

# Meltham Mercury

Meltham Town Council's Newsletter - Autumn/Winter 2020

The Council offices are temporarily closed.

Please email the Clerk:

[townclerk@melthamtowncouncil.gov.uk](mailto:townclerk@melthamtowncouncil.gov.uk)



/AroundMeltham



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The Clerk to the Council is Michelle Chard.

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[townclerk@melthamtowncouncil.gov.uk](mailto:townclerk@melthamtowncouncil.gov.uk)

The Council offices are on the first floor of The Carlile Institute (access via lift or stairs).

## WELCOME TO OUR AUTUMN/WINTER 2020 NEWSLETTER

We are now nearly seven months into the pandemic with few signs that life is soon to return to any sense of normality. Your Town Council has been supporting and involved in various initiatives to ensure that residents get the help they need; we continue to ensure that our outdoor spaces are looked after. We hope that the weather will continue to allow you to get out for a walk or bike ride on a regular basis.

In addition to physical wellbeing, we hope that SMALL WORLDS: Lockdown in Meltham posters, which I hope many of you have seen, might have given you a bit of a lift. This photography project made it possible to capture some of the people and stories during lockdown for us to look back on in years' to come. Sadly, there are so few opportunities for us to get together this Autumn but we look forward to a time when this is all behind us. If you'd like to tell us your story, go to [Meltham.org](http://Meltham.org) and upload your experiences in lockdown for future generations to marvel at.

The Council Office in the Carlile Institute remains closed due to the virus but behind the scenes it's business as usual. You can contact the Council (ideally via email) [TownClerk@melthamtowncouncil.gov.uk](mailto:TownClerk@melthamtowncouncil.gov.uk). If you do not have access to email, please telephone our temporary number: 07983 627364.

## STREETBIKES

Streetbikes uses cycling as a vehicle to enhance health and wellbeing to people of all ages and abilities throughout Kirklees. Streetbikes' recycling scheme encourages residents to donate unwanted bikes rather than send them to landfill. They run a Christmas bike give-away scheme – further information on their website [www.streetbikes.org.uk](http://www.streetbikes.org.uk)

Kate Buchanan, Town Mayor, Meltham Town Council is seen here donating her bike to Clare Taylor, Streetbike's Operations Manager at Meltham Recycling Centre.



Clare Taylor and Town Mayor (right).  
Photo by Aleks Jedroz

# A word from the caretaker...

In 2002, I took on the role as caretaker for Robert Ashton Memorial Park. At the time, we had no one looking after it, so there was a fair amount to catch up with – toilet block broken into at weekends, play area run down and so forth. It's such a beautiful park with so much potential, that it didn't take long to start getting things back on track.

One of the first things I did, was build a wooden shelter by the playground, to mitigate against our changeable weather, and I'm delighted that it's standing the test of time and still sheltering us from the autumn rains. Later, the Council had a toddlers' play area built, a programme of tree management initiated, the pond had a long overdue dredging and had the football field levelled. Before that football was definitely a "game of two halves" – uphill or downhill...

I also empty the bins and pick up litter each day. Every week, the play areas get checked for safety, maintained annually and I've even thrown in some scary dinosaurs for good measure. Within the bounds of the park, we have two areas of allotments (one of them being the old walled garden of Meltham Hall) and these need essential maintenance.

Three years ago the Council asked me to attack any "grotspots" in the town, which is a mix of litter-picking, clearing overgrown vegetation, removing graffiti and general tidying. I look after the numerous benches dotted around our countryside. We inhabit "God's own country", so it's good to have a nice sit, and enjoy the view. Also, I top up the dog bag dispensers monthly.

In the last fortnight, I've renewed a couple of dilapidated seats at Helme village and Royd Road (both in idyllic settings) and cleared out three large concrete planters outside the Pink Elephant and the Fire Station (see photo). All this while enjoying the late summer sunshine we've had, makes me realise what a great job I have.

While the Park is ticking over nicely – a blessing in itself, during these trying times – there are plans afoot for a large-scale refurbishment and renewal, so it's an exciting time. With help from the Mayor, a Friends of Robert Ashton Memorial Park is being set up who'll have a say in any changes taking place and I'm looking forward to being involved, along with so many enthusiastic volunteers.

The future's looking decidedly rosy...  
Chris Sinclair



*New bench at Helme*



*New Benches installed: The Town Council has replaced the tired benches in Helme Village and at Royd Road with new recycled plastic benches that require less maintenance to keep them looking good.*



*Chris Sinclair with Morrisons' Community Champion, Rachael Chadwick. With thanks to Morrisons for donating the plants (and helping to plant them out too)*

1. Crow 2. Bat 3. Frog 4. Owl 5. Rabbit 6. Butterfly 7. Mouse 8. Squirrel 9. Duck 10. Fox



# When it comes to road safety, it's simple: speed matters.

Speeding in Meltham was one of the things that was raised most regularly by residents during the Ask Meltham project last year and the Council continues to explore ways of reducing speeding on our roads. In a crash, 1mph can mean the difference between life and death, but we know that people still regularly break speed limits or travel too fast for the conditions of the road.

## Show your commitment to lower speeds

Road Safety Week is the UK's biggest road safety event, coordinated annually by Brake, the road safety charity. The theme for 2020 is: 'No Need to Speed'. During Road Safety Week (16 - 22 November) we will be delivering '20s plenty' wheelie bin stickers to residents along the highways in Meltham which have a 20 mph speed limit. With the permission of Kirklees Council (who own the wheelie bins), we are asking residents to put the stickers on their black wheelie bins: they look really effective when all the residents in a street use them and show the community's commitment to lower speeds.



## 'No Need to Speed' Poster Competition

We are inviting all primary school children (between the ages of 4 to 11yrs) in Meltham, Helme and Wilshaw to design an A4 poster which reminds motorists to keep within the speed limit. There will be a number of prizes kindly donated by Towndoor and Rosenbauer and presented by the Town Mayor at a virtual prize giving. One of the winning posters will be printed in the next edition of Mercury and we will be encouraging residents to display the poster in their windows.

Submit your posters to participating schools or send to the Town Clerk, Meltham Town Council c/o Carlile Institute, Meltham HD9 4AE to arrive no later than 30<sup>th</sup> November 2020. Don't forget to write your

name, age and contact details on the back so we can contact the winners. Unfortunately, we are unable to return the posters.

For further information please contact [townclerk@melthamtowncouncil.gov.uk](mailto:townclerk@melthamtowncouncil.gov.uk) or look under the Notices section of the website.

### Cllr Kate Buchanan, Town Mayor comments:

*"Reducing speeds is vital to keep our roads safer, especially for children travelling to and from school. We've been keen to remind motorists that speeding will not be tolerated, and the winning poster will help get the message out."*

## Meltham Pleasure Grounds



Meltham Walkers are Welcome and the Friends of Meltham Pleasure Grounds are delighted to announce that they have been allocated a significant amount of money from the Kirklees Section 106 fund to be spent on Meltham Pleasure Grounds. Chair of Walkers are Welcome, Brian Keighley said: 'We have dreamed of improving the children's play area and now after 5 years we can. We have worked with Kirklees Parks and Green Spaces to create a consultation document which we hope many of you have seen and responded to.' If you are interested in learning more about Walkers are Welcome please see their website which has free monthly guided walks and details about volunteering with the Friends of Meltham Pleasure Grounds. <https://walkingmeltham.co.uk/> or contact them on [info@walkingmeltham.com](mailto:info@walkingmeltham.com)

# Robert Ashton Memorial Park (RAMP)

Following the Ask Meltham project last year, many people identified RAMP as a positive asset to Meltham. The Town Council recently commissioned a masterplan from Kirklees with the brief to enhance the Park's best existing features, create a long-term vision to manage the Park, and to introduce, where appropriate, innovative, sustainable and natural interventions which will help to secure the future of the park for the benefit of local residents and businesses. Some of the aims of the project are:

- To protect, maintain, manage and restore significant views and the historic character within the Park
- To restore and enhance the pond
- To protect, manage and maintain the existing woodland, trees and planting areas
- To improve the quality of the designed planted areas for improved ecological, maintenance and user benefits.
- Improve existing facilities and recreation offer for users

The masterplan is in draft form and can be viewed on the Town Council's website.

## Let us know your views

We welcome further conversations and encourage people of all ages to please complete our online questionnaire about the park. The Town Council is also asking our primary children through the three Primary School to participate as well.

See both the draft plan and the questionnaire at <https://melthamtowncouncil.gov.uk/park-masterplan>. You can also scan the code below to access the online questionnaire:

## Friends of RAMP

In tandem with the implementation of the Master Plan we are in the process of setting up a Friends of RAMP group. Two initial meetings were held early in the year, which were attended by around 15 people. Unfortunately, the arrival of Covid-19 meant that no further face-to-face meetings could be held. Members of the Town Council have recently held a virtual working group meeting, and it was agreed that three of the Town Councillors would form an initial committee, the intention being that other people will take over the roles as time goes on. The aims of the Friends group will be closely linked to the Master Plan.



## MELTHAM LITTER PICK

Meltham Walkers are Welcome and Meltham Town Council had hoped to be able to reschedule the Litter Pick which was cancelled due to Covid 19 but have reluctantly had to accept that it is not possible this year. We remain very keen to hold the event as soon as we can in the Spring of 2021. We are delighted to have received positive support for the event from our local Morrisons and Co-op stores.

If you would like to register interest please contact Councillor Brian Keighley on [brkeighley@gmail.com](mailto:brkeighley@gmail.com)



## Crossroads Food Bank

During Lockdown, demand for assistance from Meltham Food Bank increased by more than 600%. This stretched the capacity of the service which operates from Meltham Town Hall following the purchase of the building by Meltham Town Council in 2019.

# Town Hall Improvements

**Meltham.org worked with the Crossroads Project to secure funding which will see a transformation of the Food Bank area of the building in the basement, to create a spacious, hygienic and safe environment. The works began in early October. Funding was secured from Kirklees Council's Community Investment Fund as well as funding from The National Lottery. Works are being undertaken by Bray Building Services.**

Sue Priestley, Chair of the Crossroads says: 'It's been a busy time for the Crossroads Project, coping with increasing amounts of stock as donations have continued to arrive at the Shop and the Centre. Our pop-up shops in the Church Hall have been successful in raising much needed funds and



*Masks by Remade in Meltham*

'Remade in Meltham' has provided us with a regular supply of beautiful homemade face masks for us to sell.

Check them out on Facebook #remadeinmeltham. 'The place where upcyclers create'.

Due to the refurbishment in the basement, we have temporarily moved upstairs and are looking forward to moving back to our improved premises in the next month or so.

Bill Hunter, a Food Bank volunteer said:

'At the food bank I have sorted out donations, made up food parcels, and delivered to clients. The latter ranges from individuals to families all with different needs. I have learned a lot from working here and am very impressed by the commitment energy and innovation shown by the army of volunteers that make it work.'

Sue continues: A thank you to everyone who has supported us in any way, we really appreciate all the help we have received. A special thank you to the Co-op and Morrisons for their generous donations.'



*Bill Hunter, volunteer at the Food Bank*

## Shop Front Grant Scheme

**We are delighted that Gemma Ellis was successful in applying for a Shop Front grant from Meltham Town Council towards the refurbishment of HairGem on Holmfirth Road. With support from her extended family, Gemma was able to buy and renovate a beautiful old building in the centre of Meltham having moved her business from Slaithwaite.**

Opened in August, Gemma is happy to report that the business has taken off extremely well. Chairs are available to rent for stylists/ barbers at the salon to help with the demand.

Kate Buchanan, Town Mayor comments 'As the first recipient of the Shop Front Grant Scheme, we are delighted with the results of the renovations at HairGem. One of the priorities that residents identified in Ask Meltham was to improve the look of the town centre and we feel this is positive step forward.'



*Town Mayor (left) and Gemma Ellis.  
Photo by Aleks Jedrasz*



# Crime in Meltham during the pandemic

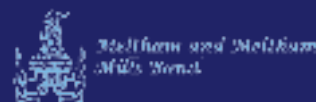
Since the beginning of April 2020 there has been a 75% reduction in both domestic and commercial burglary in our area. There have also been significant reductions in the theft of vehicles and theft from vehicles, which means that our area continues to be one of the lowest crime areas in Kirklees and the lowest for burglary. However, there have been some worrying increases in areas such as reports of domestic abuse and anti-social behaviour particularly in the first three months of lockdown. It is more than likely that all these trends were as a consequence of more of our residents being at home for much of this period. The Town Council urges residents to remain vigilant and report crime whenever and wherever they see it.



## Over 70s: Virtual Event - Tuesday 15<sup>th</sup> December 2020, 2.00pm

It is with huge sadness that the Town Council has to announce that due to Covid 19 the gift giving event will not be taking place this year. However, we are inviting residents who are over 70 to a virtual event taking place on **15 December at 2.00pm**. The Town Mayor will be hosting a Quiz and the Meltham and Meltham Mills Band will be playing some music to cheer us up. If you would like to take part, details of how to join the virtual event via Zoom will be published on the Council's website in the Notices section (scroll down to the bottom) the week before the event.

Every year Meltham residents who are over 70 are invited to the Carlile Institute to receive their Christmas gift from the Town Council - a tradition which has been going on for many years. For many it wasn't the gift itself but the opportunity to meet fellow residents at the 'pop up' café and enjoy a hot drink and a mince pie, served by the Town Councillors.



## Website accessibility

The Town Council has taken steps to ensure that its website meets certain accessibility requirements which aim to help make sure online public services are accessible to all users, including disabled people.

We've done an audit of the website to check for accessibility problems and have made a plan to fix any problems that were highlighted. We've also published an accessibility statement on our website <https://melthamtowncouncil.gov.uk/accessibility/>

## Mini-Bus

South Pennine Community Transport has kept the Meltham 933 local minibus operating throughout all of the main lockdown, and passenger numbers are already building again for this vital village service.

## Halifax - Stainland - Meltham - Holmfirth

**Below is the new Saturdays only route timetable, already proving popular with Melthamers.**

<b>Halifax Bus Station</b>	<b>1000</b>	<b>1300</b>	<b>1500</b>
West Vale	1009	1309	1509
<b>Stainland School</b>	<b>1016</b>	<b>1316</b>	<b>1516</b>
Wilberlee	1026	1326	1526
Slaithwaite, Britannia Rd	1029	1329	1529
<b>Meltham, Turning Circle</b>	<b>1038</b>	<b>1138</b>	<b>1538</b>
Ford Inn	1043	1343	1543
Parkhead	1044	1344	1544
<b>Holmfirth Bus Station</b>	<b>1049</b>	<b>1349</b>	<b>1549</b>
<b>Holmfirth Bus Station</b>	<b>1055</b>	<b>1355</b>	
Parkhead	1100	1400	
Ford Inn	1101	1401	
<b>Meltham, Fire Station</b>	<b>1106</b>	<b>1406</b>	
Slaithwaite, Britannia Rd	1115	1415	
Wilberlee	1118	1418	
<b>Stainland School</b>	<b>1128</b>	<b>1428</b>	
West Vale	1135	1435	
<b>Halifax Bus Station</b>	<b>1144</b>	<b>1444</b>	



# Photography Project

Earlier this year, Meltham.org commissioned Olivia Hemingway, a local photographic artist to create a series of images which documents stories and images of Lockdown in Meltham. Meltham Town Council financed the production and design of the posters and postcards.

**SMALL WORLDS: Lockdown in Meltham** comprising twelve photographic posters and text is currently being exhibited in the Carlile Institute. Individual posters are on display in other locations around the town.

SMALL WORLDS was launched at a virtual viewing evening on 1 October 2020 by Clr Noon with forty guests. Clr Noon said: "It has been a pleasure to work with Olivia throughout Lockdown in Meltham. Having spoken with many people, it is clear that the series is a wonderful reflection of residents' experiences. I want the SMALL WORLDS series to act as a point of hope and to offer people a moment of reflection during these new local restrictions and beyond."



Jill © Olivia Hemingway

## Christmas Services/ Events

**Please check arrangements nearer the time in case of changes.**

29th November 4pm Methodist Church, Christmas Tree Festival Service

13th December 10.00am Methodist Church, A Nativity Service

20th December 6:00pm Methodist Church, Carols and Readings by Candlelight

24th December 11:30pm St Bartholomew's Meltham, Midnight communion

### **Christmas Day: 25 December 2020**

9:00am St Bartholomew's Meltham, traditional said communion.

9:30am St James Meltham Mills, Christmas Day communion.

10:00am Methodist Church with the Baptist Congregation, Christmas Day Service

10:00am Christ Church Helme, Christmas Day communion.

11:15am St Mary's Wilshaw, Christmas Day communion.

The Methodist Church is planning a virtual or distanced Christmas Tree Festival for the last weekend in November. Details to be decided.

Other events which ordinarily take place such as 'Christmas Lights Switch-on,' 'Carols in the Park' and 'Carols in the Pub' will not be taking place due to the on-going pandemic.



## Are you on your own at Christmas?

Meltham Town Council has provided a grant to ensure that people unable to visit family on Christmas Day can apply for a subsidised Christmas Dinner at a cost of £10. A two-course meal prepared and cooked by Helen and Kristi of ex-Foxhole fame will be delivered to your door. Please contact Pam on 349 857 or 07761 393 502 or [pammurg.mgt@gmail.com](mailto:pammurg.mgt@gmail.com).



## Family Activity: Where are the animals hiding in the park?

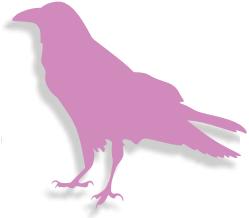
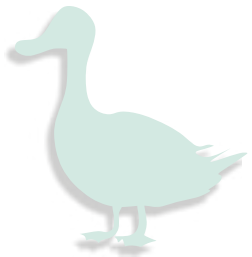
Sneakily hidden around the Robert Ashton Memorial Park in Meltham are ten shapes of wild animals that live in or visit our park– can you find them all – what animals did you find? (Answers on page 2)

Did you find this  
animal in the park?

What is this  
animal called?

Did you find this  
animal in the park?

What is this  
animal called?

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## Meltham Covid Volunteers to be recognised by Town Council

Meltham Town Council is to recognise those who volunteered their time during the full lockdown which began in March. Pride of Meltham lapel pin badges will be presented by the Mayor, Cllr Kate Buchanan and the founder of Meltham.org Cllr Richard Noon at a virtual ceremony. Kate Buchanan, Town Mayor commented: 'Without the support of these very special volunteers, many people would have found it impossible to get their prescriptions, food and other deliveries during lockdown. We can be proud that our community is there to help during these difficult times.'