

## School link boosts the culinary art

GAIL CHANDLER

Paris House, Woburn Park  
Woburn

I WAS delighted to read in the March editions the article on chef Grant Hawthorne, from The Plough at Wavendon, who has joined the Chefs Adopt A School programme.

My husband Peter Chandler, chef at Paris House restaurant in Woburn, is a senior long-standing member of the Academie Culinaire de France for 22 years and was elected to the chair of Alexandre Dumas some six years ago. Some 12 years ago, he adopted High Ash School in Great Brickhill.

Three or four times a year he would invite 12 children with their teachers on three consecutive days and spend the morning with them in the kitchen explaining the preparation of food, different cuts of meat and in the summer months take them into our herb garden and introduce them to herbs and home-grown produce.

They would then adjourn to the dining room to learn the etiquette of dining and be given a variety of dishes to taste.

### Worthy

Peter also visited the school on one occasion and gave a cookery demonstration of our house speciality 'The Hot Raspberry Souffle' which he did in a 'Can't Cook, Won't Cook' style with the children. They all loved it.

Unfortunately, over the last three years Peter has been suffering with cancer and has been out of action due to many hospital visits and extensive treatment. He has had to cancel visits planned from High Ash School so he was delighted to see that another local chef has finally been taken on board to support this worthy cause.

I hope Grant Hawthorne finds this as rewarding as Peter did as all the children would send him pictures and thank-you letters afterwards, which were most interesting and sometimes amusing.

Some of them who are now grown up have even returned with their girlfriend/boyfriend and recall when they visited the kitchens of Paris House in their schooldays and the experience they gained from it.

# 'City Streets' will hamper traffic flow

JOHN NAPLETON c.Eng F.I.C.E  
via e-mail

KEVIN Whiteside, head of transport at Milton Keynes Council, is right to try to explain why Milton Keynes will need more traffic lights in the future to maintain the city's traffic flows, but his article tells only part of the story.

The grid road corridors in the Milton Keynes Master Plan were unique in providing flexibility for all forms of transport (not just motor cars). The redway system of cycle and pedestrian routes added to the original concept and provided both safety and accessibility.

The spacing of the corridors was fixed at one-kilometre intervals to support fast, efficient public transport with no resident more than 500 metres from a bus stop. This opportunity has been wasted in recent years with many bus routes now

moving slowly through residential areas.

Originally the intersections of the grid road corridors were to be controlled by traffic lights but, with serious concerns about high speeds and low traffic flows in the early years resulting in high accident rates, roundabouts were provided to which traffic lights could be added when necessary. There is no evidence that this has been considered at all.

The grid could be expanded as envisaged into new development areas, thereby maintaining the integrity of the grid which has now been fatally damaged.

Traffic lights are best used to deal with the unbalanced junction flows that occur at peak hours. The rest of the time they are environmentally expensive, time-consuming and will increase journey times considerably.

Most grid roads had the possibility of dualling built in to deal with higher traf-

fic flows. There are now places in the city where the corridors are actually being built upon.

The 'City Street' road system to be introduced in the East and West flanks will do nothing to aid traffic flows and will put additional pressure on the existing grid. This is a flawed concept introduced by a few planners and public transport enthusiasts who wished to see Milton Keynes 'normalised'.

### Reverse

This decision was made without consultation with those who had planned and built the city and only recently has the general population become aware of the abandonment of the grid road concept. The result will be more congestion, a higher accident rate and a two-tier city. Sadly, it seems it may already be too late

to reverse the changes that have been set in motion.

Perhaps the underlying factor in all of this is cost. The roundabout and underpass/overbridge system is expensive to build and the new style of junction will produce considerable cost savings.

All residents of Milton Keynes will live to regret the day they allowed the basic principles of the Master Plan to be undermined by current transport dogma and the "we know best" arrogance of the council.

◆ Mr Napleton joined Milton Keynes Development Corporation in 1974 as chief assistant engineer (highways and traffic) became a director in 1983 and was director of infrastructure between 1988 and 1992 when he was appointed director, Milton Keynes for the Commission for New Towns. He retired in 1998.

## Conference centre hosts events on a national and international scale

NIGEL HOLLIS  
Managing Director,  
Wyboston Lakes Ltd  
via e-mail

I WOULD like to make a few considered points in relation to the Business to Business article headlined 'Tourism holds key to improved economy'.

The article refers to many of the local hotels and venues and states that there is no large conference centre in the Bedfordshire/Cambridgeshire area.

On behalf of my team at Wyboston Lakes, I would like to clarify a few points:

- ◆ Wyboston Lakes is the largest

single site, privately owned, conference and training centre in Northern Europe, attracting more than 235,000 international, national and regional customers a year;

- ◆ Customer revenues are split into approximately 85 per cent business tourism and 15pc leisure tourism;

◆ Our conference and training facilities are regularly used by leading brand names, global organisations and the public sector. Our largest conference room can seat up to 270 delegates;

- ◆ We are ranked in the top three by Hospitality Assured, a national customer service accreditation body;

- ◆ We have 406 en-suite bedrooms offering three-star and four-star hotel standard accommodation in three centres on site;

- ◆ Our leisure offering includes a 18-hole golf course, a watersports centre and health and leisure club with swimming pool;

Needless to say, many of your readers may have seen or driven past our 350-acre site. I would invite those who have not visited us, to do so.

I would be happy to welcome them to Wyboston Lakes personally and to demonstrate our part in the local community as well as in the bigger global conference and training picture.

## A breath of fresh air

TIFFANY IRONS

Environmental project worker, Amazing Waste  
via e-mail

I WOULD like to commend the four-page feature on corporate social responsibility in last month's edition of Business MK and Business to Business. It is a breath of fresh air to read how some of the region's largest organisations give back to their local community.

I work for Milton Keynes Christian Foundation at Amazing Waste, which is part of their social enterprise. We are committed to recycling in Milton Keynes and engaging young people aged 16-19 who are struggling to access training or employment. We run an office furniture re-use programme, office recycling collections and bio-diesel supply in which all our trainees are actively involved in.

Amazing Waste has been running as a small social enterprise for 14 months now. We are looking to expand and develop so we are not only diverting more recyclable waste from reaching landfill but we also are engaging more trainees and giving them a chance of work experience within a professional environment and helping them to acquire vocational knowledge and skills.

proposed to run a 'Pound for a Baby Week' beginning on June 9, when we hope that schools and businesses across the city will once again offer their support for this worthy cause.

Many workplaces across Milton Keynes became involved last time and organisations like Barclays and Abbey National ran fundraising events as well as many smaller companies based locally. All it needs is people in each workplace to take responsibility for organising an event or simply making a collection.

I hope by giving plenty of notice that the local business community will have time to consider possible fundraisers and feel able to offer their help and support. It might also be a time when you could raise the public profile of your company.

So please go for it.

## HAVE YOUR SAY

Write to the Editor via e-mail to [news@businessmk.co.uk](mailto:news@businessmk.co.uk)

PHILIP SCULL  
Headteacher,  
Giles Brook Primary School, Tattenhoe  
via e-mail

AS A headteacher in Tattenhoe, I am only too aware of the huge numbers of requests for help from charities that we all receive these days. However I think this one really is special in every sense.

I would like to bring to your attention an appeal that I hope your business will feel able to support. It is for the special care baby unit at Milton Keynes Hospital which has touched the lives of so many people. For many it has literally meant the difference between life and death for their babies.

Five years ago businesses and schools in Milton Keynes helped to raise funds for a 'Pound for a Baby' appeal across

the city for the special care baby unit (now renamed the neonatal unit) at Milton Keynes Hospital NHS Foundation Trust. Together we raised more than £28,000 to buy new incubators and equipment for the unit.

The unit is very stretched and needs to expand: last year alone they looked after more than 350 premature babies and Milton Keynes is still growing rapidly.

The hospital has launched its 'Little Lives Appeal' which aims to raise £250,000 to redesign and refurbish the

unit, to support future equipment needs and enable the trust to add further cots. The hospital currently has 18 cots to deliver intensive and special care and plans to add a further four high-dependency cots. A complete refurbishment is needed to enable the hospital to increase capacity and acquire upgraded equipment to ensure that babies get the best possible care.

As the person who instigated the last appeal, I have been in contact with unit manager Glenda Deacon and we have