

NEWSLETTER

Autumn / Winter 2020



MK CIL is still open by strict appointment only

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Dear All,

Here's a letter to update you with what is happening at MK CIL.

You must all be wondering what is going on at the moment, with the current Covid restrictions.

At the beginning of lockdown, Edith went into the office regularly to check the answerphone and emails, and did urgent enquiries on the phone,

As lockdown eased, Val joined Edith, and now they both go into the office on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays. They have done face to face form fillings, by very strict appointment, in the small meeting room, adhering to the socially distancing rules, as set out by the government.

Unfortunately, due to the restrictions it isn't possible for many of us to be in the office at once at the moment, as our space is far too small to keep safely apart from each other.

Ernie has been really busy applying for various grants to try to secure our future; as our main source of income, Westcroft Charity Shop was obviously closed during lockdown. The shop is now open again, but the donations to us will be much lower than usual. Also we have lost income from our room hire, which we usually rely on.

Ernie has also been in regular contact with MK Council regarding issues where the disabled community have not been considered.

Chris has been hosting a weekly chat on Facebook for the volunteers.

Hannah has been working hard from home keeping the CIL Facebook and Website updated.

Bev and Tony have raised over £650 for CIL, by making and selling face masks.

Hopefully, as restrictions ease, we will eventually get back to some kind of new normality, this will probably be a while, but we will keep you posted.

Thank you All for your patience and valued support.

Stay safe.

Annette, Editor

On behalf of All the MK CIL Trustees



***"We'll meet again,
Don't know where,
Don't know when,
But I know we'll meet again,
Some sunny day"***

Honours



Valerie Williamson

Huge “CONGRATULATIONS” to Val who has been awarded a BEM (British Empire Medal) in the Queens Honours list.

She has been awarded it for her services to the community in North Bucks, what a brilliant achievement, well done Val !

SWIMATHON

Esther Johnston, one of our Trustees, has put forward MK CIL as a beneficiary from the Swimathon 2021. A fund raising event organised by Rotary MK annually. This is the first time CIL has been invited.

It is an opportunity for everyone to contribute in some way.

There are 2 venues on 2 different Saturdays in June 2021 (Dates to be confirmed.)

Teams of up to 6 to take part on a relay basis for 55min.

Children can take part with parental permission.

Get friends and family to make up and / or sponsor a team. CIL could have teams in one or both events. Some helpers on the day would be useful, (counting lengths etc.)

It is better for people with disabilities to swim at Middleton Pool in Newport Pagnell, as there the water is warmer, (30 degrees centigrade) and the facilities include hoists and special changing rooms. The other pool is in Wolverton.

After the events have taken place and all monies collected there will be an event where cheques are presented to participating charities.

Please register your interest with Valerie (Valerie.Williamson@mkcil.org.uk) so we know if we can take up the invitation.

For more information go to: www.rotary-milton-keynes-org/our-projects/swimathon/what-the-swimathon-is-all-about/



Rotary MK

Val joined Rotary MK several weeks ago, she felt this would help highlight the work carried out by MKCIL to new audiences / sections of the MK wider community. The idea was also to use this as a way to open new potential opportunities that may help with fundraising.

Rotary MK organise various community events, including a main charity fundraising event (swimathon) to support other local charities. This year's event raised over £27K for local charities.

Here is a photo that was in the Rotary bulletin welcoming Val to the club - loving the colour purple coincidence. This is the colour used for 'End Polio' Campaigns, a cause Rotary International have been in the forefront for its eradication globally.

Esther, Trustee



E-scooters

I doubt from the media coverage that there has been that this will come as a surprise to you but Milton Keynes Council is trialling e-scooters. They are just the same thing as many of us would have seen and possibly used when we were younger except these are electric powered and go at 15mph, and are no longer meant for kids but adults.

MKC state that it is government sponsored fast-tracked plan to explore alternatives to short car journeys. With the plans being further sped up as a consequence of the COVID-19 pandemic to see also whether they might relieve pressure on public transport. The trial, which will last up to 12 months, involves the use of three different operators **Lime**, who also operate electric cycles in MK, **Spin**, and **Ginger**. It is believed that during the trial there will be no more than 900 scooters parked around in the MK area shared between the three operators.

The scooters can be booked via a phone app which can be downloaded for free from the usual places and before using the scooter, the user will be invited to watch a short instructional video and a guide telling of the basic operations. The guide will also show how and where you can use the scooters and where to how to park them when your journey is finished. Using them obviously does not come for free and the 3 operators use different charge rates. Wearing helmets is not compulsory, but the operators advise it as being sensible to do and the scooters have passed safety tests stipulated by the Department of Transport before being licensed.

They have two brakes, inflatable tyres, lights and a horn/bell, they cannot weigh more than 35kg and as said above are restricted to less than 15mph, unless it can be pedalled faster. All users need to hold a driving licence, although from what we have gained this need only be a provisional one, this means as we were told, that a medical fitness to operate the scooters has been established to the same level as if you were to drive a car. Mind you I don't think they considered disabled drivers when they thought that out. It does mean though that a driver has to be no more than 16 to use one, although the operators apply an age restriction of their own to only allow over 18s, they've not mentioned an upper limit. To prove this users will need to present their photo driving licence via the app when they enrol with the scheme.

MKC informs that generally, you can ride a scooter wherever you can ride a cycle. Which means for MK that they can be used on the Redway system. They can also be used on any roads except the grid roads. In CMK the scooters can be ridden on the service roads through car parking areas and via underpasses. It is emphasised though that they are not allowed on pavements. To control where the scooters can be ridden the operators will be using geo fencing technology, meaning that the whereabouts will be monitored by GPS and if they go outside of permitted areas their power will be switched off, or at least reduced. This effectiveness of this approach will be assessed as part of the trial. MKC state that if this approach proves ineffective they will introduce other measures such as signage, or area restrictions.

The most frequent problem that has been brought to everybody's attention so far is **where they are left**. The scooters operate in one of two ways

- 1) 'free flow' - where you can ride a scooter in an area and when you have finished your ride you leave it there for the next users. This means that scooters can be left almost anywhere. The operators are aware of where they are at all times through their GPS facility. If any scooters are left unused for a defined period (24hrs typically) the operators will pick up the scooter and return it to a higher usage area.
- 2) Docked - the scooters will be parked in a designated pick up area and the operator will require them to be left in a similar designated parking area on completion of the usage.

As part of the trial MKC and the operators will continuously monitor their use and where they are being parked. From this it is intended that within a few weeks of the start of the trial starting 'hotspots' of usage will be identified and from that it is intended to identify parking areas where they can be left. Once these parking areas are established users will be instructed to use them so that they are not left causing an obstruction.

Users are already asked to leave them in safe places and not causing an obstruction and they are encouraged to do this through offering rewards, like reduced price for future rides. Conversely if users persistently leave their scooter in inappropriate places they can be 'banned' from the scheme.

The operators are required to deal with any scooter that is parked incorrectly or left for long periods without use. Typically they are required to respond between 2 – 4 hours of an incident being identified.

Of course the Redways are, or at least should be, the sole area where the scooters come into contact with individuals with disabilities however it is felt by MKC that there is sufficient room on these for all to use safely. Although the trial will evaluate whether this is so.

A stakeholder advisory group with representatives from the Police, Parks Trust, Santander, Cycle Forum, Operators, MKC, Business and the Disability Advisory Group has been formed. This group will review the trial and offer recommendations for any amendments / actions to be considered. At the completion of the trial this group will be invited to deliver a report to Government to advise on whether nationally we should continue with e-scooters. MKC are also working with the Guide Dogs for the Blind to take on their views as the trial develops.

More information can be obtained from the operator's websites, details below, and contact details are included on the scooters should you wish to report something to them.

Lime <https://www.li.me/en-us/home>

Spin <https://spinpm.wpengine.com/>

Ginger <https://www.ginger.town/>

You can also contact MKC by e-mail to Transport.policy@Milton-Keynes.gov.uk

MKC have emphasised that private e-scooters are not part of the trial and remain illegal to use in MK and only scooters licensed through the trial are permitted in MK.

This write-up has been drafted based on discussions we have had with MKC and from information they have provided to us. If you do have any questions or comments then please let us know by ringing 01908 231344 and either telling us or leave a message or e-mail us on info@mkcil.org.uk.

Ernie - Chair of Trustees



Volunteer Award



Edith Dunse

Having listened to BBC 3 Counties Radio in August I heard they were running a "Make A Difference Award 2020"

I submitted 2 applications, one for fundraising and one for volunteering.

The fundraising one for, Tony and Bev, did not get an award, but the one for volunteer, Edith, did.

Edith came third overall receiving a bronze award. She will receive a framed certificate.

Edith has been a volunteer and trustee at CIL for over 20 years. She had been going into the office during lockdown to check for messages and giving help as needed, since we had to close our drop in service to keep everyone safe.

“CONGRATULATIONS” Edith, so very well deserved !

Valerie, Trustee



Arts for Health Exhibition in MK Gallery Project Space
16th October - 15th November 2020

Open Friday - Sunday 10am - 5pm
Free Entry

Visit mkgallery.org/visit for information on how we are operating under covid-19 regulations

Arts for Health features selected artworks made between March and July 2020 by artists living in Milton Keynes and its surrounding area. Through a range of media - including painting, drawing, photography, and film - the exhibition aims to create dialogue and awareness around those living and working in social isolation. Arts for Health also includes work created for Milton Keynes Disability Awareness Day 2020, an annual event which highlights the talents of people with disabilities. Artworks which explore the daily experiences faced by many who live with disability now seem to have more public resonance as a result of the current COVID-19 pandemic; from the discovery of joy in simple things to the comforts and discomforts of repetition or disrupted routines. Within this context, Arts for Health invites a reimagining of the way society views physical disability and mental health.

The exhibition is presented by [Arts for Health Milton Keynes](#), a charity who use the arts and creativity to improve the health and wellbeing of their local community. The exhibition features artworks made by artists working at Milton Keynes University Hospital as well as art therapists and artists whose practice has recently adapted, evolved, or had an unexpected resurgence.

Many of the artworks are for sale; 25% of all sales goes directly to Arts for Health Milton Keynes and will help to fund its future programmes. Click [here](#) to view and purchase artworks.

Two of our Trustees, Val and Annette, have pieces of their work in the exhibition.

Arts for Health
Milton Keynes



MK Community Shop Westcroft Ltd

10 Wimborne Crescent, Westcroft, Milton Keynes, MK4 4DE

01908 506640

Supporting MK CIL and MK Samaritans



Clothing

Books

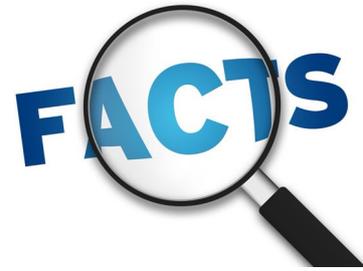
Toys

Crockery

etc

All donations of any unwanted items in good condition will be very welcome

Interesting Facts



People with disabilities

- There are around 13.3 million disabled people in the UK (almost one in five of the population)
- Only 17% of disabled people were born with their disabilities. The majority of disabled people acquire their disability later in life
- Around 7% of children are disabled, compared to 18% of working age adults and 44% of adults over State Pension age
- There are two million people with sight problems in the UK. That's around one person in 30. It is predicted that by 2020 the number of people with sight loss will rise to over 2,250,000
- There are approximately 10 million people (1 in 6) in this country with a hearing loss. 6.5 million of these are aged 60 and over. Around 2 million people use hearing aids
- Only 28% of wheelchair users are under the age of 60
- Disabled adults are nearly three times as likely as non-disabled adults to have no formal qualifications, 30% and 11% respective

Carers

- One in eight adults (around 6.5 million people) are carers. By 2037, it's anticipated that the number of carers will increase to 9 million. Over 1 million people care for more than one person
- 1.4 million people provide over 50 hours of unpaid care per week
- One in five carers are aged 50 - 64. Almost 1.3 million people in England and Wales aged 65 or older are carers
- 58% of carers are female and 42% are male
- Just over a third (37%) of carers live within walking distance and 44% live within a 30 minute journey of the person they cared for, but just under a quarter live over half an hour away with 5% over 2 hours away



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MK CIL is a Charity

All donations gratefully received

Thank You!