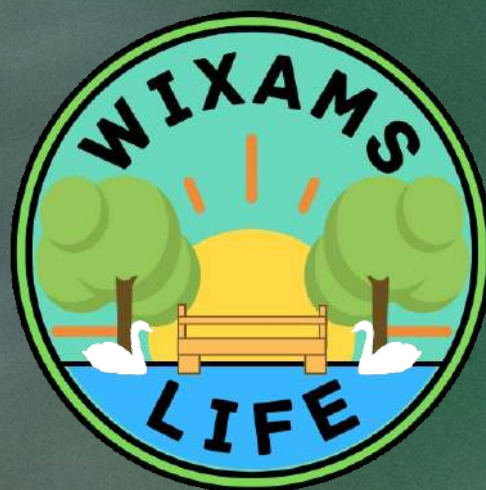
Mindfulness-based movement practices offer a holistic approach. Yoga, beyond physical flexibility, yoga cultivates mental clarity and relaxation. Tai Chi, Gentle movements reduce stress and enhance balance. Pilates, strengthens your core while calming your mind.

Let's Do This!

During Mental Health Awareness Week, let's prioritize movement. Small steps lead to significant changes. Whether it's a walk, a dance, or a yoga session, let movement be our ally in nurturing mental well-being. Put it in your diary & set yourself the challenge to move more that week.

MAY 13th - 19th

Let's Get Moving



Here are just a few recommended local activity groups this month to help get you moving more! If you feel there are more groups to share please email Nick at Wixamslife@gmail.com

Outdoor Activities



Wixams Walkers

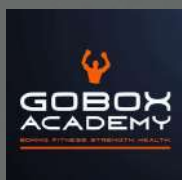


Wixams Runners



Mums Running Club - Wixams

Indoor Activities - Lakeview Village Hall



GOBOX Academy



Wixams Tang Soo Do



Wixams TaeKwonDo



LIV Yoga



Stuart Irish Dancing Bedford



Shine Theatre School



Entertainia Theatre School

Indoor Activities - Wixams Retirement Village



GYM



Pilates



Legs, Bums, Tums

Holistic & Wellness Activities



Somantic Movement

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(FREE PICK UP/DROP OFF TO WIXAMS)

AIRCON, TYRES, EXHAUSTS ENGINEER & GEARBOX REPAIRS

DPF CLEANING

BODY REPAIRS

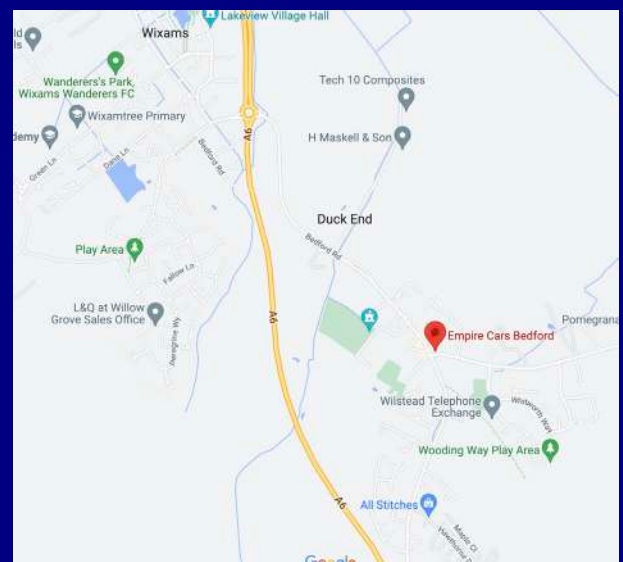
ALLOY WHEEL REPAIRS

DENT REMOVALS

MINOR SCUFFS OR SCRATCHES

How to Find Us

WE ARE LOCATED AT THE CROSSROADS IN THE CENTRE OF WILSTEAD VILLAGE, JUST OPPOSITE WIXAMS AND TWO MINUTES FROM A6 ENTER WILSTEAD ON THE BEDFORD ROAD AND WE ARE ON THE LEFT NEXT TO WOOLPACK PUBLIC HOUSE.



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For a no obligation quote or enquiries please contact Mark Magill

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bshinewindows@yahoo.com

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Christ the Word
Wixams

Every Sunday 10:30am you are welcome at our Sunday Services in the village hall

10:30-11:30am. Activity bag for young children
Please stay for tea, coffee & cake afterwards 😊

www.christthewordwixams.org.uk, 07879716958

[f](#)

Lakeview Village Hall Activities

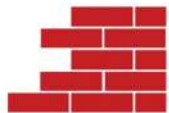


Lakeview Village Hall

The groups advertised below are correct at the time of publishing. Some groups run term time only.
Please contact the group directly for their class running times and further information.



DAY	TIME	GROUP	ROOM	CONTACT	WEBSITE/FACEBOOK
Monday	09:30 - 11:00	Playgroup	Lakeview		1st and 3rd Monday of the month (term time only)
	16:00 - 16:30	Shine Theatre School Ballet (aged 5-11 years)	Lakeview	Louisa Hodges - 07749 091885	facebook.com/Shine-Theatre-School shinetheatreschool.co.uk
	17:15 - 18:15	Rainbows	Munson		
	18:15 - 19:30	Brownies	Munson		
	18:30 - 20:00	Wixams Tang Soo Do	Lakeview	Nick	facebook.com/WixamsTSD
	20:00 - 21:00	Go box fitness	Lakeview	07727 113285	facebook.com/goboxfit
Tuesday	10:30 - 12:00	Wixams Community Cafe	Swan		
	18:30 - 19:30	Yoga	Munson	07825 561569	www.bookwhen.com/livyogauk
	18:30 - 19:30	Christ the Word Ignite Club for yrs 6, 7, 8 and 9	Lakeview	07879 716958	facebook.com/christthewordwixams www.christthewordwixams.org.uk
Wednesday	17:30 - 19:30	Wixams Youth Group	Swan	07880 448599	wendy.millgate@4ypuk.com facebook.com/4YPUK
	17:30 - 20:00	Irish Dancing	Lakeview	Katie	facebook.com/stuartirishdancebedford
	17:00 - 18:00	Rainbows	Munson		
	18:15 - 19:30	Brownies	Munson		
	19:45 - 21:00	Guides	Munson		
Thursday	09:45 - 14:00	Toddler Sensory Different groups running	Lakeview	Samantha - 07538 502587	facebook.com/toddlersensebeds www.toddlersense.com/bedfordshire
	16:30 - 17:15	Entertainia Dance Class Class 1 (4-7 years)	Lakeview	Nina	entertainiatheatreschool@gmail.com
	17:15 - 18:00	Entertainia Dance Class Class 2 (7-11 years)	Lakeview		
	18:30 - 19:15	Go box fitness for Kids	Lakeview	07727 113285	facebook.com/goboxfit
	19:30 - 20:30	Go box fitness for Adults			
	18:50 - 20:30	The Man Cave	Munson		facebook.com/p/The-Man-Cave-UK
Friday	10:00 - 11:00	Little Stars	Swan		
	18:00 - 20:00	Scouts	Lakeview		facebook.com/1stwixamscouting www.1stwixamsscouts.org.uk
	19:00 - 20:45	AA	Munson		
Saturday	08:45 - 9:15	Shine Theatre School Ballet (aged 3-5 years)	Swan	Louisa Hodges 07749 091885	facebook.com/Shine-Theatre-School www.shinetheatreschool.co.uk
	09:00 - 10:00	Lego Club (3-7 years)	Munson		Email: legoatwixams@gmail.com
	10:45 - 11:45	Lego Club (7-16 years)			
	09:15 - 10:00	Shine Theatre School Musical Theatre (aged 4-7 years)	Swan	Louisa Hodges 07749 091885	facebook.com/Shine-Theatre-School www.shinetheatreschool.co.uk
	09:30 - 11:30	Irish Dancing Beginners classes for all ages	Lakeview	Katie	facebook.com/stuartirishdancebedford
Sunday	09:45 - 11:15	AA	Munson		
	10:30 - 11:30	Christ the Word Church Services	Lakeview	Alan - 07879 716958	facebook.com/christthewordwixams www.christthewordwixams.org.uk
	15:00 - 16:00	Christ the Word Sunday Club For children aged 4-10 years	Munson		
	18:00 - 19:00	Christ the Word Evening Group	Swan		
	18:00 - 19:00	Taekwondo	Lakeview		



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We thought it would be nice to update everyone with what we have been doing since December. We hope you enjoyed our Christmas display, valentine display and more recently the Easter Post Box topper. For Easter this year instead of creating a display on the pier we thought we would give the children of Wixams an Easter trail of bunnies and chickens etc. In return we asked parents to post pictures on facebook of the children when they found them. We were delighted to see so many happy faces.

As we are coming into Summer please look out for our Summer display on the pier – watch this space and we are knitting up a storm for Christmas too!

Our next meeting details will be on **Tuesday 28 May 2024** in the Craft Room, Wixams Retirement Village, and you are most welcome to join us. We welcome new members so if you are interested please contact us - wixamsyarnbombers@gmail.com

Wishing you all the best

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ixams very own Street Ranger - **Roger** - announced his retirement in March. By the time you read this Roger will have hung up his notable orange high-vis & street ranger

equipment but I think he might just hold onto those dog treats a little longer!

A post was shared on the WCG FB group by husband & wife, Matthew & Jo Atkins. Mr & Mrs Atkins were kindly letting the community know that Roger would be retiring on April 17th & that anyone who wanted to sign a card could do so. This of course also allowed the community to post their well-wishes & own experiences of Roger in the comments.

I personally didn't meet Roger, though I had seen him around doing a fantastic job of keeping our growing community clean & tidy. I was blown away reading the abundance of comments and kind words. I could see that Roger had really connected with many people, especially their dogs.

It takes a special person to evoke such a reaction from so many people & so it is only right that we give Roger a well deserved send off with a public **Thank You & Happy Retirement.**



“I’ve been working in Wixams since 2018 as one of the street rangers. In that time I’ve made numerous friends including many dogs. I have thoroughly enjoyed the time I’ve spent in Wixams and would like to say a special thank you to everyone who has made me like part of the community.”

- Roger - Legendary Street Ranger

“Cuthbert is going to be distraught when he won't spot you anymore as he's always on the look out for you.
Thank you for everything you've done helping our village stay spotless and making Cuthbert day every single morning.
Enjoy your well deserved retirement xx
- Rebecca Chester-Lewis”

“Roger - You are amazing!
Myself, my children & the dog (Henry) will miss seeing you. Enjoy your retirement
- Jo Jo”

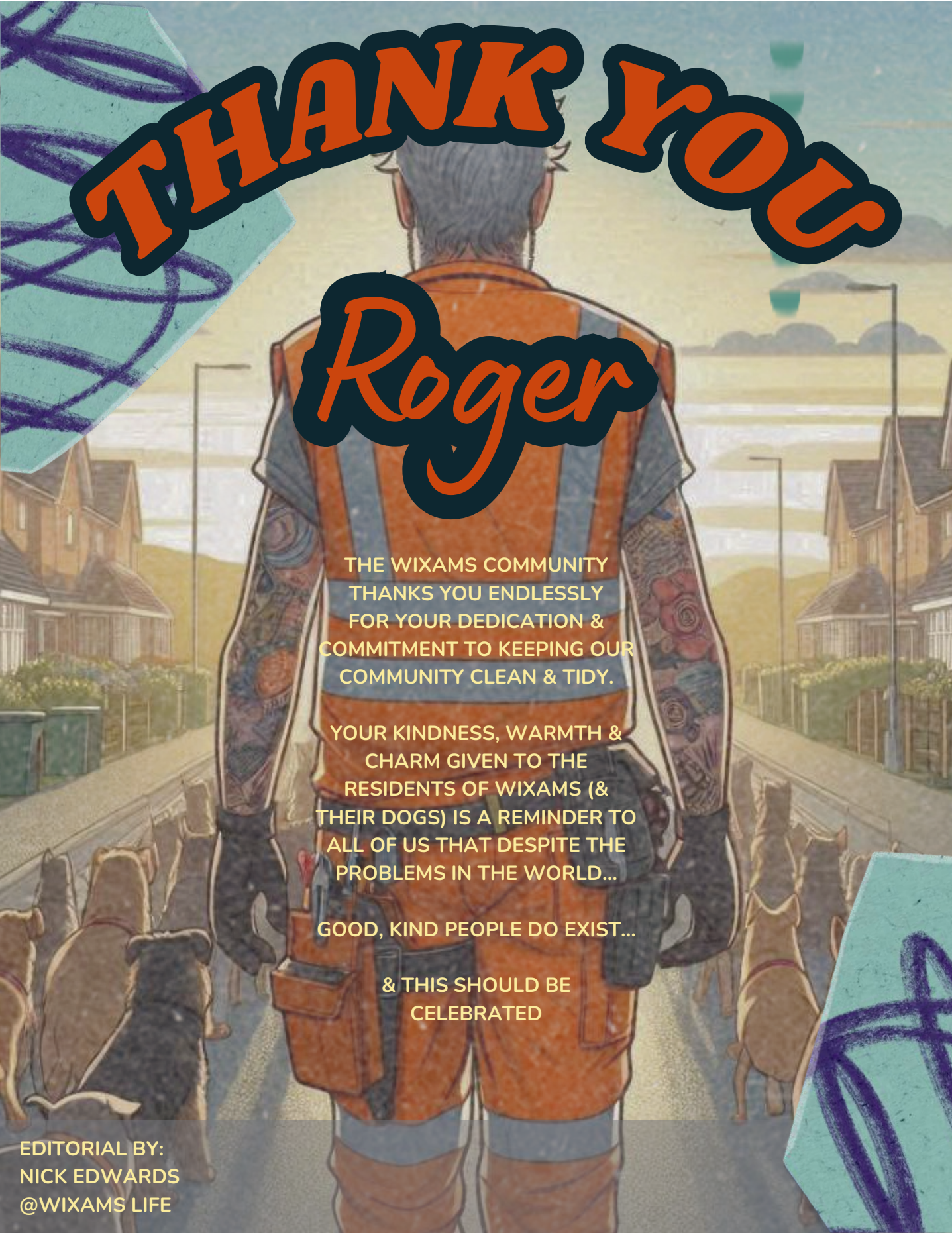
“Aww, Alfie will miss you too. He always gets so excited when he sees you about (could be to do with the treats hhh)
- Sandie White”

“Me & Milly will miss Roger so much!
Thanks to him and his dog biscuits, Molly now thinks everyone in a high vis is Roger the amazing Street Ranger! Happy retirement, well earnt. Hope to still see you around. All the best.
- Jaime Samantha”

“Enjoy your retirement! Going to miss you by the academy early mornings. Popping in to use the loo or deliver random items the students have left round Wixams. Especially my son (on the door) who always loved to say hi x
- Kelly Smetham”

“Thank you Roger for all of your hard work in keeping Wixams clean and tidy. Luna and Bonnie our Labs will be heartbroken. Luna always spotted you long before I did, but I knew you were there as she dragged me in your direction to demolish your doggie treats. Have a well deserved long, healthy and happy retirement. You will be sorely missed.
-Mick Trosh”

“You are one of the highlights of our walk, Minnie the Cockerpoo will be heart broken. Thank you for all you have done and enjoy a well deserved retirement - Rachel Knight”



THANK YOU Roger

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EDITORIAL BY:
NICK EDWARDS
@WIXAMS LIFE



Lemon and Elderflower Tray Bake

Preparation time: 40 mins

Cooking time: 1h 10 mins plus
chilling and cooling

Serves: 12-15

Ingredients

- 250g lemon curd, plus extra to decorate
- 250g butter, softened
- 250g caster sugar
- 2 lemons, zested
- 4 eggs
- 100g self-raising flour
- 150g ground almonds

For the pastry

- 200g plain flour, plus extra for dusting
- 125g cold unsalted butter, cut into cubes
- 1 tbsp caster sugar
- 1 lemon, zested
- 1 egg yolk

For the icing

- 200g icing sugar
- 2 lemons juiced (use the zested lemons above)
- 2 tbsp elderflower cordial

STEP 1

First, make the pastry. Tip the flour, butter, sugar and lemon zest into a food processor and blitz until the mixture resembles fine breadcrumbs. Tip in the egg yolk and ½-1 tbsp cold water and blitz again to bring everything together into a dough. If the dough isn't coming together, add more cold water, ½ tsp at a time, and blitz again. Roll the pastry out on a lightly floured surface to a 3mm thickness, then use it to line the base of a loose-bottomed traybake or brownie tin (ours was 20 x 30cm). Transfer to the fridge and chill for 20 mins.

STEP 2

Heat the oven to 200C/180C fan/gas 6. Line the chilled pastry case with baking parchment and baking beans, then bake for 15 mins. Remove the parchment and beans and bake for 5 mins more until the pastry is lightly golden. Leave to cool for a few minutes before spreading over the lemon curd, leaving a 2cm border around

the edges (it will spread out when the cake batter is poured over). Turn the oven down to 180C/160C fan/gas 4.

STEP 3

Beat the butter, sugar and lemon zest together using an electric whisk or in a stand mixer until pale, light and fluffy, about 8 mins. Beat in the eggs, one at a time along with 1 tbsp of the flour, then fold in the remaining flour and the ground almonds. Carefully spoon the batter over the lemon curd and gently spread out using the back of the spoon, then bake for 35-40 mins until a skewer inserted into the middle comes out clean. Leave to cool in the tin completely, then carefully remove to a board.

STEP 4

To make the icing, combine the icing sugar, lemon juice and elderflower cordial until loose enough to drizzle over the sponge, then swirl over extra lemon curd, if you like. Cut into squares and serve. Will keep in an airtight tin for up to three days.

Have you got a tasty recipe that you'd like to share with the community?
We'd love to feature it in a future edition. Email newsletter@wixams.org

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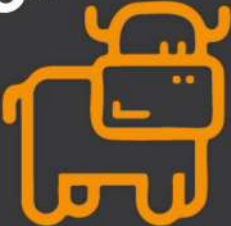
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Gardening Tips for May

by Marion Colledge



Marion, a dogged gardener in all weathers, is a member of RHS, and Biddenham Gardeners Association.

Crazy weather – 14 degrees one day in the middle of February. Frogs spawned early. Asparagus (a May crop) shoots were popping up 30 March, my prize-winning grape vines were budding five weeks early. Vines are labour-intensive. You may not know, but like the plane tree, grape vines shed their bark – but in long threads not patches (see pictures). Stripped last year's loose bark hastily with fingers and a tooth brush for branch junctions. Brushed off hundreds of dead sticky parasitic insects hidden under the bark in the warm. One shoot quite high up dripped sap, quickly attracting a mountaineering effort by ants, but the plant didn't bleed to death.

Don't forget at this time of year when you are weeding if the weeds do not have flowers you may leave them on the surface and they will act as a mulch. When pruning, cut up stems and branches with secateurs as small as you can and drop them on the beds, again this will act as a mulch preventing evaporation, suppressing the light and weeds.

Now the lawn is alive with yellow primulas: all descended from a purple one whose seeds I scattered about 5 years ago.

What can you plant at this time of year?

Cabbages. Maybe best to plant cabbage seeds in a module because we don't know whether it's going to rain or not. We must make sure that the soil was damp outside and in May it will be hit and miss. Before putting some potting compost in a module, if the compost bag was already opened, it's a good idea to sterilise it. You can do this by putting in Pyrex dish in the oven and bake between 160-180 degrees for 10 minutes. (The module is probably 5 cm deep. Fill to brim with soil, press soil down gently with your fingers. When you put the seeds in just make a little hole with the tip of a pencil. They should be near the top so that the roots can spread all the way down. Brassica have a good rate of germination.



When putting outside, if you put lots of lime round the roots that will stop them from getting a nasty disease called Club Root. You can make a little circle of wood ash or a little circle of wool compost round the cabbages to stop slugs and snails getting them eaten. If you only have a raised bed you could still have a couple of cabbages in there, if you're a fan but there would be much more space for radishes!

Attracting butterflies and moths

The largest number of garden butterflies' and moths' larvae feed on stinging nettles: small white, peacock, small tortoiseshell. Ideally you need a meter square of nettles (*Urtica dioica*) for them. We no longer use nettle stems for ropes but we can still make nettle tea from leaves or nettle pesto. Here is a useful link: <https://honest-food.net/nettle-pesto/>. If you do not have a large garden, you can collect nettles from doggie free places near ditches in the countryside.

Enjoy your gardening.

Enjoy your gardening or garden-watching this month!

Marion

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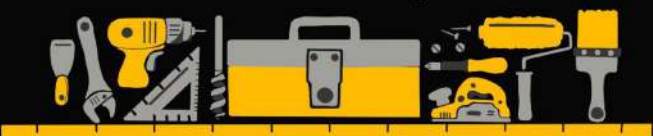
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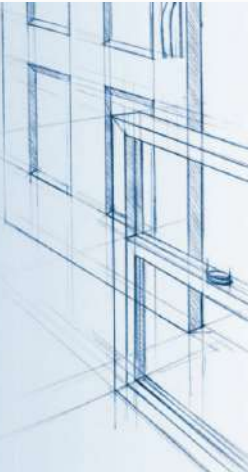
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Deadline for submissions for next issue:
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If there is anything specific you would like to see in the Newsletter or if you would like to write an article of interest to others please get in touch with us at newsletter@wixams.org

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