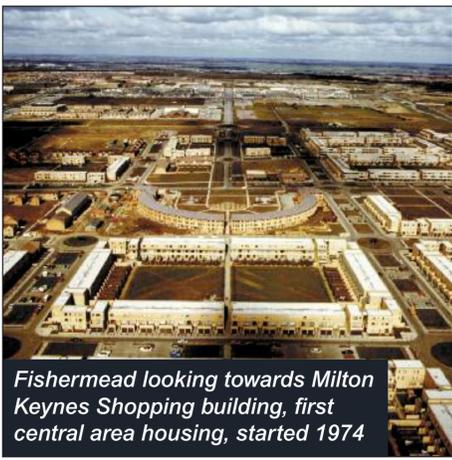


Building the City



Fishermead looking towards Milton Keynes Shopping building, first central area housing, started 1974



MKDC architects, planners and quantity surveyors, 1972



Early construction of Marlborough Street, 1975

Recording the past for the future

Many of the images used in this exhibition come from some wonderful collections of photographs held by Living Archive Milton Keynes and from Milton Keynes Development Corporation's quarterly newsletters. They show how important it is to photograph the present, to show future generations what it was like.

If the area where you live hasn't been featured don't worry – we plan to do further exhibitions in the future.

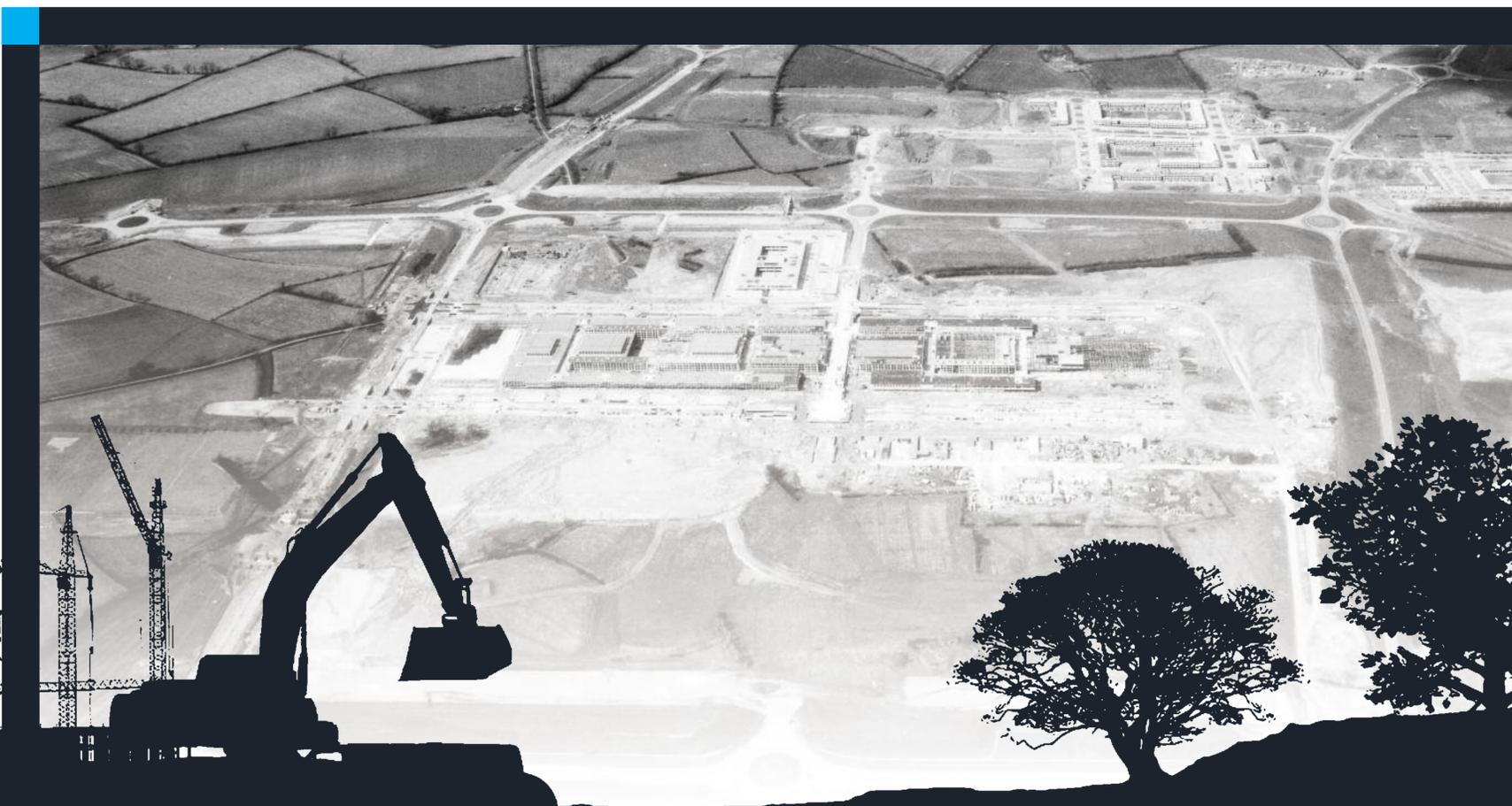
As Milton Keynes approaches its 50th birthday in 2017, it is important to record the history and heritage of the communities in the 'new' areas as well as what was here before 1967.

If you have any images, film or documents about Milton Keynes that you'd be prepared to share with us, please contact admin@livingarchive.org.uk or visit our website www.livingarchive.org.uk

If you would be interested in starting a local history group in one of the 'new estates' please contact Milton Keynes Heritage Association – www.mkheritage.co.uk for help and advice.



MILTON KEYNES HERITAGE ASSOCIATION



Beanhill



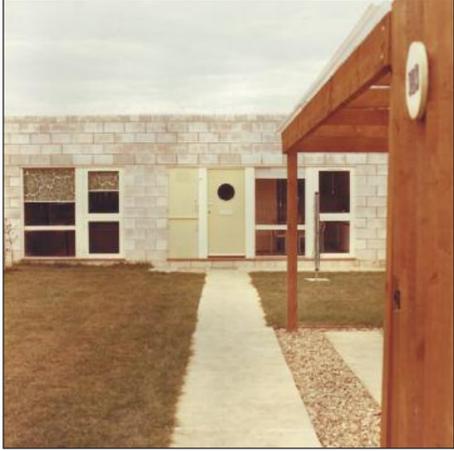
The building of Beanhill started in 1973 during a strike by brick makers. Hence, the phase one development was constructed with timber frames covered with corrugated iron cladding. Many of the houses are bungalows. After construction every new home was given a tree voucher, compliments of Milton Keynes Development Corporation.

In keeping with 1970s Milton Keynes culture, there were various arts projects within the Beanhill community. The underpass between Beanhill and Coffee Hall was painted with a Wizard of Oz theme. A sculpture of the Tin Man was created by a community project organised by Liz Leyh, resident artist for Milton Keynes Development Corporation and creator of the concrete cows. Other artists, Lesley Bonner and Michael Grabowski, were involved in the completion of the project. In 1979 artist Lesley Bonner, Beanhill residents and volunteers created concrete toadstools.

...every new home was given a tree voucher, compliments of Milton Keynes Development Corporation.



Building the City



Coffee Hall

Coffee Hall was designed by a young architect, Richard MacCormac, who later went on to be internationally famous. Building started in 1973 and comprised of 850 dwellings, all of them initially for rent.

Like neighbouring estates at Netherfield and Beanhill, it followed the fashion of having flat roofs, which subsequently had to be changed to pitched roofs after the originals gave problems. Like Netherfield and Beanhill, because of costs and shortages of bricks and bricklayers, less conventional building materials were used – in this case concrete blocks.

As Milton Keynes was to be the 'city of the car', each dwelling had a garage or carport in a long front garden.

The roads on Coffee Hall are all named after old London coffee houses – hence the name Coffee Hall.

“

It was very bleak. There was absolutely nothing. It was just a building site. The first road, Daniels Welch, had half a row of bungalows and there was nothing else. No trees, no school, no nothing. You were given a voucher to buy a tree.”

Sue Clarke (an early resident)



Eaglestone

Eaglestone, one kilometre south of the new city centre and between the V7 Saxon Street and V8 Marlborough Street, was designed by architect Ralph Erskine's Swedish office. Construction started in January 1973. Its design is in complete contrast to nearby Netherfield's formal, regimented, spaced out design with flat roofs and aluminium cladding. Eaglestone by contrast is informal, higgledy-piggledy, built in brick with pitched roofs. It is almost like a traditional hill village and combined 238 rental properties and 557 houses for sale. Its more traditional brick and tile houses made it a popular estate in comparison with surrounding estates built in more unconventional materials.

The housing estate forms a part of the Eaglestone grid square, in the south. The long awaited General Hospital finally opened in 1984.



The long awaited
General Hospital
finally opened
in 1984.



Building the City



Fishermead

The *Milton Keynes Gazette* of 14th November 1975 announced that the contract for the construction of the first homes on the Fishermead grid square had been won by Crudens Ltd.

The first of the estates to be built around the city centre, Fishermead was developed at a much higher density (over 200 people per hectare) than other areas so far, with mainly rental homes initially.

Three storey family homes were built in terraces along the streets with smaller dwellings in corner blocks. Space was reserved at each corner to provide shops and other community facilities.

This plan meant that semi-private spaces, directly accessible from the gardens of the surrounding houses, could provide protected, safe areas for children to play, seating areas and typical MK landscaping.

Fishermead is named after a field called Fisher's Mead. The fishing theme is continued and all of the streets are named after fishing ports and villages in Cornwall.



Netherfield



By the summer of 1973, the Netherfield grid square was taking shape. It is a large estate of 1068 dwellings designed in long terraces. The dwellings range from one to four storeys – using the topology of the site – the roofline remains constant. Some commented that in their design, the architects were less concerned with the needs of people than with preserving their constant roofline!

Netherfield was built as public housing. It was built to the constraints of the Parker-Morris standards of basic house size and facilities on the one hand and the Cost Yardstick – the money allocated per dwelling on the other hand. The houses were built at a time of shortages of bricks and bricklayers and an alternative method of construction – timber frames and aluminium cladding – was used to produce the houses within budget. These materials later caused many problems from leaking roofs to condensation and mould growth.

In spite of their unconventional design and appearance, the Netherfield estate initially proved popular with new residents moving from poor accommodation in inner London. A new house of their own, the new school, the local shops and the large green spaces where children could safely play were much appreciated.



There's nothing to do!

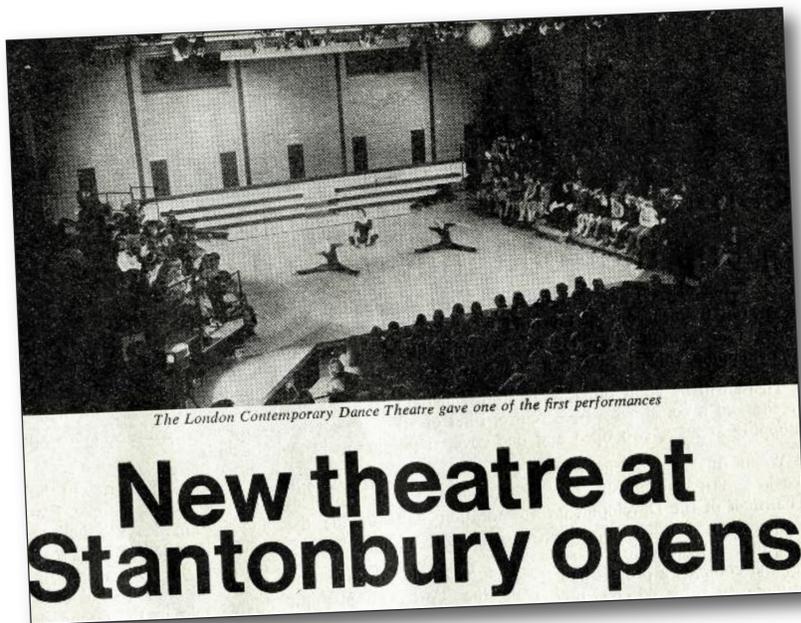


In 1967, there were three open air swimming pools in the area – at Bletchley, Wolverton and Newport Pagnell.

In 1971, Bletchley Council decided to build a leisure complex including a sports hall and small theatre which would replace the old swimming pool with one that could be used year round. Although not fully completed until Spring 1975, the iconic complex with its pyramid building housing the pool was opened on 10th February 1973 by Dr Roger Bannister. Until the 1990s, a snake-like walkway went from the multi-storey car park to the centre reception. In 2009, a new Bletchley Leisure Centre opened, replacing the original centre next door.

Meanwhile in the north, another leisure centre, including a pool, and theatre had been built at Stantonbury Campus in the early 1970s.

Between them the two theatres hosted a variety of cultural events, including ballet and concerts – they were the places to go!



New theatre at Stantonbury opens

WHAT'S ON IN MILTON KEYNES

Friday, 21 January
The Royal Philharmonic Orchestra at Bletchley Leisure Centre. Conductor – Vernon Handley; Soloist – John Ogdon. Tickets: £2.00, £1.75, £1.50, £1.25. 8.00 p.m. Enquiries: Milton Keynes 562144.

Friday 28 January
The National Youth Jazz Orchestra at Stantonbury Theatre. 2.00 pm and 7.30 pm. Enquiries: Milton Keynes 562144.

Thursday 3 February – Saturday 5 February
The Royal Ballet's "Ballet for All" at Stantonbury Theatre. 7.30 pm. Tickets: £1.50, £1.25. Matinee Saturday 2.30 pm. Tickets: £1.25, £1. Enquiries: Milton Keynes 562144.

Wednesday 23 February
O.A.P. Talent Contest at Wilton Hall, Bletchley, 7.30 pm. Enquiries: Milton Keynes 76311.

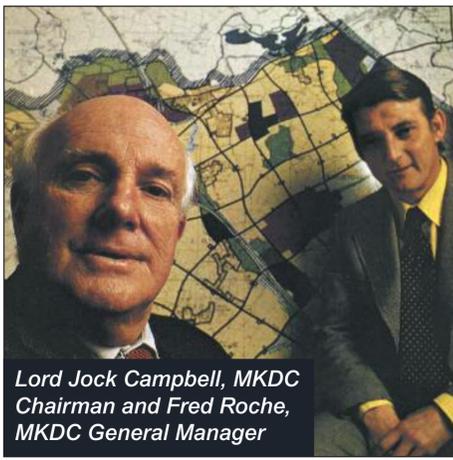
Saturday 5 March
The Spinners at Bletchley Leisure Centre. Tickets: £2.00, £1.75, £1.50, £1.25. Enquiries: Milton Keynes 562144.

Friday 11 March
B.B.C. Concert Orchestra at Bletchley Leisure Centre, 7.30 pm for 7.45 pm. Tickets: £1.75, £1.50, £1.25. Enquiries: Milton Keynes 562144.

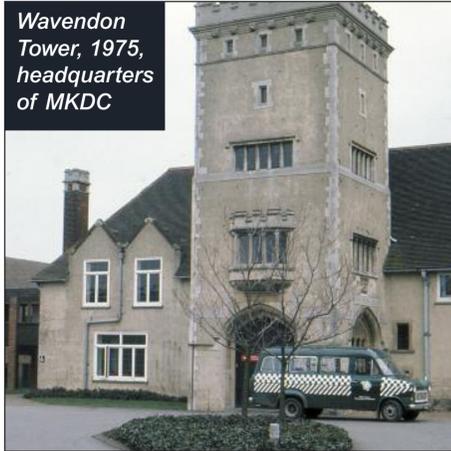
Saturday 26 March
Verdi's Requiem. Milton Keynes Chorale, Milton Keynes Chamber Orchestra at Stantonbury Leisure Centre. Enquiries: Milton Keynes 562144.



Building the City



Lord Jock Campbell, MKDC Chairman and Fred Roche, MKDC General Manager



Wavendon Tower, 1975, headquarters of MKDC

At its peak in the 1980s, MKDC employed 1700 people.

The MKDC 1967-1992

The creation of the new city of Milton Keynes, designated by a Government Order of 23rd January 1967, was overseen by Milton Keynes Development Corporation (MKDC) which was formally established on 13th March 1967. Board Members included prominent local and national representatives of business, the professions and academia as well as from the local and county councils. Within 25 years, MKDC attracted over 80,000 jobs, oversaw the construction of 44,000 houses and planted 14 million trees and shrubs.

At its peak in the 1980s, MKDC employed 1700 people. Its starting point and guiding principles were incorporated in the Master Plan for Milton Keynes, commissioned from Richard Llewellyn-Davies by Lord 'Jock' Campbell, MKDC's first Chairman, and published in March 1970. By March 1992, when MKDC was wound up under its second Chairman, Lord Chilver, the population of the Borough had increased more than three-fold to 183,000. The city provided 83 new schools, 10 new health centres, over 100km of new city roads and nearly 230km of unique cycle Redways.

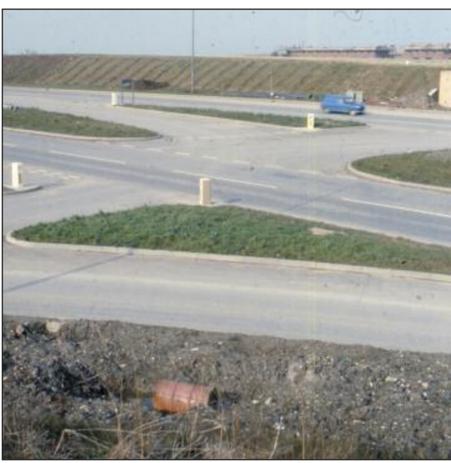


The roads that made it happen

In the last days of December 1974, the important spine road Marlborough Street (V8) opened. The first of our grid roads to be completed, it linked the shops in Bletchley with the new housing areas. From Tinkers Bridge in the south to Stantonbury in the north, the V8 passed through the construction site that would become the heart of our city, the City Centre. It was an important achievement as it helped make people feel they belonged to one place, rather than a collection of towns, villages and new estates.

By Spring 1975, the Milton Keynes Development Corporation Quarterly Review reported that 22 miles of new road had been built, including Childs Way (H6) linking Marlborough Street with the M1 at Junction 14. Work was also underway on sections of the H3, V5, V6, H8, H7 and V7 with the expectation that by the time the city was complete some 200 miles of grid roads would have been built.

...by the time the city was complete some 200 miles of grid roads would have been built.



Campaign for a hospital, mid-'70s



MK Hospital, 1984



People needed more than housing...

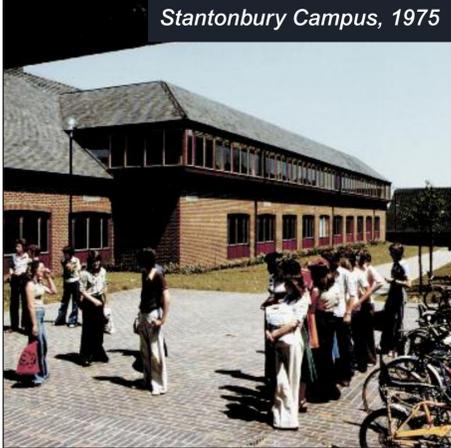
They needed shops, pubs, schools and more if they were to enjoy living here.

Stantonbury Campus opened in 1974 and was the first secondary school in the country not to have a uniform. It introduced a policy where students called staff by their first names.

By the Spring of 1975, a big new Sainsbury's had opened in Bletchley. By Autumn 1977, the Pilgrim's Bottle at Great Linford, one of a number of new pubs on new estates, was opening its doors. The same year brought the opening of a new Fire Station at Broughton.



Sainsbury's supermarket at the Brunel Centre, Bletchley



Stantonbury Campus, 1975



Stantonbury campus: pleasant, polite, articulate

People in Milton Keynes also wanted a Hospital and a campaign 'Milton Keynes is Dying for a Hospital' was mounted in the mid 1970s. This led to the construction of a four-ward community hospital that opened in 1979, followed by the construction of the main hospital which opened in 1984. A Roman Catholic Church opened in Coffee Hall in 1976. Designed by architects Peter and Sue Blake, it is reminiscent of Le Corbusier's famous Villa Savoye.

