



Wilstead NEWSLETTER

December 2025
including Parish Council News

PUBLISHED BY WILSTEAD NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH, PART OF BEDFORD & DISTRICT NW ASSOCIATION

All Saints Church

United in Faith. Welcoming All

The services have been planned as follows for **DECEMBER**:

Sunday 7th December | 11.00am
Morning Praise

Sunday 14th December | 11.00am
Holy Communion

Sunday 21st December | 11.00am
Holy Communion

Wednesday 24th December | 3.00pm
Christingle

Sunday 28th December | No Service

Regretfully there will be no service at midnight on Christmas Eve or on Christmas Day as no clergy are available.

There will be a Christmas themed Coffee Morning on **Wednesday 17th December** in the Chapter House at 10.30am until 12 noon.

Robert Heley

Advertising in Your Village Newsletter

If you wish to advertise your business in the Newsletter please contact us on wilstead.newsletter@gmail.com.

Contents this month include:

Parish Council	Page 3
Wilstead Players	Page 9
Senior Citizens Tea Party	Page 10
Village Hall	Page 13
Footpath Group.....	Page 15



The Trustees of the Wilstead Endowed Charities warmly invite all our over 60's residents to this year's Annual Tea Party.

Wednesday 14th January 2026
3.00pm Wilstead Village Hall

There'll be plenty to enjoy, delicious afternoon tea, a raffle, and a special performance by the children from Wilstead Primary School.

We also have a duo playing guitars with hits from the 60's and 70's, which we're sure you'll remember.

And to start things off in style, guests will be welcomed with a complimentary glass of Prosecco or Bucks Fizz on arrival.

Further details are on the back page of this newsletter and will be displayed on Village noticeboards.

We look forward to seeing you there for another fantastic community afternoon.

Your Co-ordinator is:

Wilstead Primary School

Christmas bells are already ringing at Wilstead Primary School, as we get ready to sing at the 'Christmas Lights Switch On' on **Saturday 28th November!**

We are gearing up for a busy few weeks, with our performances at All Saints' Church, the school Nativity for Key Stage one and Key Stage 2 Carols by Candlelight. One of my favourite Christmas traditions is taking the school choir to the care homes in Wixams.

If you see us walking down in our Christmas jumpers, do give us a wave and help to spread our Christmas cheer!

Our PTA Christmas Fair is taking place at the wonderful Herrings Green Farm this year, and we are so grateful for their support. The event is running from 11am until 3.30pm on **Saturday 13th December** and has lots to do for all the family. If you would like to join us there, we would love to see you!



RAMBLERS

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Bedfordshire

Come and join us for a walk. We walk every Saturday afternoon approximately 6 miles and Saturdays twice a month in morning for approximately 12 miles - or try our "Ramble" on first Saturday morning each month - slightly shorter, slower pace.

Please note change of start time for afternoon walks - Winter start 13:00.

DECEMBER WALKS

6th DECEMBER AM "Ramble", Keysoe, 4.8 miles,
PM Keysoe, 6 miles

13th DECEMBER AM Cambridge, 5 or 10 miles
(same walk, but leave or join at lunchtime)
or **PM** Priory Park, Bedford, 5.5 miles

20th DECEMBER PM Moggerhanger (Mince Pie Walk),
4.8 miles

27th DECEMBER AM Wilstead, 5 miles
or **PM** Wilstead, 5 miles **OR** both, 10 miles

For our latest walks program visit www.ramblers.org.uk/go-walking/ramblers-groups/north-bedfordshire-group.

Please bring a drink, snack or lunch as we always have a break.

For more information on our walks telephone:

Margaret Sawyer | 07780 933729 Facebook: **North Beds Ramblers**
www.ramblers.org.uk/north-bedfordshire



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Wilshamstead Parish Council

Planning Application For Up To 149 Houses At Duck End Lane Recommended For Refusal

The Borough Council Planning Committee made up of elected Borough Ward Councillors members, who considered this planning application at their November meeting have made a recommendation for this application to be refused. The members heard from Borough Ward Councillors Marc Frost, Graeme Coombes, Andrea Spice and Parish Councillor Mark Brooks who all spoke passionately with robust planning policy reasons as to why this application should be refused.

The Parish Council response collated by an experienced planning consultant who had provided professional advice with detailed technical and robust challenge to the local authority to this planning application at Duck End Lane, was sent directly to each elected member of the Planning Committee in advance. The application had gone to committee recommended for approval, so this collaborative working, including all the public submissions from the Wilstead community showed unity and strength with a clear message that this application was not in keeping with the wishes of the community.

Enormous thanks to all those who took time to submit comments to the application and to those who represented the community at the Planning Committee meeting.

The next steps are the application will return to a future Planning Committee, with the Planning Officer having prepared supporting planning policy reasons for a refusal. The committee members will vote, and a decision notice will then be issued. There will not be allowed to be any input from Borough or Parish Councillors during this meeting as the right to speak representations have already been made, however, this item will be monitored closely by the Parish Council.

Continued on page 4 >>>

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>>> Continued from page 3

Major Gas Main Replacement Works Latest

Unfortunately, at the time of writing, the Parish Council has heard nothing further regarding these works which had previously been due to start on 10th November. If information is received regarding the start date of the gas main replacement works taking place on Bedford Road towards the roundabout and down along Cotton End Road as far as Ivy Lane, this will be communicated across various local platforms by the Parish Council.

Village Improvements What Would You Like To See...?

As usual at this time of the year, the Parish Council start to turn its attention to the budget planning for the next financial year, which then informs the setting of the precept which is collected through the Borough Council council tax payments made by residents.

A lot of time is taken with carefully considering how best to manage the Parish Council finances, to ensure best value as well as developing local services and facilities for the benefit of Wilstead residents.

If you have any thoughts on what could be improved in the village, what you might to see more of, or less of, or maybe you have some new ideas that you feel the Parish Council should consider. Please do get in touch with the Parish Clerk (office@wilsteadparishcouncil.org) or any Parish Councillor to feedback your thoughts and ideas, all are very welcome.

A reminder your current Parish Councillors are Mark Brooks, Marc Frost, Richard Draycott, Karen Hollands, Russell Adams, Chris Carberry, Nikki Williams and Eric Benton. Contact can be made via email, for example for Mark Brooks, use MarkBrook@wilsteadparishcouncil.org. All Councillor emails follow this format pattern

Change In Parish Office Opening Hours

Please kindly note that with immediate effect the Parish Office will be open on a Wednesday from 9am to 12 midday.

The Parish Office is at the rear of the Village Hall, it is worth ringing in advance to ensure it is open.

Contacting The Parish Council

The best way to contact the Parish Council is to email Lizzie (the Parish Clerk) at office@wilsteadparishcouncil.org.

Alternatively, you can call 01234 743152 or write to PO Box 1548, Bedford, MK44 5AX.

It is always more interesting to attend a Parish Council meeting in person to see what goes on and understand the range of items covered in trying to move improvements for the Wilstead community forwards.

Dates and the agenda are advertised on the village noticeboards, with meetings usually on a Monday starting at 7pm in the small hall at Wilstead Village Hall. (Head to the left-hand side of the main hall building and you will see the door open which is where the Parish Council will be). Everyone is most welcome to join us, with the next meeting scheduled for Monday 5th January.

Also please remember to view regular updates published on local matters through the Wilstead Parish Council website, do visit www.wilsteadparishcouncil.org to see the latest news and helpful information.



WILSTEAD & WIXAMS

The last Wilstead Cafe date for 2025 in the Village Hall is **Friday 12th December** at the normal time 2.00pm to 3:30pm.

If it opens in 2026 the date will be **Friday 8th January**. We really need volunteers to keep this going so please get in touch if you have a couple of hours to spare once a fortnight.

Don't forget Wixams, Lakeview Village Hall every Tuesday 10:30am to 12 Noon.

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Wilstead Bowls Club

More than 50 members and guests attended our
Finals' Presentation Buffet Lunch on Sunday 2nd
November.

Many of our members are enjoying indoor short
mat bowling which has resumed on Tuesday and
Wednesday afternoons from 2pm - 4pm, and
Friday evening 7pm - 9pm. If you fancy playing,
no experience necessary, you are very welcome
to join us. You just need flat soled shoes; we have
bowls you can borrow.

There are very competitive games of a very high
standard being played on Thursday evenings in
the Herts and Beds Short Mat League, hosted by
Wilstead.

Pupils from Wilstead Primary School Year 3 came
along in November to give short mat bowling a try,
some budding bowlers amongst them.

Our AGM took place on Friday 21st November with
most of the committee being re-elected.

For our social events, a Race Night was held in
November.

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Christmas themed Coffee Morning with a raffle
on **Wednesday 10th December**
10.30am - 12noon - £3

All welcome, you don't need to be a member.

A Quiz evening will be held late January.

If you need any club
information please
contact:



Sue Marchant
Club Secretary 07716 676383
sue@marchantonline.com
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Wilstead P3 Footpath Group

Meetings

The latest P3 meeting was planned for after the deadline for this edition of the Newsletter. There would have been reports on each of the seventeen Public Rights of Way in the Parish highlighting any problems which prevent easy use of these Public Footpaths and Public Bridleways.

How these problems might be addressed will be identified at the meeting together with the Group's need for any help from Bedford Borough Council to do this work on the paths. If any work is too large/difficult for the Group to tackle then assistance will be sought from the Borough Council Rights of Way Dept.

The following meeting of the Group is provisionally set for **Saturday 7th February** in the Village Hall. Come along if you are/could be interested in helping to monitor the state of the paths and/or helping to overcome any problems identified in the surveys.

Working Parties

Working Party dates will be arranged at each P3 meeting.

Walks

The November walk was originally planned for 23rd November in the countryside around the old disused Old Warden railway cutting and tunnel but was postponed because of the forecast high probability of rain. It is now planned to do this walk early in the New Year. Keep an eye out for poster on the village noticeboards and details in future issues of the Newsletter.

The next walk will be the traditional (now going for over twenty years) New Years Day walk along some of the paths which surround the village. Come along all are welcome.

Meet at 11.00am in the Village Car Park off Whitworth Way. I will bring some of the latest walk leaflets which show all the paths in the parish.

The following walk is provisionally planned for the morning of **Sunday 1st February**. It will be somewhere in Bedfordshire, but not too far away! Keep an eye out for info on the Village Noticeboards at the Village Hall and Crossroads.

Nigel Jacobs

Wilstead Footpath Group | 01234 400733

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Flit Vale Local Group

MONDAY 8TH DECEMBER

On-line Zoom meeting. 7.30pm
Flit Vale Wildlife Trust Group AGM

The AGM will take place by Zoom, commencing 7.30pm. If you would like to attend, please contact Ann and you will receive the link nearer the time.

MONDAY 12TH JANUARY

Maulden Church Hall, 7.30 pm
Talk by Kate Dimmock of the Harlington Hedgehog Hogspital

Harlington Hogspital is a small rescue which takes in the sick, injured, abandoned, orphaned or otherwise distressed hedgehogs with the aim of rehabilitation & re-release to the wild. Hedgehogs - the only native spiny mammal, and one which is an indicator species - are currently red listed as vulnerable to extinction, so how can we help this inoffensive creature?

Charge: £5.00 per person

Our popular quiz will be held on Friday 13th February

Further details will be coming soon, put the date in next year's diary!

Booking for indoor Flit Vale events is optional.

Please contact Ann by email: flitvale.info@gmail.com or Phone (leave a message or text if you prefer) 07580 178 889 for more information or to reserve your place.

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Wilstead Women's Institute

Our November meeting brought Helen Close who lives in the village and who is an Historian, talking about Witchcraft over the ages. Slides were shown to the meeting, and a discussion took place.

Members have been holding craft days, had one in October to make felt decorations to put on our Christmas tree which will be shown in the Church Christmas Tree festival. We had another sewing day on 17th November to finish off our decorations.

Our December meeting will have taken place by the time you read this article, and we are making cards and baubles out of craft paper and colouring and decorating them to use on our own Christmas trees. We have mince pies stollen and sausage rolls to start the Christmas period off.

We have our Christmas outing to see the Christmas lights in London after having a fish and chip lunch to set us up. This sold out very quickly.

Our next meeting is a member's afternoon in the Village Hall with members bringing "sharing plates". We will be having a beetle drive with a twist. So 2pm in the village hall on **Thursday 8th January 2026** all are welcome come along and join in.

Wishing everyone a Happy and Healthy Christmas and New Year from your WI Committee.

Karen Cook | President

01234 403936 | karencook3@btinternet.com

Have you tested your smoke alarm!

Did you know that you are four times more likely to die in a house fire if there is no working smoke alarm?

So why not test your smoke alarm at the beginning of every month and tick it off your 'to do' list?

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Ideally, you should be testing this life saving equipment once a week. Doing it on the first of the month is a great start.

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News from the Pews

In November, our "Ready to Share" discovery group met in Hebrews Café to explore the theme, "Our Challenges". We talked about and listened to thoughts on the kinds of things that can hold us back when people ask us why we attend church or what we, as Christians, believe. The session was very well attended and we shared really interesting thoughts and how we can overcome them. Our next meeting will be on **Tuesday, 9th December** at 2pm and we will try out some of our ideas. Doors open at 1.45pm for a hot drink. This will be our final session on the theme of sharing our faith. Look out for next year's theme in our church news.

As I write, we are well into preparations for our Christmas Tree Extravaganza. It will kickstart our Advent and Christmas season and we hope every visitor has a wonderful time.

We will also have welcomed the beginning of Advent with our family Advent Carol Service.

Everyone is welcome to the Advent and Christmas services in the five churches. The Quiet Christmas at Elstow Abbey is a peaceful and reflective way to join in the celebration for anyone who finds the Christmas period difficult. It is at 7.30pm on **Thursday, 4th December**. All details will appear on All Saints Wilstead Facebook page.

The Team offers Home Visits, Home Communion and advice about Baptism, Confirmation and Wedding and Funeral arrangements. Please contact us at the numbers and email below.

All that remains for me is to wish you all a very peaceful and blessed Advent and Christmastide.

Helen Harbron-Applegarth

Lay Minister | Elstow Team

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vicar@elstow-abbey.org.uk



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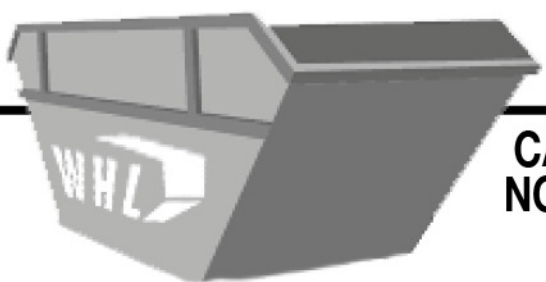
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Wilstead & Wixams



COMMUNITY ART GROUP

We wish all our readers and members a very happy Christmas and best wishes for the New Year.

If you're interested in art and would love to try out your talent, why not join us? Your first session is free and, if you decide to continue and become a member, it will be £3 a session when you're able to come.

We meet in the Village Hall on Mondays from 2pm-4pm. We don't meet on Bank Holidays. Our last meeting of the year will be on **Monday 15th December** and we will commence again on **Monday 5th January 2026**.

Our group has members of all abilities, using a variety of mediums. You might like sketching in pencil, charcoal, pen and ink, or painting by numbers. You can also paint in watercolour, acrylic or even oil. Meeting in the large hall makes it a safe space to work in and we are well spaced out. May I remind members and new people that we do have a small variety of art resources for your use so, if there is anything you haven't got or would like to experiment with, we may be able to help. If you need it, several of our members will help and encourage you in whatever your artistic endeavours happen to be.



Hare sketch by **Pauline**

Enquiries: **Michael Bradley 07526 939164**
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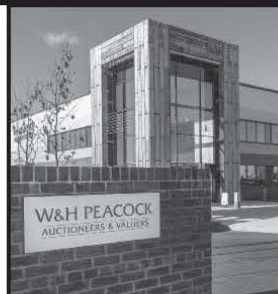
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Sue Ryder Christmas Treecycling Bedfordshire and Borders

National healthcare charity Sue Ryder is inviting residents to participate in their Christmas Treecycling Scheme to help raise much-needed money for families in need of palliative and bereavement care.

With an optional donation to Sue Ryder, a team of friendly, reliable volunteers will collect your real Christmas tree directly from your front door, garden, or driveway and recycle them.

As part of Christmas Treecycling, residents in and around Bedfordshire in MK40, MK41, MK42, MK43, MK44, MK45, PE19, SG15, SG16, SG17, SG18 and SG19 postcodes can have their trees collected between 8th – 16th January 2026.

Your real Christmas tree will be recycled into compost or wood chippings which will be used in local parks and woodlands or to generate green energy.

To learn more about this eco-friendly fundraising initiative in and around Bedfordshire, and to reserve a collection by midnight on 4th January 2026, visit www.sueryder.org/treebedfordshire.

Registrations to reserve your tree collection are now open.

Contact the fundraising team at Sue Ryder St John's Hospice with any queries on 01767 642412 or email: stjohns.events@sueryder.org.

Royal British Legion Remembrance Day 2025



There was a wonderful turnout on the 9th November for the Remembrance Day march and service at the Memorial. Then the church was well filled with those taking part in the service afterwards. Thank you to everyone who took part.

More details in next month's newsletter.



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Wilstead Village Hall

Most of you who use the Hall will have noticed that we recently had CCTV fitted. This is to help to provide a safe and secure environment for everyone using the Village Hall and to protect the Hall's property. We also hope it acts as a deterrent against the "no gooders" in the area. Cameras are positioned in the main hall, foyer and outside the premises and it is recording images only. We have a strict CCTV policy in place so everyone's privacy is protected.

Some more good news is that new chairs have been ordered and possibly by the time you read this, they will have been delivered and in full use. Hopefully you find them more comfortable and there will be 10 chairs with arms for the less mobile of you. They are stackable vertically and there will be a trolley to pull the stacks out. No more folding of chairs and struggling to move a full trolley of chairs that never goes where you want it to go!

The Hall Committee wish you all a very Happy Christmas and New Year.

Don't forget that you are very welcome to join the Committee to support the running of the Village Hall.

To find out any information about the hall, please visit our website: wilsteadvillagehall.co.uk

Barbara Seamark | Chairperson
seamarkbarbara@gmail.com | 07709 573475

Angela Fosbrook | Secretary
fosbrookangela@gmail.com | 01234 294692

**Bedford Foodbank**
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Food collection

Help support your local food bank

Bedford Foodbank provides emergency food parcels for local individuals and families facing hardship.

Donate food

Donate an item or two from our shopping list, ensuring we can provide food for people facing hardship in your community.



Donate money

Help to cover the costs of storing and distributing food, as well as developing sustainable projects.



Shopping list

- Jars of Coffee
- Tinned Rice Pudding
- Tinned Tuna
- Long Life Fruit Juice
- Jars of Cooking Sauces
- Tinned Sweetcorn
- Bars of Chocolate
- Tinned Meat
- Biscuits
- Laundry Tablets

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This newsletter is published by Wilstead Neighbourhood Watch, part of Bedford & District NW Association, in close co-operation with Bedfordshire Police.

The Wilstead Village Website can be found at
www.wilsteadvillage.org.uk

Christmas Carols

Thursday 18th Dec 7:30pm
Wilstead Evangelical Church:
new building
(formerly Methodist Church)



You are warmly invited to join us for this popular event as we sing some good old Christmas carols, followed by hot mince pies and coffee

For more info: **wilstead.org**

Seasons Greetings from the Wilstead Garden Club

The Garden Club members started their Christmas journey at their meeting in November. The session started with a seasonal drink of warm mulled wine and this was followed later with tea and coffee and warmed mince pies.

In between refreshments and conversation, a difficult achievement with this friendly, social group, we enjoyed a demonstration from Dot to make a Christmas table decoration with candles, foliage, flowers, pine cones, teasels, sparkly bits and anything else we could find before having a go ourselves. At the end of the creating an impressive display of unique decorations took up the width of the stage.

Our December meeting is our Christmas meal and will probably have taken place by the time you are reading this. At the meal, as well as a fun quiz, we asked members to contribute to ideas for the future of the Garden Club. So we are hoping for some different activities in the near future. In January we are holding a meeting to both talk about the gardening issues of 2025 and plan our activities for 2026.

Meanwhile we wish you all a merry and peaceful Christmas and for a happy New Year enjoying our gardens.

Wilstead Garden Club Committee
wilsteadgardenclub@hotmail.com



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Wilstead Pre School News

As I write this in November we are yet to have had our Christmas Bazaar, so I'm thanking everyone in advance who came and supported us on the day, whether you gave your time and helped run the bazaar or you came along with your families and hopefully enjoyed a lovely Christmas afternoon.

If you are reading this before the 6th of December DO come along to the village hall 12-3pm and support us!

More details and thanks in the next newsletter.

We have been very busy this half term learning all about seasons, road safety, why it's important we wear poppies for Armistice day, remembering the soldiers who kept us and continue to keep us safe, and of course the celebration of Christmas.

I asked the children why we celebrate Christmas. Lots of interesting answers!

"Cos we need more toys"

"Cos we like Christmas trees"

"Because we like to put lights up"

"Isn't it about a baby called Jesus?" Bingo!

Hopefully after practicing and performing our Christmas nativity the children will have a better understanding of why we celebrate Christmas. The children have been fantastic practising so far, and I hope the performance will go ahead without too many hitches. (Which if you know, me is an utter nonsense, as I love it when it goes wrong !!)

Can I just take this opportunity to thank everyone who supports us along the way.

We are a Charity run Pre School and rely on a committee of parents to keep us going. THANK YOU to those who have given their valuable time this year to help us. You know who you are! We really do appreciate it.

Quick thank you to all the staff, who do an amazing job (if I do say so myself!) and managers who keep us in line! (And also do an amazing job!)

Can I thank the parents for all their support and thank you ALL for your support with our fundraising efforts it really does mean a lot that we have such fantastic support!

DATE FOR YOUR DIARIES

Our next quiz night is **Saturday 7th March** at the Village Hall. Hopefully you will all get a new diary for Christmas so stick the date in!

I'd like to wish everyone a very Merry Christmas and a peaceful New Year.

Just one last thing. A HUGE thank you to Jackie and the fantastic team at the Wilstead Newsletter for all their support and hard work in producing this monthly newsletter! Thank you. **Julia.**

Newsletter

DEADLINE

For any copy, new advertisements or changes to existing advertisements

Friday 19th December

The next newsletter will be published on Friday 9th January 2026.

Please send items and articles for inclusion in the Wilstead Newsletter to our dedicated email address:

wilstead.newsletter@gmail.com

Please note that requests for NEW ADVERTS and Advert Changes should now be sent to **Maxine Hendry**, as should Payments.

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To cut out and keep by your telephone.

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PC Vito Napoli	101
Crime Stoppers	0800 555 111
Abandoned Vehicles	01234 718359
Borough Councillor, Graeme Coombes	07815 302318
Borough Councillor, Marc Frost	07825 304080
Neighbourhood Watch Central Office	01234 842043
Wilstead Good Neighbours	07807 408928

Who's Who:

Neighbourhood Watch, Wilstead.

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MAXINE HENDRY, 17 Hampton Close, Wilstead MK45 3DA

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RECENT CRIME RECORDED FOR WILSTEAD

Harassment | Whitworth Way | 02/11/25

Theft | Cotton End Road | 01/11/25

Criminal Damage | Bedford Road | 21/10/25

Assault | Bedford Road | 16/10/25

Public Order Offence | Oak Avenue | 15/10/25

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The Wilstead Newsletter volunteer team do not accept any responsibility for adverts or items placed in this publication.

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Invitation

Wilstead over 60's Annual Tea Party

NEW
YEAR'S
TEA PARTY

Wednesday 14th
January 2026

If you would like to come along please fill in the details below and either take the cut off strip to Wilstead Post Office (*marking the envelope 'New Year Tea Party'*) or deliver/send to 125A Cotton End Road Wilstead MK45 3DD or email ericbenton@wilsteadparishcouncil.org.

Alternatively you can telephone me on mobile 07749869742 or 01234 740980, or email me at anne-lowe1@hotmail.co.uk Please state if you require a lift to and from the party.

Anne Lowe | For the Trustees

I/we would like to come to the New Year's Tea Party on Wednesday 14th January 2026- 3.00pm Wilstead Village Hall.

Name:

Address:

Telephone:

☐ If you would like a lift to the Tea Party please tick this box

The Wilstead Newsletter

**Volunteer Team would like
to wish all residents a peaceful
and happy Christmas and
the very best for 2026.**