

New Development Saves Local YMCA

The YMCA in Milton Keynes will gain 50 new sleeping units in new plans unveiled recently. The existing three low-level buildings, which are no longer fit for purpose, will be demolished and replaced with a new 8-storey YMCA building, integrating all of the housing into a single building.

The new building includes a range of types of accommodation from single rooms, some in clusters with shared kitchens, studio and 1 bed apartments, together with circa 2100m² of social, recreational, commercial and administrative space. This will include a café/canteen, double height social space, shops, nursery, training and teaching spaces and a community space.

As part of the deal with Milton Keynes Council and the developer, part of the land currently occupied by the YMCA's three buildings will be redeveloped as a new private rental apartment block.



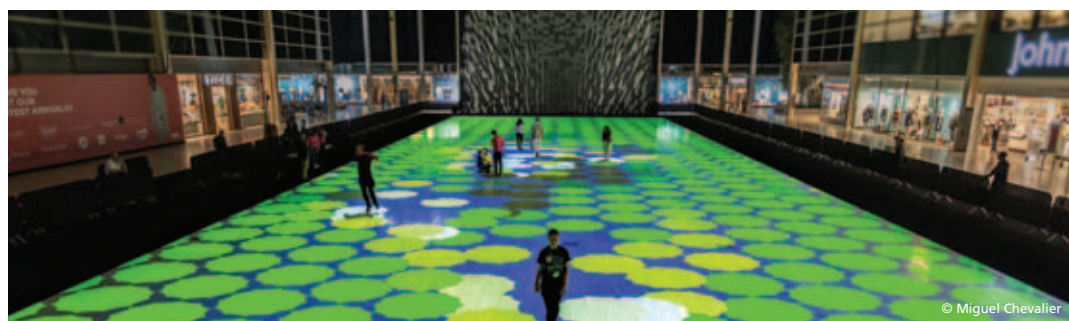
International Festival Success

One of the biggest events to take place in Milton Keynes is the bi-annual International Festival. This year's festival took place over ten days at the end of July and was centred on Willen Lake, but also included several events in CMK and Campbell Park.

Hundreds of people lined the streets of CMK for the Dominoes event, as the two kilometre line of concrete blocks wound its way through shopping centres and houses, chased by eager spectators. "Some of this year's major art commissions are only happening because of the generous support

of hundreds of local volunteers." said a festival spokesperson, "giving their time and energy and helping create an amazing festival atmosphere."

While the main 'Festival Central' site was centred on Willen Lake, numerous other events took place in CMK, including 'magic carpet', a huge interactive space in Middleton Hall, a number of performances and art installations around the centre:mk, and 'The Colour of Time', a spectacular street parade with music and dance. The events culminated with the World Picnic in Campbell Park.



INTU INQUIRY UPDATE

CMK Town Council is continuing to prepare its case for the public inquiry over proposals by Intu to build over public space at Midsummer Place.

The date of the inquiry has now been confirmed as running from Tuesday 6 September to Friday 9 September.

This will be held at the Christ the Cornerstone Church and members of the public are welcome to attend.

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Cycle Hire Success

The new Santander Cycles MK hire scheme has enjoyed huge success in its first weeks of operation, with over 3,400 registered users reported. The 400-bike scheme has had over 2,500 rentals in its first week, well above expectations. To find your local station go to santandercyclesmk.co.uk.

Police & Crime Survey

The Thames Valley Police and Crime Commissioner has launched a survey seeking feedback from local residents on policing and crime. The survey is hosted on the Police and Crime Commissioner website at www.thamesvalley-pcc.gov.uk/survey. It takes 10 minutes to complete and is open until 30 September 2016.

Architect Selected

CMK Town Council and The Parks Trust have selected internationally renowned architects Stanton Williams for the project to build a new community facility and cafe in Campbell Park. This allows the plans to proceed to a more detailed design stage, which will be followed by another round of consultations following those held earlier in the year.

Bins Removed

Residents living in Petersfield Green may have noticed that the litter bins installed by the Town Council last year have recently been removed. Unfortunately the management of Vizion, who own the land, objected to the bins being installed. The Town Council apologises for any inconvenience resulting from the removal of the bins.

CMK's Most Beautiful Spot?

Could this be the most beautiful spot in CMK? Grafton Park is a welcome refuge of greenery in the heart of our city centre yet it is surprisingly little known beyond the people who work in offices nearby. The long, narrow park, located behind the Pinnacle and Jaipur restaurant, features a winding path accompanied by a small flowing stream which runs through a series of reflective ponds. The east end of the park is also home to 'The Kiss'; one of CMK's works of public art.

However, local people raised the alarm when the park's distinctive water features suddenly started to dry up. As wildlife was suffering the Town Council urged Milton Keynes Council to identify the problem and get it fixed. The water pump had failed, but a few weeks later a new one was installed. Fortunately fears



that fish in the ponds had died turned out to be unfounded as rainwater topped up the oxygen supply just in time!

The pump scare has brought more attention to the park and the Town Council has also raised the neglected condition of the planting

with MK Council's landscape department. CMK Town Councillor Linda Inoki says "The Town Council looks forward to seeing the weeds cleared and more attention being paid to Grafton Park in future, as it is such a wonderful urban oasis for both people and wildlife."

Table Tennis in the Gardens

Regular visitors to the Fred Roche Gardens will have noticed the appearance of a new ping pong table at the end of the park, next to the church. This has been installed as part of a wider initiative to place the tables around CMK to encourage people to exercise and socialise outdoors, which was launched in a ceremony in Queens Court in June.

Plans are now in place to install a second table in the next month. However there have been issues with bats disappearing from the tables, so any anybody taking advantage of the Summer sun and using the tables is politely asked to leave the bats behind for others to use after they finish!



Plane Trees Threatened Again

Plans to remove a number of the classic plane trees from the 'Green Frame' around CMK as part of a landscape maintenance programme were discussed at the July meeting of the Town Council.

The Parks Trust proposes to reduce the double row of plane trees along North Row and South Row to a single row over the next fifteen years. They would remove every other tree in the first phase, followed by every other tree from the row behind that in the second phase, then finally the entire front row in the third phase.

The Parks Trust believe that thinning is necessary as the crowns of the trees are touching each other as they grow. However the Town Council is aware of other places where much larger, fully grown plane trees successfully co-exist, at the spacing distance seen in CMK. Town Councillor Ken Baker, one of CMK's original architects, says "It was always the intention to create a continuous, unbroken treeline overhanging CMK's roads." The Town Council is not yet convinced that thinning the trees is necessary, and will look closely into the matter.

MK Rated Second Best for Work

A new report has shown that Milton Keynes enjoys higher average salaries and better job satisfaction than the vast majority of British cities. The survey, run by recruiting firm Glassdoor, revealed that 3.2 out of 5 people in Milton Keynes are satisfied with their job. 76% of Milton Keynes' working age population is currently in work, giving the city one of the highest employment rates in the country.

With an overall score of 4.0 out of 5, composed from a combination of job availability, the cost of living and overall job satisfaction, Milton Keynes came second only to Cambridge in the national survey. The results place the city ahead of other high performers like Nottingham and Oxford, further cementing the reputation of the city as one of Britain's most economically successful urban centres.



MK 2050 Report Released

A new report has been released by the 'Milton Keynes Futures: 2050' commission. The independently produced document is the culmination of a project to identify what has made the city successful over the past five decades and sets out a long-term vision for how it may grow and develop over the coming decades.

The document sets out six major projects for the future of the city and CMK, the most significant being the plan for a new university in CMK to open next year, referred to as "MK:IT". This university, which was also an aspiration in the CMK Neighbourhood Plan, is envisaged as a research institution offering both academic and vocational qualifications, allowing Milton Keynes to take its place at the centre of the Oxford-Cambridge arc of learning.

The other projects include 'Renaissance: CMK', a project to attract investment into the city centre and strengthen its role as a major regional centre, and 'Milton Keynes

- The Creative and Cultured City', a project intended to build on the city's artistic legacy and work towards its bid for European Capital of Culture 2023.



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Wednesday 3 August MK Playday

A day of fun and play for children in Campbell Park, running from 11am to 4pm.

Friday 5 August Children's Rounders

A kids' rounders tournament is coming to Campbell Park! Free refreshments will be on offer. The event, for 7-13 year olds, begins at midday. Advanced booking is required.

Saturday 6 August Hiroshima Day

A reflection event on the anniversary of the Hiroshima bomb, taking place at the MK Rose at 10.30am.

Tuesday 16 August Club MK

Celebrate the role of Rugby in Milton Keynes by creating your own unique 'team photo' using paper collage. 10am-12 midday, tickets cost £2.

Saturday 20 August Open Air Film Festival

A two-day display of major films at an open air cinema in Campbell Park, this year including 1986's Labyrinth in tribute to David Bowie. The schedule will be announced closer to the time.

Tuesday 13 September Peppa Pig Workshops

A show-related Peppa Pig themed workshop at MK Theatre, filled with games, storytelling and activities for all the family to enjoy. Multiple sessions run on 13 and 14 September from 11am.

Thursday 22 September Family History Consultation

Free 30 minute consultations at MK Library to help you research your Family History. Sessions need to be booked in advance, tel: 01908 254160.

Wednesday 28 September Choral Pilgrimage

The City Church's 16th Choral Pilgrimage celebrates the work of William Byrd and Arvo Pärt, taking place at 19:30. Tickets cost £15, with discounts for students, jobseekers and disabled people.

MK Playday

The annual MK Playday will return this year for another day of activities for children and families, promising to be the biggest and best Playday to date.

Fun things to do at the event include water slides, bug hunting, den making and woodland play areas. There will also be fairground rides, an under-fives' village, 'fun on the stage' sessions, and much more. Face painting will also be available, at a small charge. There will even be appearances by Peppa Pig!

Several organisations will have stalls at the play day, including Bucks Fire and Rescue. The event will run from 11am until 4pm on Wednesday 3 August in Campbell Park. Entry is free for all. For more information please check the events page of the Town Council website for links to the Play Day Facebook and Twitter pages.



Family History Consultations

Interested in finding out more about your ancestors? Two sessions at Milton Keynes Central Library could help residents shine some light on their family past.



These consultation events are held by the family history department at the Library, with the assistance of genealogy expert John Hanson. The department has access to a huge range of historical resources and information, including records from across the country as well as detailed history for the Buckinghamshire area.

The sessions will take place on Thursday 25 August and Thursday 22 September, running from 4.15pm to 7.30pm. They are free, but must be booked by calling 01908 254160.

MK Arts Week



© Andy Lane, of Rebecca Kowalski, painted by Sophia Tyler Ghory and Alison Bessant

Residents will have the chance to sample all manner of works from a wide range of local artists during MK Arts Week.

Running from 24 September to 2 October, the week will feature the opening to the public of several studios and art facilities around the city. This includes Arts Central, located in CMK's Norfolk House, a hub of artistic activity in the heart of the city centre that is not normally open to public viewing.

The event was devised by a group of local art organisations including Arts Gateway MK and the MK Community Foundation.

The project's organisers hope that MK Arts Week will expand over the coming years to form a major part of Milton Keynes' bid for European Capital of Culture in 2023.

More information will be available nearer the time, including a guidebook that is planned to be available from the Central Library.

www.cmktowncouncil.gov.uk



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