

## Tackling Campbell Park(ing) problems



With the Campbell Park events season coming to a close, the Town Council is pleased to report that collective efforts to minimise parking impacts on local residents appear to have been effective.

Over the past few years, residents have raised concerns about inappropriate and often dangerous parking in Campbell Park on busy event days. Drivers have been known to park on verges, clearways, and even obstruct access to residents' homes. The Town Council has been working closely with affected residents and voicing their concerns to key partners such as the City Council and The Parks Trust to ensure that sufficient action is taken.

This year, event organisers increased their efforts to direct drivers to more suitable parking areas, such as the John Lewis car park, and improved the level of signage around the park. The City

Council designated surrounding roads as 'urban clearways' to restrict parking, and traffic enforcement officers regularly patrolled the area issuing fines. In collaboration with The Parks Trust, the Town Council purchased signage to direct drivers away from using grass verges and residential areas.

Campbell Park resident Larry shared his experience: "Living next to Campbell Park is a great joy, but unfortunately, we often suffer from the impacts of uncontrolled parking. As residents, we've been trying to address the issue and saw little improvement until the Town Council got involved."

He added: "Town Councillor Pete Lightfoot has been a real help. We now see no-parking cones and regular patrols in the area. Communication from event organisers with residents also seems to be improving, and we hope this continues as we head into 2025."

## Design heritage trail 'Look Again' celebrates successful pilot

Look Again, an arts initiative that encourages people to stop and explore the distinctive cityscape of CMK, has successfully completed its pilot phase.

The project, commissioned by the City Council, saw the launch of a test route from Fred Roche Gardens along Silbury Boulevard to Lloyds Court this summer. The design heritage trail led people to 24 unique pieces of local artwork across the city centre. Each point of interest had an explanatory panel and QR code which directed them to the project's website [www.lookagainmk.city](http://www.lookagainmk.city), complete with an interactive map.

Free tours were held throughout the summer too, where people could learn more about CMK's modernist-built architectural heritage, green spaces and public art.

The 24 pieces in the first phase are only a small selection of the 65 public art pieces in the CMK parish area, all of which it is hoped to feature in the further phases of the project.

Feedback on the Look Again pilot was incredibly positive, and it looks like there are plans to extend the pilot further. A proof of concept mapping board was erected at Lloyds Court in August, which is the first of eight across the city to showcase CMK's design heritage. The City Council will also be supporting The

Parks Trust and Living Archive with their Campbell Park 40th birthday trail, with there being plans to extend Look Again into the park later in the project.

Town Council Chair, David Stabler, said: "Look Again has given residents and visitors a unique opportunity to appreciate CMK's distinctive architecture and public art. The positive feedback from the pilot shows there's real interest in our city's design heritage, and we're looking forward to seeing the trail develop in the future."





## THE PLANNING SPOTLIGHT



### CMK Town Council raises concerns with long-term plans for CMK

In our summer newsletter, we told you about the draft Milton Keynes City Plan, which outlines Milton Keynes' vision for growth up to 2050. The consultation period has now ended and responses are being reviewed by the City Council, ahead of the Plan being considered by a Planning Inspector next year to enable it to become an official planning document.

The Town Council has been actively involved in responding to the proposals, particularly those affecting CMK. These changes could have a major impact on the character and functionality of the area. To ensure we put forward a strong,

evidence-based response, we worked with a planning consultancy to thoroughly review the Plan, producing a detailed 38-page consultation submission document that you can find in full on our website.

#### Our main concerns with the draft MK City Plan were:

- **Housing targets:** The proposed 11,000 new homes for CMK by 2050 is, in our view, too high and could drastically change the character of the area.
- **Housing density:** The density proposed is much higher than what currently exists,

which raises concerns about overcrowding and local infrastructure.

- **High-rise buildings:** The possibility of having buildings up to 31 storeys is a major concern.
- **Retail space:** We have questioned the projected need for more retail space, considering current trends and future needs.
- **Parking reductions:** The Plan suggests reducing car parking, which lacks sufficient justification in an area which remains reliant on vehicles to get around.

The Town Council will continue to work with the City Council to ensure that growth plans for CMK balance development with preserving the area's unique character.

We will keep residents updated on the City Plan and its impact on CMK. To read our full response, visit our website at [cmktowncouncil.gov.uk](http://cmktowncouncil.gov.uk)

## Developers challenge City Council's rejections of high rise proposals

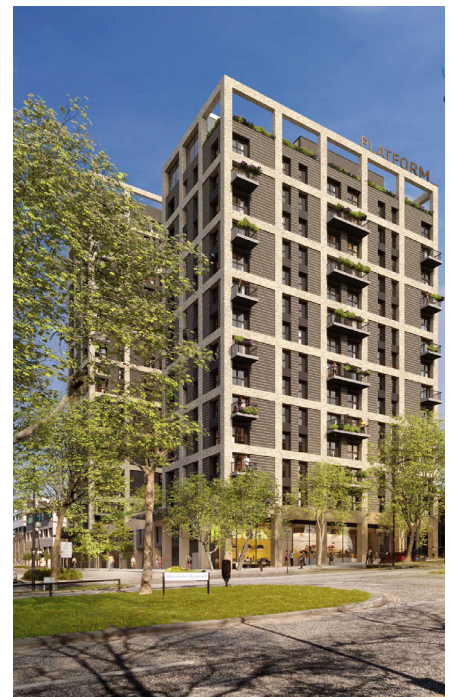
Several development proposals have been refused by the City Council in recent months, leading to planning appeals by developers. As previously reported, the appeal for the Bank House development was upheld, meaning that a 20-storey building will be built along Midsummer Boulevard. This will have a significant impact on the area, altering CMK's skyline, and inevitably set a precedent for future development.

There has also been a major update in the appeal against the City Council's decision to refuse the Jaipur redevelopment scheme. Developers are seeking to build a 33-storey apartment block on the site of the former restaurant, but the City Council rejected the scheme at a Planning Committee in December last year.

The developers' appeal hearing begins on 15th October at Margaret Powell House, lasting up to eight days. The proposed development has faced criticism for its lack of affordable housing, insufficient social and economic benefits, and no allocated parking. Town Council Chair of Planning Andrew Thomas will be speaking at the hearing in support of the City Council's decision to refuse the application, advocating for the protection of CMK's unique character.

The Town Council has also been informed that the planning application to redevelop The Point will also be subject to an appeal, with the hearing scheduled for March 2025.

The Town Council remains hopeful that the City Council's refusals of both the Jaipur and The Point applications will be upheld. We strongly believe that these developments aren't suitable for their proposed locations, and if approved, they would negatively impact the look and feel of CMK.



## More major redevelopment proposals brought forward

Two planning applications have been submitted for major redevelopments in CMK - both featuring apartment blocks reaching between nine and 12-storeys tall.

Developers have submitted plans to convert Westminster House, an office block adjacent to Saxon Court, into a build-to-rent development consisting of eight and nine-storey apartment blocks. It would accommodate 378 flats, and provide a limited number of parking spaces.

While the Town Council is supportive of certain aspects of the scheme, such as its height, we have issued a formal objection citing concerns surrounding insufficient affordable housing provision, poor parking, and inadequate details on how the units will be serviced.

Plans have also been brought forward for a more contentious development on the flank of Campbell Park. Milton Keynes Development Partnership (MKDP) and developers Urban Splash have plans to build a new 'community' along the northern flank of Campbell Park, with the first phase involving a parcel of land at the northern edge of the park, extending up to the canal.

Original plans for the development, called Campbell Park Northside, were withdrawn. These plans proposed building apartment blocks up to 18 storeys, but this was faced with fierce opposition. The new planning application seeks to build up to 12-storey apartment blocks housing approximately 400 flats. The Town Council has objected to



this scheme for several reasons:

- According to the draft MK City Plan 2050, the Campbell Park flanks are designated to be 'mainly residential' with a 'far greater mix of types of housing,' which this development fails to achieve.
- There is no clear rationale for permitting buildings taller than 8 storeys in this location.
- The design of the development does not create safe and accessible redways for cyclists and pedestrians, as it includes secluded areas lacking natural surveillance.
- No proposals for affordable housing have been included, which would prevent key workers from accessing properties within the parish.
- The Town Council seeks assurances regarding the public's right of access through the development.

Town Council Chair of Planning, Andrew Thomas, said: "We believe these proposals undermine the desirability of maintaining the prevailing unique character and setting of CMK and its city park contrary to the best interests of our residents."

## Tallest tower block in CMK

Plans to build 285 rental flats on the site of the old theatre multi-storey car park have been approved by the City Council. Three buildings, the tallest reaching 25 storeys, will form 'Campbell Park View' on Avebury

Boulevard. Developer Packaged Living says there will be ground floor parking along with leisure facilities on the first floor, which could include a cinema, restaurants and bars. Once built, it will be the tallest building in CMK.





# Could you be CMK's next town councillor?

Central Milton Keynes (CMK) Town Council currently has a vacancy for a town councillor, offering a unique opportunity to make a difference in the local area.



Becoming a town, or parish, councillor means contributing to decisions that shape the future of CMK. Whether you have just a few hours to spare or can commit more time, your involvement will add real value to the Town Council and the community. Town councillors bring their own experiences and expertise, and can volunteer to lead the development of projects that the Town Council delivers on behalf of its residents.

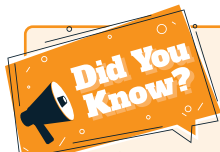
## What does the role involve?

The role of a town councillor, which is unpaid, is flexible, allowing you to participate at a level that suits your availability. You'll attend monthly meetings, open to the public, held on the first Thursday of each month at Centrecom community centre. These meetings are a great way to see the Town Council at work and get a sense of what's involved.

Town Councillors can also contribute between meetings by providing their views on communications from Milton Keynes City Council and other organisations. You'll get involved in local projects, lead initiatives, and make a tangible difference to residents. If you're interested in planning, you might be invited to join the planning committee, which reviews and formally comments on local planning applications.

If you're new to the role, don't worry. The Town Council's Clerk and the seven current town councillors will support you as you settle in as a 'co-opted' town councillor, helping you understand how we operate.

Those who are interested in finding out more can contact Paul Cranfield, the Town Council's Clerk, at [clerk@cmktowncouncil.gov.uk](mailto:clerk@cmktowncouncil.gov.uk). We look forward to hearing from you.



CMK is home to over 3,000 people and over 1,000 businesses & retail outlets.

CMK Town Council covers the area from the railway to the Grand Union Canal, between Portway to Childs Way.

With no facilities owned or managed by the Town Council, our main focus is on the planned expansion of CMK. We're particularly focussed on the proposals for thousands of new homes, local infrastructure and facilities, and access for pedestrians and vehicles.

# Electra launches seasonal cruise schedule



As the weather cools and the festive season approaches, Electra, the all-electric community boat, has released its schedule of autumn and Christmas cruises, offering a unique way to enjoy the Grand Union Canal.

In addition to its regular public and private charters, Electra will run Soup & Roll cruises during the week, serving homemade soup and freshly baked rolls while passengers take in the autumn scenery.

In November, the boat will be decorated for the festive season, with the return of the Mince Pie & Mulled Wine and Festive Fish & Bubbles cruises. It's a unique way to get into the festive spirit!

Discounted sailings are available for people with an MK9 postcode - you just have to enter the code 'MK9202410' when booking online.

You can book your trip aboard Electra, and see the full cruise schedule, by visiting [www.bmkwaterway.org](http://www.bmkwaterway.org).



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Scan here to visit CMK Town Council's website, where you can find out more information on who we are and what we do. You can also download the application form for our 2023-2024 small community grants scheme.



SCAN ME

[www.cmktowncouncil.gov.uk](http://www.cmktowncouncil.gov.uk)



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