

MILTON MATTERS

Issue No. 75

MILTON NEIGHBOURHOOD FORUM February 2023



Ann and Mandy from Milton pay tribute to Her Majesty - Page 4

NEXT OPEN FORUM Wed. 15 Feb. 7pm
At Christ Church, 239 Milton Road/Edgeware Road
Annual General Meeting
Energy Saving Display
Countryside Officer on Milton Common
Update St James Planning Application and Appeal

OPEN FORUM MINUTES

In place of a Public Forum Meeting, we held an open session in Milton Village Hall on 10 August 2022 to answer your questions on the Neighbourhood Plan.

Members of the Neighbourhood Planning Forum had prepared plans and maps of the areas affected together with explanations of the Policies included in the Plan in readiness for your votes in the Referendum on 18 August.

Chair Rod Bailey, Secretary Ian Clark, Patrick O'Hara, Martin Lock and Martin Silman spoke to residents to clarify any points prior to the vote. Local councillors were also on hand to answer questions together with MP Stephen Morgan. Key issues were the changes that having a Neighbourhood Plan would make if voted for in the coming Referendum.

We were delighted at the number of residents who took the time to attend and to find out more about the Plan which has taken 7 years to prepare and is unique covering an area of a city as complex as Portsmouth.

Despite having to be held in August, the turnout on the day was solid and a vote of 87% in favor of the Plan endorsed it so that the Neighbourhood Planning Forum now becomes a consultee on all local applications, entitled to comment on whether each adheres to its policies.

THANK YOU TO ALL RESIDENTS WHO TOOK THE TIME AND TROUBLE TO SUPPORT THE PLAN

This strengthens the role and responsibility of our Neighbourhood Forum. We shall make effective and considered representations on planning applications and appeals in our area, monitor the plan and how the local planning authority is considering our policies, and since our plan will last 15 years, it will be necessary to review and revise it in due course.

For these reasons and to ensure the Forum continues to play a valued role in Milton including evaluating applications for spending the increased level of Community Infrastructure Levy we now attract, we need a group of Milton residents who care about the area, accept the plan and are keen to work together to keep it a good place to live.

Our AGM will be held on 15 Feb. at the Open Forum. The current Officers will be retiring at the AGM so it is important that we strengthen the committee to continue with our work. If you would like to be nominated or to nominate someone else (who must live in Milton) to join the Committee, please write with full address, name and contact details, to Secretary, MiltonNForum@aol.com

Don't please think that our focus is just on planning matters. We enjoy running the Picnic on the Green and other community events like our Halloween in Milton Market, we publish this magazine prior to each Open Forum Meeting, operate a website, update our community notice boards and try to bring you topics which you want to hear more about. So don't be shy, come and join us. *Janice Burkinshaw Chair*

ST JAMES APPLICATION TO CONVERT HOSPITAL & BUILD NEW HOUSES



The application by PJ Livesey went to Appeal last Summer and will be heard by an Inspector in late April. The Neighbourhood Forum will be a party to the Appeal because the application is non-compliant with the Milton Neighbourhood Plan.

City Council Officers are opposing the application but only on two grounds which are likely to be remedied before the Appeal date. These are (a) the extent of the Milton Common Mitigation likely to be required to reduce harm to protected wildlife habitats (which the Council is unable to quantify without an updated Visitor Survey of the Common) and (b) an associated Viability Appraisal for "Affordable Housing".

Members at the 21st December Planning Committee added a third to accord with the Neighbourhood Plan's Environmental Policies on Open Space loss. The Council has asked the Chair of the Planning Committee to represent them at the Appeal.

The Neighbourhood Planning Forum has already made written representations to the Inspectorate on other grounds; damage to the setting of the Grade II Listed Hospital from the excessive quantum of Housing on the former Airing Courts; adverse highway impacts on congestion and air pollution; excessive parking for 389 cars (above the Neighbourhood Plan standards of 303 and the Portsmouth Plan of 350); and poor design.

The Council has not confirmed whether the Chair of the Planning Committee will be legally represented. The Inspector has advised the Neighbourhood Forum to obtain representation, which is clearly beyond our means. It seems only fair and reasonable that Members are legally represented:- they are elected to perform a civic duty and are not planning professionals. Not to allow them legal support would set an awful precedent.

In the meantime, the Portsmouth South MP Stephen Morgan is assisting the Neighbourhood Forum with Written Parliamentary Questions to the relevant Central Government Departments asking why the NHS Property Services appears to have disregarded Historic England Guidance on the disposal of public land with heritage assets. The Guidance clearly sets out how the return of surplus Listed Buildings can be put to good use but that price is not to be the overriding objective. The developer's rationale for the excessive intensification and damage to the Airing Courts is one of private profit.

It is incredibly disappointing that having taken seven years to produce a Neighbourhood Plan, Planning Officers are paying too little attention to it.

I will be attending the February Open Forum when I can answer any questions on St James or on our Neighbourhood Plan.

Rod Bailey, Chair Milton Neighbourhood Planning Forum

FAREWELL YOUR MAJESTY!

On hearing of the death of our Queen on September 8th, my friend of 45 years, Mandy and I knew we just had to go to London to pay tribute to her Lying in State. Straight away Mandy booked the train tickets and Travelodge in Wembley. On September 15th we caught the 8.16 am train to Victoria. We walked past Buckingham Palace to Green Park where we were stunned by the beautiful smell of the flowers laying there.

The visual impact of the tributes was incredible. Wreaths, sprays, crocheted garlands in the trees, images of the Queen knitted by devoted subjects, an immense 4ft high piece of etched glass with her image as a young queen, numerous Paddington bears and touching messages such as 'To sweet Lilibet, with Philip now' not to mention jars of marmalade, biscuits for the corgis and cards. We spent well



over an hour there and dragged ourselves away to take the tube to the hotel.

After something to eat and a brief rest we left at 6pm and caught the tube back into London. Whilst on the journey we met Julian from Bristol who became the first person we would spend the rest of the night with! We finally arrived at Chiswick Park at 9pm and collected our wristbands which indicated our time of arrival and point in the queue so that we could leave it for comfort breaks and keep our original position. A very well thought-out system.



cont..

FAREWELL YOUR MAJESTY!

In the queue the three of us soon made friends with an Irish family who now live in Bishop's Staunton who collected their daughter Eleanor from school to come and pay tribute to our Queen. The ages of our little group ranged from 10 to 80. Everyone near us was wonderful. Refreshment points stayed open just to serve the queue. It was easy to rejoin those you had made friends with. The Police who had been recruited from all over the country were friendly and helpful. Volunteers gave us thermal clothing. The atmosphere was wonderful. Her Majesty would have been so pleased.



The time in the queue passed swiftly as we watched our progress past the London Eye, St Pauls and the new *Covid Memorial* opposite the Houses of Parliament. Then at 4am we all halted on the next bridge where we had to wait for 1.5 hours whilst rehearsals took place for the funeral. It was extremely cold on the apex of the bridge and the worst point in the whole night but once we were moving again, it was no time before we entered the Great Hall.



Security there was thorough and friendly; checking our bags airport-style. We passed the catafalque where Her Majesty lay in her coffin draped with the Royal Standard. The room was hushed with reverence and we felt the impact of being a part of history at that moment. She had been our Queen for most of our lives and we were in her protective presence for the very last time.

Big Ben showed 5.55am as we left the Great Hall at Westminster and returned to our hotel to sleep before returning to Portsmouth and our families. It had been a very, a very moving experience and one of the best things we had ever done. We believe our families are very proud of us, especially my grandsons Lewis and Oscar. We are all so glad to be British.

Ann Partridge



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MILTON PARK – A BRIEF HISTORY

Milton Park celebrates its centenary as a public space in 2023. It was purchased by the City Council from the Estate of James Goldsmith after his death in 1911 and was opened as a public park in 1923 after undergoing work after the First World War. But to understand the park's history and its role in local society, we need to understand how Milton itself has developed. It can be seen that the Park is one of few tangible reminders of Portsmouth's rural past. This paper is not intended to be a complete history of Milton Park - there are extensive records available that are yet to be consulted. But hopefully it provides a broad outline of how the park developed and indicates sources that can be used as part of further research.

Milton's Early History Milton formed around the eastern track that ran down Portsea Island from Copnor to the beach close to where Lumps Fort now stands. 'Medieval Milton' is Local Area of Archaeological Importance 4. This covers the area of the medieval settlement of Milton, a manor with fishery rights by the 14th century. As a result of this importance, permission for development in the area often includes the condition of an archaeological watching brief. Prehistoric finds have been found locally. A hoard of four middle bronze age Palstaves was found near the Maternity Wing of St Marys Hospital, and Palaeolithic implements have been recovered from Milton Cemetery. A Neolithic flint axe has also been found in a local garden¹.

The name Milton is believed to derive from old English for middle tun, or Middle Farm. Milton is not featured in the Domesday Book of 1086, when the nearest settlements were Fratton and Copnor. The Victoria Country History records that Milton Manor was granted to Matthew, son of Herbert, by King John, and that the grant of Milton given by Peter, son of Matthew, to John Falconer was confirmed in 1388. It appears however that Falconer was not granted all of the lands, for in 1494 the lord of Warblington held, in addition to the rent due from John Falconer, certain rents from tenants-at-will and the profits of the woods, besides fishing and fowling.

A survey of the Manor of Eastney and Milton undertaken in 1632 gives us two barns, one of six bays and the other of three bays. It also had stables along with other outhouses, a garden and a courtyard. The Manor house also had two acres of marshy or wet land adjoining it. valuable evidence as to not only the ownership and tenancy of land in the area, but also the nature of the farming. Unfortunately it is not possible to positively identify where the manor house or farm stood in 1632 but the survey did record that the Manor House was a small farm house covered with slates. It had two barns, one of six bays and the other of three bays. It also had stables along with other outhouses, a garden and a courtyard. The Manor house also had two acres of marshy or wet land adjoining.

MILTON PARK – A BRIEF HISTORY *CONT*

Until 1813 a sizeable part of Milton was farmed as Common land. Milton had six field systems - East, West, South Town, Domer, Sendram and Crana. Milton Common itself was some way to the east adjoining Langstone Harbour. These were probably arable and were possibly rotated. The southern boundary of what is now Milton Park was formed by the northern boundary of South Town Field.

The manors of Milton and Eastney became the property of John White, the Mayor of Portsmouth, in 1722. In 1809 the manor of Milton consisted of 120 acres, and in 1812 when Milton and Eastney Commons were enclosed the manor gained 39 acres. Despite this, the financial security of the White family seems to have been precarious, and the property was repeatedly mortgaged, and portions of land were periodically sold. One of the earliest maps showing settlement at Milton is the Edwards Map of 1716, which is in the collection of the Bodleian Library. Focusing on the Milton area it shows a number of buildings to the east of the junction between Priory Crescent and Milton Road, and a number of buildings further south around what is now the junction with Locksway Road. Already the layout of road patterns can be seen, including Priory Crescent and Winter Road. The area that is now Milton Park is separated into a number of fields.

Goldsmiths Farm by L. Cleall (*Portsmouth Museums*)

Whilst the Nineteenth Century saw much change for the rest of Portsea Island due to the growth of the Dockyard as a result of the Napoleonic Wars, the threat of war with France and the expansion of the Royal Navy, Milton changed relatively little and overwhelmingly retained its rural nature. The area was increasingly dominated by



Farmer land-owners who consolidated ownership throughout the century. Milton was mainly arable, with many farmers growing rhubarb and vegetables, along with smaller market gardens. Fishing, smuggling and netting birds were also common. Local also partook of shooting, recovering spent shells for the Gunwharf. The common lands of Milton were enclosed under an Act of 1810, as well as the common field at Velder. Enclosure was the process by which landowners appropriated 'waste' or common land, to which people had previously had rights of access.

The first major development in the Milton area was the coming of the Portsmouth Canal. Constructed between 1818 and 1822, the canal was an attempt to connect Portsmouth with London.

MILTON PARK – A BRIEF HISTORY *CONT*

The canal basin was close to the junction between Arundel Street and Commercial Road. It ran along the line of the existing railway by Canal Walk, then along the route of what is now Goldsmith Avenue. At the junction with Milton Road it then followed the line of what is now Locksway Road. It joined Langstone Harbour at Milton Locks. The canal was not a success, and had closed by 1838. The canal was later filled in with rubbish and repurposed, either for the railway line or as the basis for roads. However it formed the southern boundary of what is now Milton Park.

Goldsmith Farm Interior

(Portsmouth Museum 1972/719)

Perhaps the most prominent family in Milton's history are the Goldsmiths. There is evidence for the Goldsmith family farming at Milton since 1755, and in 1808 they purchased what was called Purnells Farm - later renamed Middle Farm - at the centre of what is now Milton Park. The Goldsmith's acquisition of land in the area accelerated under the leadership of James Goldsmith in the mid



Nineteenth Century and his son of the same name who was born on 13 September 1836. In 1855 James Goldsmith senior purchased the Leggatt and Egerton farms. After his death in June 1858 his son carried on the expansion. In 1872 Upper Milton Farm and its 125 acres were purchased, while Lower Milton Farm and Milton House were purchased in 1885. In July 1891 the Portsmouth News reported that James Goldsmith had purchased land at auction. By 1908 Goldsmith who also owned Port Royal Cottage. As late as the 1890s Portsmouth was still very much a town of districts, with Old Portsmouth, Portsea, Landport and Southsea retaining their own character. Whilst development had filled in many of the areas in between the four towns with small terraced houses, there was also still evidence of Portsea Island's rural past. James Goldsmith's resistance to sell any of his farmland for building meant that Milton was perhaps the most rural area of the Island .

James Goldsmith has been described as a bachelor and an alcoholic, who resisted change while the village decayed around him. Another contemporary recollection recorded 'I saw Jimmy Goldsmith in his little horse and carriage driving into Milton Park... we could see nothing inside... he was a most unsociable man'. In December 1883 he was summoned to appear in court for unlawfully moving 120 sheep. A contemporary description paints Milton in the latter part of Goldsmith's ownership as consisting of 'old weather-beaten cottages, and, half hidden by the trees of overgrown gardens, dilapidated plastered and thatched farm buildings' . 9

MILTON PARK – A BRIEF HISTORY *CONT*

James Goldsmith junior died on 23 February 1911 and was buried at St James Church on 27 February. His property was valued at over £146,000, the equivalent of £12m in 2021. His importance to the history of the area is shown by the manner in which Goldsmith Avenue was named after him in 1896, 15 years before his death.

Although James Goldsmith died in early 1911, executing his will and selling his assets took some time. The slow progress was reported in the local press. The Corporation of Portsmouth purchased Middle Farm on 28 May 1912. It opened to the public as **Milton Park on 11 July 1923**, its opening almost certainly delayed by the First World War. Milton Bowls Club was formed shortly afterwards in 1923. One of the original Middle Farm buildings remains; the thatched barn, which has been extended and is now the home of the Portsmouth Players amateur dramatic society.



This article is part of a comprehensive history of the Park and Milton by James Daly, Culture Leisure and Regulatory Services, Portsmouth City Council. Oct. 2022. The full paper with some beautiful illustrations and historic maps of the area can be seen on the Milton Neighbourhood Planning Forum website <http://miltonplan.org.uk> together with acknowledgements to all the sources and contributors.

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[Neighbourhood Planning Forum website http://miltonplan.org.uk](http://miltonplan.org.uk)

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