

# Meltham Mercury

## Meltham Town Council's Newsletter - Summer 2021

The Council offices are temporarily closed.

Please email the Clerk:

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



/AroundMeltham



### YOUR Members of Council

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The Clerk to the Council is Michelle Chard.

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

## WELCOME TO OUR SUMMER 2021 NEWSLETTER

Your Town Council has been meeting virtually during the COVID pandemic, and although activities have been curtailed, we have still managed to conduct Council business and take forward projects such as Ask Meltham. We have also continued to provide grants to local organisations, details of these are on Page 3. If you think your organisation might be eligible for funding then please take a look at our website for details of this and our Shop Front Grant scheme.

This year, we are delighted to present six Pride of Meltham Awards (Page 6) to those who have made a significant difference to our community. We have also made additional awards of a Pride of Meltham lapel badge to the many people who volunteered to help others in our community during the COVID crisis.

We continue to support the Library with a substantial annual grant and is returning to its usual opening hours from June 21st (subject to government lifting of restrictions).

In this edition you can read the annual reports from the Town Mayor and the Chairs of the Council Committees. You will also find news about our proposed Picnic in the Park later in the year updates on the Friends of Robert Ashton Park group and information about the condolence book which we placed in the Carlile after the sad death of the Duke of Edinburgh in April.

We also have a regular feature 'What's on in Meltham', if you have anything you would like us to include in this, please contact us at [townclerk@melthamtowncouncil.gov.uk](mailto:townclerk@melthamtowncouncil.gov.uk)

## Clr Roberta Bampton, Town Mayor 2021-22

I am delighted to be taking on the role of Town Mayor of Meltham and am looking forward to taking forward projects such as Ask Meltham, the Friends of Robert Ashton Park group, and our latest initiative to work towards making Meltham a Plastic Free community. I would like to thank Councillor Kate Buchanan for her achievements and hard work as Town Mayor and I look forward to working with her, Clr Richard Noon (the newly-elected Deputy Mayor) and my other Town Council colleagues over the next twelve months.

Meltham is an expanding community, and I would particularly like to extend a welcome to all those who are new to Meltham. If you would like to be involved in any of our activities, please let us know by contacting us on [townclerk@melthamtowncouncil.gov.uk](mailto:townclerk@melthamtowncouncil.gov.uk).



# Meltham Town Mayor at Meltham C E Primary School



Cllr Kate Buchanan, Town Mayor & children at Meltham C E Primary School  
Photo by Aleks Jedrosz

*The Town Mayor, Cllr Kate Buchanan writes:*

2021 is the year of the Census and I was delighted to receive letters from twenty-five 8 year olds from Meltham C E Primary School with suggestions for improving facilities for the children of Meltham. There were some wonderful ideas including a chocolate factory, hospital, sweet, toy and book shops, more zebra crossings, more Parks and some children wondering why we couldn't have our own hospital, High school, aquarium and zoo. The children also said what a great place Meltham is to live and some listed all the things they like. It was quite an eye opener.

In my responses, I gave them some indication of what the Town Council is able to do (and what it can't) so I hope they learnt a little about the workings of a town council. I was

subsequently invited in to school and enjoyed a question and answer session with the children.

## Email from the class teacher:

Thank you so much for coming in to talk with our classes today. It was a really memorable occasion and an invaluable opportunity for the children to understand that they do have a voice, if not a vote, and to learn the value of writing letters.



Children at Meltham C E Primary School. Photo by Aleks Jedrosz

## Duke of Edinburgh (1920 – 2021) Book of Condolence

His Royal Highness The Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh died peacefully at Windsor Castle on 9 April 2021.

A book of condolence was set up in the Carlile Institute by Meltham Town Council for residents to record their thoughts.

Photo credit: Aleks Jedrosz.  
Cllr Kate Buchanan, Town Mayor signs the Book of Condolence.



# Meltham – A Plastic Free Community?



**We are all aware of the damage caused to our environment by the use of avoidable single use plastic, so Meltham Town Council has signed up with Surfers Against Sewage to try and make Meltham a Plastic Free Community.**

The first step we have taken is to pass a Council resolution promising to remove single use plastic from our premises and operations, and to encourage plastic-free initiatives in the area. Going forward we will need to establish a Plastic Free Steering Group, including representatives from our local business community, other community organisations, and schools. We realise that it will not be an easy task to achieve plastic free status but we feel that there will be many benefits to Meltham along the way. We also plan to hold events and work with our local schools to promote this initiative and raise awareness.

Going completely plastic free is not easy, but reducing your plastic use is, there are relatively easy wins that you can start to do now. You could consider buying a reusable water bottle or coffee cup – these are now available in a collapsible form, making them easy to slip into your bag. Other ways in which you can help would be to remember to take your reusable bags when shopping, not to use condiment sachets or plastic cutlery, and to consider refillable options for cleaning and bathroom products.

If you would like to be involved in this initiative please contact us:

[townclerk@melthamtowncouncil.gov.uk](mailto:townclerk@melthamtowncouncil.gov.uk) or keep a lookout for announcements/events on social media, the Council's website and notice boards.



## Grants awarded by Meltham Town Council 2020-21

Wilshaw Village Hall Trust

**£10,000**

Friends of the  
Robert Ashton Memorial Park

**£500**

SMALL WORLDS:  
Lockdown in Meltham  
(photography project)

**£1,750**

## Meltham Litter Pick Date for your diary: **Saturday 24 July 2021**

Do you have a few hours spare?

We are looking for volunteers for a Litter Pick on Saturday 24 July. We will meet at the Carlile St Car Park at 10.00am. All equipment will be provided. Please bring your own gloves.

If you would like to register interest or suggest an area for the Litter Pick please contact Brian Keighley on [brkeighley@gmail.com](mailto:brkeighley@gmail.com)

*Organised by Meltham Walkers are Welcome and Meltham Town Council.*



# River Holme Connections in Meltham

**River Holme Connections has been very active in and around Meltham over the past 12 months but none of it could have happened without the enthusiastic support of our many partners including Meltham Town Council, Crossroads, Friends of Meltham Pleasure Grounds, Meltham Walkers are Welcome and Kirklees Council.**

Clr Roberta Bampton, Meltham's Town Mayor said:

*'It's great to see the improvements in the Pleasure Grounds and how this has impacted on the habitats along the river and streams. We look forward to continuing to work with River Holme Connections in and around Meltham.'*

For the past five years, River Holme Connections has been operating across the catchment of the River Holme and its tributaries. This means from the moors in the Peak District down in to Huddersfield and including Meltham. Not all of this work will have been noticed although the creation of the seating area at Meltham Pleasure Grounds (MPG) in partnership with the Friends of Meltham Pleasure Grounds is very visible.



Also in that area we have planted new hedges and installed bird and bat boxes. You might have seen some new signposts indicating walking routes. We have just launched a new walk entitled Meltham - Pleasure Ground, Mill Town, Moorland. This is available free either as a hard copy from Crossroads and the Meltham Post Office or to download from our website [www.riverholmeconnections.org/explore](http://www.riverholmeconnections.org/explore).

Volunteers from across the catchment have been growing native wild flowers from locally collected seeds and these will be planted along the river

corridors to support native wildlife. The areas chosen for this will be ones where the very invasive Japanese Knotweed has been treated leaving bare ground. Much of this activity has taken place near Meltham Scout and Guide Headquarters which was particularly badly affected.



The water quality of the rivers and streams is important both for our own health and to support many habitats. We have been monitoring riverfly with a local team from Meltham. Riverflies are a good measure of water quality and this is part of a wider Environment Agency programme. The quality of water in the rivers is also affected by run off from the land after heavy rain in particular and with the changes in weather patterns due to global warming the incidence of storms and localised flooding will become more prevalent. We are therefore working with various partners including Kirklees, the Environment Agency and Yorkshire Water to improve this situation and that includes planting thousands of trees and hedges. This has been the case around a Meltham for the last couple of years and this winter has included a further 1,400 trees near the Catch as part of the White Rose Forest and a further 12,000 new hedge plants (2000m of new hedge) near Thick Hollins Road.

Education is an important part of what we do and we have the opportunity to work with all the junior schools in the catchment. Meltham C.E Primary School, Meltham Moor Primary School and Helme C.E Academy have been provided with River Explorer kits. More details about our schools programme and indeed everything we do can be found on our website at [www.riverholmeconnections.org](http://www.riverholmeconnections.org)



RIVER HOLME  
CONNECTIONS





## Robert Ashton Memorial Park

The Town Council continues to work with Kirklees Council on the redevelopment of the Robert Ashton Memorial Park. Plans are being drawn up for the first stages of this and will include redevelopment of the children's play area, work on the paths, and improvement of the duck pond and surrounding areas.



We are planning to hold a Picnic in the Park on Saturday 28 August, 11.00 – 4.00pm. This event had been planned for last summer but we were unable to go ahead with it because of the pandemic. This year's event will be lower key than was previously planned, but there will still be plenty to do for all members of the family, with stalls, games, and of course an ice cream van, so please note the date and come and visit our beautiful Park.

## Friends of Robert Ashton Memorial Park

A Friends of the Park group has now been established with the help of funding from the Town Council. Once circumstances permit, we aim to meet with those who expressed an interest in being involved with this group and plan our next steps. If you are interested in this but have not been in contact with us previously then please contact us on [friends.ramp@gmail.com](mailto:friends.ramp@gmail.com)

## RAMP - Easter 2020

Despite the wind, many families were able to enjoy the pop-up sensory garden which was in the Park over the Easter weekend. Everyone enjoyed the bright colours, windmills and wind chimes. Thanks to Chris Sinclair for all his efforts.



*Photo by Chris Sinclair*

## Pride of Meltham - Special Awards

As we creep ever closer towards a full release from restrictions from the pandemic, Meltham Town Council decided to acknowledge those who stepped forward to help out other local residents during the National Lockdowns.

Those residents who were involved in the Meltham.org local response will be recognised with a special Pride of Meltham Award. Those who are eligible will be contacted via email to attend an online ceremony; a specially designed lapel pin badge will be awarded as a commemorative acknowledgement of their efforts. Just over 300 individuals and organisations will receive this award. The Town Council wishes to pass on its thanks to meltham.org, its volunteers and prompt response to the restrictions that were imposed.



# Pride of Meltham 2020-21



## Pam Murgatroyd

Pam volunteered at the Crossroads Shop for seven years. She joined the St Bartholomew's Church Hall committee in 2012 and volunteered there until recently. Pam is Chair of the Friends of Meltham Library and organises class visits to the Library from Meltham C E Primary. Her other involvements include membership of the Meltham Business Group and organiser of the Christmas Lunch for older residents. She was a councillor for Meltham Town Council for two years.



## Peter Murgatroyd

Peter has been involved with many projects in Meltham including the Christmas Lights Committee and Meltham Memories. He led the project for a new roof on St Bartholomew's Church and organised the renovation of the Clock Tower which included the refurbishment of the carillon. He was Speaker Secretary of Meltham's Probus Club for eight years until 2018. Peter is Chair of the Carlile Street Residents' Association.

## The Crossroads Meltham Food Bank

The Crossroads Meltham Food Bank was started by Roger and Sheila Furmedge in the Meltham Methodist Church. Now based at the Crossroads Centre, Debbie Still (pictured here), the Foodbank manager and her team of hard workers provide wonderful support for those who need it. Residents donate money and food to ensure the Food Bank can continue and it is generously supported by Morrison's and the Co-Op. During the coronavirus pandemic the volunteers at the Food Bank worked long and tirelessly to ensure that no one went hungry, and with all the generous community support will continue to do so.



## John Mitchell

John and his wife Celia have lived in Meltham for over 50 years and contributed a great deal to the life of the town. John has had a longstanding involvement with the Church and was its main fundraiser for the renovation of the Clock Tower. He organised art exhibitions of his own work and other invited artists to raise Meltham's profile in the wider arts community. John helped to organise Yorkshire Day and established the annual Last Night of the Proms with Meltham & Meltham Mills Band.

## Alex Beaumont

Alex retired as the Head Teacher of Meltham C of E Primary School in August 2020 after 12 years. Alex was an outstanding and popular school leader with staff, families, children. The school under his leadership developed outdoor learning and preparing children to become active citizens in their later lives. During his time, the school has become much more closely connected to both the Church and the wider Meltham community with the school's grounds a regular venue for events including Meltham Memories and the Beer Festival.



## Syed Hussain

Meltham Post Office has been owned and managed by Syed and his family since 2016. Over the last five years, Syed and Taiba have become very much valued and appreciated by many in the local community. Syed maintained postal and personal and business banking services to residents throughout the pandemic when many other local branches were closed. Meltham is extremely grateful for his contribution to the community and feels he went above and beyond to support residents during this difficult time.



# Meltham Town Council's Annual Reports 2020- 21

## **Town Mayor's Report, Cllr Kate Buchanan**

Now coming to the end of my second year as Town Mayor, I am grateful to have the opportunity to reflect on the last year since my second term of office began in May 2020. None of us imagined that the coronavirus pandemic would continue for so long and with such terrible consequences. We are fortunate in Meltham that a committed group of volunteers has been able to support those who needed help and they will be recognised with a Pride of Meltham lapel badge.

Every part of our lives has been impacted and your Town Council is no exception. We had to cancel many events this year but we are looking to 'back to normal' later in 2021. Improvements in the Robert Ashton Memorial Park and other priorities relating to Ask Meltham have taken longer to progress although we are continuing to work in partnership with Kirklees. The Town Council has continued to maintain the Park including the children's play area. The family activities (Find the Animals and a pop-up sensory garden) were well received.

Meltham Town Council commissioned the Meltham in Focus digital project and it is available on the website. Other achievements this year are replanting the concrete planters with winter pansies and then a wonderful display of tulips in April; contributing to the SMALL WORLDS: Lockdown in Meltham photography project; launch of the shop front grant scheme, road safety campaign in association with all the primary schools, support to Wilshaw Village Hall for their restoration project, dog fouling reduction campaign, working with allotment holders and litter picking.

For the complete Report, please go to [www.melthamtowncouncil.gov.org](http://www.melthamtowncouncil.gov.org)

## **Planning, Environment and General Purposes Committee**

### **Chair: Cllr Paul White**

This has been a challenging year, in strange times, for all of us with many struggling with anxiety and of course bereavement. As I mentioned in my last report the Town Council was moving to remote working and I'm pleased to report that we've continued uninterrupted with our Planning meetings providing a voice for local residents who may be concerned about development proposals adversely affecting their lives, and it's been pleasing to welcome residents, who have picked up 'zoom' skills, to our meetings. We had hoped to return to actual meetings in the Carlile Institute within a short period of time, but here we still are.

Early in the pandemic there was a drop in the number of planning applications, but this soon picked up, we suspect as many of us had more time at home and had more time to plan how we might improve our homes. There has been a much larger than usual number of applications since then from residents wanting to enlarge and improve their existing properties. Fortunately, many of these applications have been well presented and applicants have gone beyond, often to improve the look of their homes.

As I mentioned in last year's report the applications for new housing sites in parts of Meltham like Mill Moor Road and Helme Lane have now stopped. Despite a number of building sites being active, which is causing much concern in terms of possible over development, Kirklees Local Plan (which controls where and if new houses can be built) has no further fields allocated for housing development. For details see Kirklees website: <https://kirklees.gov.uk/localplan>

This means that there will be no new sites allocated for housing until the Plan is reviewed once more in the early 2030s. At that time the process will start all over again, and it is then that we need to be vigilant in our defence of our green spaces.

## **Tackling Grotspots**

Despite the lockdown we have continued with our work to clean up and tackle

'grotspots' and welcome all residents to tell us where and what is required. We try hard to keep on top of this and many residents have commented that things are better. Our campaign to improve dog fouling has also had some success and we aim to roll this out in other parts of Meltham as we come out of lockdown with more posters in the Township. It has been particularly gratifying to see examples of Meltham residents helping in this regard by putting pressure on dog owners to take more care as well as many residents helping by picking up litter as they're out and about. Yes, it is true there are 'good fairies' out there who do pick up your litter, please be mindful and not drop it in the first place. Huge thanks to those volunteers that care for our special place.

We have considered a wider number of issues and consultations throughout the year and this continues. For example, we are pursuing a project to reposition bus stands, in order to reduce congestion in the town centre and also how we might repurpose the bus station/turning area to help improve that part of the town centre. We will be doing this by working with our Ward Councillors.

## **Properties, Administration and Finance Committee**

### **Chair: Cllr Roberta Bampton**

Finance Committee meetings have been kept to a minimum this year because of Coronavirus, while still ensuring the smooth running of Council finances, and meeting all legal requirements. As a result, only 2 meetings were held this year, both on Zoom. The Council made some savings on budget this year, income was more or less as anticipated but savings were made due to some events not taking place, e.g. the VE Day celebrations and the Picnic in the Park.

The maintenance and improvement of the Robert Ashton Memorial Park continues to be the highest expenditure for the Town Council. This year a Friends of Robert Ashton Memorial Park has been set up and a grant of £500 awarded to the group. The Town Council continues to support our Meltham Library, thereby providing an essential community resource, and also to support various village organisations through our grants scheme. We continue to ring-fence annual amounts for items such as election costs, improvements to the Robert Ashton Memorial Park, the town centre improvement fund, and the Ask Meltham project.

The main points relevant to next year's budget are as follows:

- A new budget heading for events/activities in the Park was included, and a figure of £1500 allocated to this
- Where applicable a 2% inflation increase was applied
- The budget for audit and accounting fees was increased to cover the cost of a new accounting package
- The budget for IT costs was increased to cover the cost of Zoom and re-designating Councillors' email addresses to have a Meltham Town Council suffix
- The budget for postage and petty cash was reduced to reflect reduced postal costs
- The budget for professional fees was increased to reflect the increased number of tree surveys required
- The budget for salaries was increased to cover increases in employer pension contributions and increments
- The budget for devolved services was reduced by £500 based on spend in previous years
- The capital grants scheme was reduced from £25k to £15K (£10k for general applications and £5k for shop front grant applications).

These measures achieved the aim of maintaining our services, while ensuring that there would be no increase to the precept for a Band D property.



### 3 & 4 July Meltham Scarecrow Festival

Make a scarecrow and pop it in your garden. Check [www.melthammemories.co.uk](http://www.melthammemories.co.uk) for more information.

### 28 August 11.00 - 4.00pm Picnic in the Park

#### Robert Ashton Memorial Park

Come and join us and bring your picnic. We are planning all kinds of activities for children including creating a Meltham Mural with recycled materials and pop-up refreshments. Further information will be available on Meltham Town Council website and Facebook page.

What's On  
in Meltham  
July - October 2021

### Carlile Institute Events

#### 11 & 12 September 11.00am - 4.00pm Carlile Institute Heritage Open Days - Edible England

We need your help! Send us your memories of Meltham shops, such as the butcher, grocer and sweet shops plus any old family recipes for our exhibition. If you have any memorabilia you'd like to show to the community, get in touch with Ann: [ann74uk@icloud.com](mailto:ann74uk@icloud.com)

#### 11 September 7.30pm A Virtual Heritage Walk

A lecture by historian, Stephen Counce Admission free, licensed bar.

#### 12 September 11.00 - 4.00pm Exhibitions and Meltham In Focus

archives and photographs. Admission free, refreshments available to purchase.

#### 12 September, 11.00 - 4.00pm Meltham in Lockdown: The Film

Come and experience the stories and experiences of people in Meltham during the Covid 19 Pandemic. The film will be on a loop all day to ensure it's available for everyone to see. **Free entry.**

The film is being produced by Red Dragonfly and Grist To The Mill Productions who brought 'The Unknown Soldier', 'The Ballad of Mulan' and 'Gratiano' to the Carlile. Michelle Yim, of Red Dragonfly Productions, said: *'We are thrilled to be part of this wonderful project and I, as a local resident, am really enjoying getting to know my home town much better.'*

#### 25 September 7:45pm McShane & Shaw Folk Music

£10

For a total of 25 years both men have been running ukulele clubs in their respective home towns of Vancouver, Canada and Penistone, UK. Chris McShane is a multi-instrumentalist with significant chops on ukulele, guitar, mandolin, bass guitar and tenor banjo and Ralph Shaw has been called Canada's King of the Ukulele. Plus humour!!

#### 14 October Carlile Comedy Club

£TBC

A Laugh at The Carlile Institute - a brand new comedy night launching on 14 October, tickets available at [www.carlileinstitute.co.uk](http://www.carlileinstitute.co.uk). The first event will feature four comedians: Howard Walker, Tony Cowards, Duncan Oakley and Phil Walker. It will be a brilliant evening showcasing these extraordinarily talented comedians. Tickets will sell quickly, so don't miss out.

**Carlile Institute** Check out their website for a list of classes and groups.

**Meltham Parish Church Hall** Check out their website and Facebook page for list of activities.

**Meltham Methodist Hall** Check out their website for a list of activities.

**Probus** meets at the Liberal Club every second and fourth Wednesday for retired business and professional men (resumes on Wed 14 July 2021) Further information please contact: [graham.smith646@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:graham.smith646@hotmail.co.uk)