

# MILTON KEYNES

City Status Activity Pack





WELCOME!!

A book of activities  
to celebrate  
the city of...  
**MILTON  
KEYNES!**

In 2022, Her Late Majesty Queen Elizabeth II awarded Milton Keynes the great honour of becoming a city as part of the Platinum Jubilee Celebrations.

Milton Keynes City Council and local communities were delighted by the news, and on 23rd February 2023, The King attended a reception to mark Milton Keynes' new status as a city.

It was a wonderful few months, but after all the excitement, we began to wonder what else we could do to mark this pivotal moment in the history of Milton Keynes.

We decided to turn to the children and young people of the city and invite them to consider - from many different perspectives - what this new status might mean to them. And how the future of the city could be imagined and shaped.

The activities in this book relate to some of the themes that structured and inspired our City Status bid:

Nature and the Environment  
People and Communities  
Heritage and Culture  
and... the Future...

The activities are to be explored individually or in groups; at home, with friends, or at school. Some might take minutes, others days or weeks to plan.

In crafting your response, there really are no rules; no rights or no wrongs - how you explore them is up to you - and we hope that everyone will find something of interest.

We'd love to see what you do!! Everything shared with us via [culture@milton-keynes.gov.uk](mailto:culture@milton-keynes.gov.uk) will be archived for future generations to enjoy.

Thanks for your time and ... *over to you!*





# MILTON KEYNES

city of...



notes



# Flora and Fungi of Milton Keynes



DRAW-IMAGINE-DESCRIBE

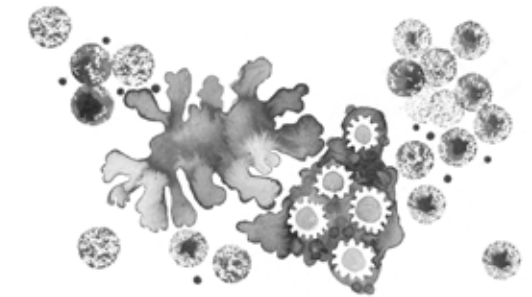
How many plants do you see in a day?

From the **biggest** trees

To the tiniest mosses and lichen



Slow down...  
...look closely



Take time to notice a few of them

In pots,  
in planters



In the cracks  
between  
paving stones

The top of a bus shelter  
Or the side of an old building

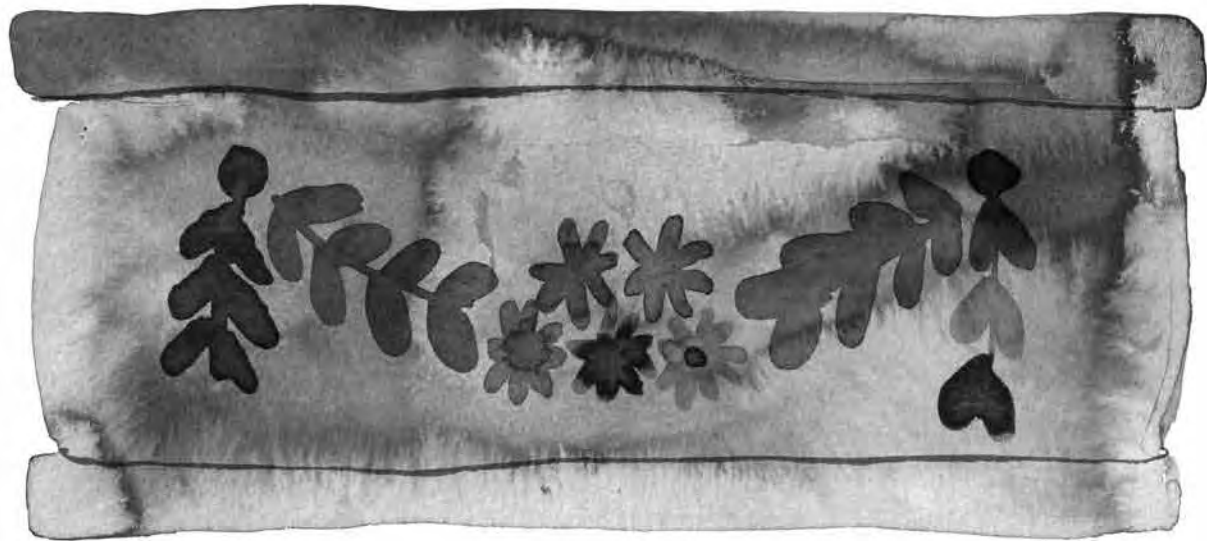


Annuals  
Perennials  
Biennials =

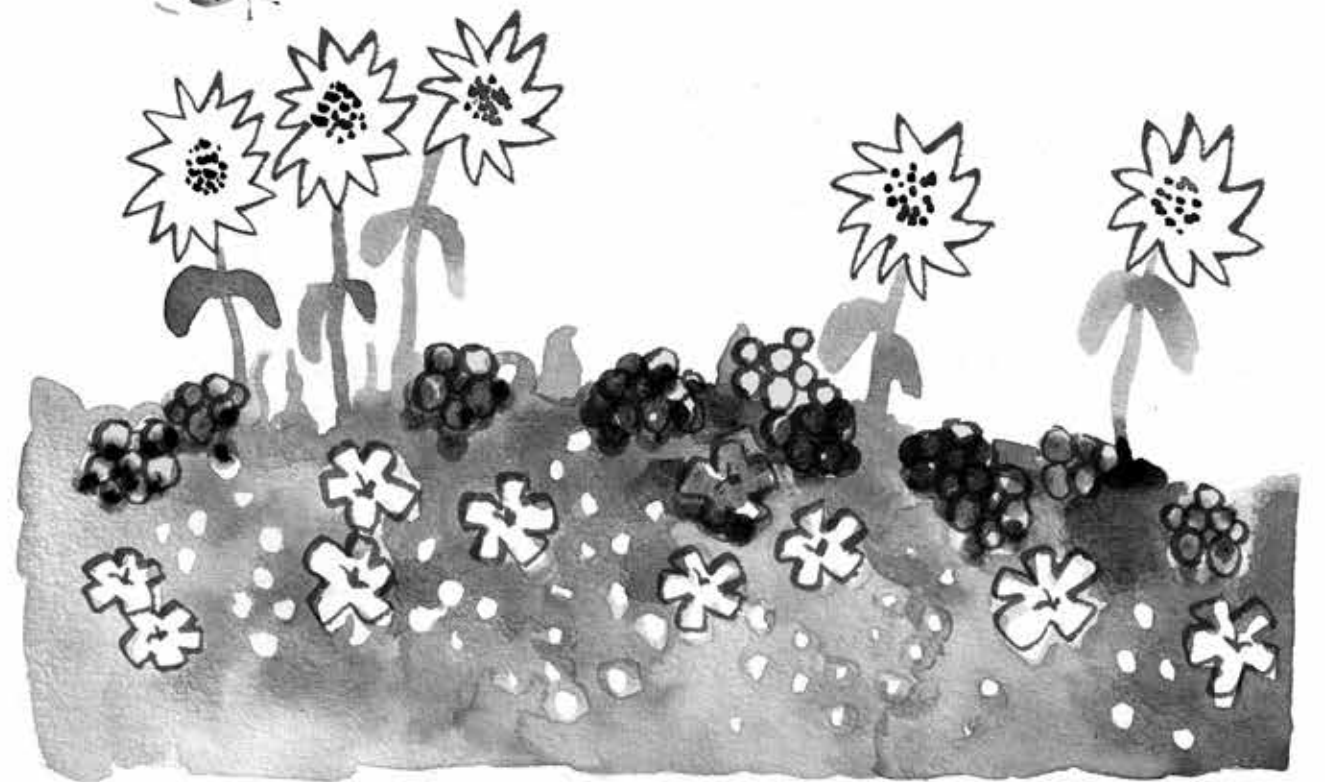
do you know the difference?

Ask your teacher to explain!





flutter



# Nature Diary



**Specimen 1**

Date:                      Location:

**Specimen 2**

Date:                      Location:

**Specimen 3**

Date:                      Location:

**Specimen 4**

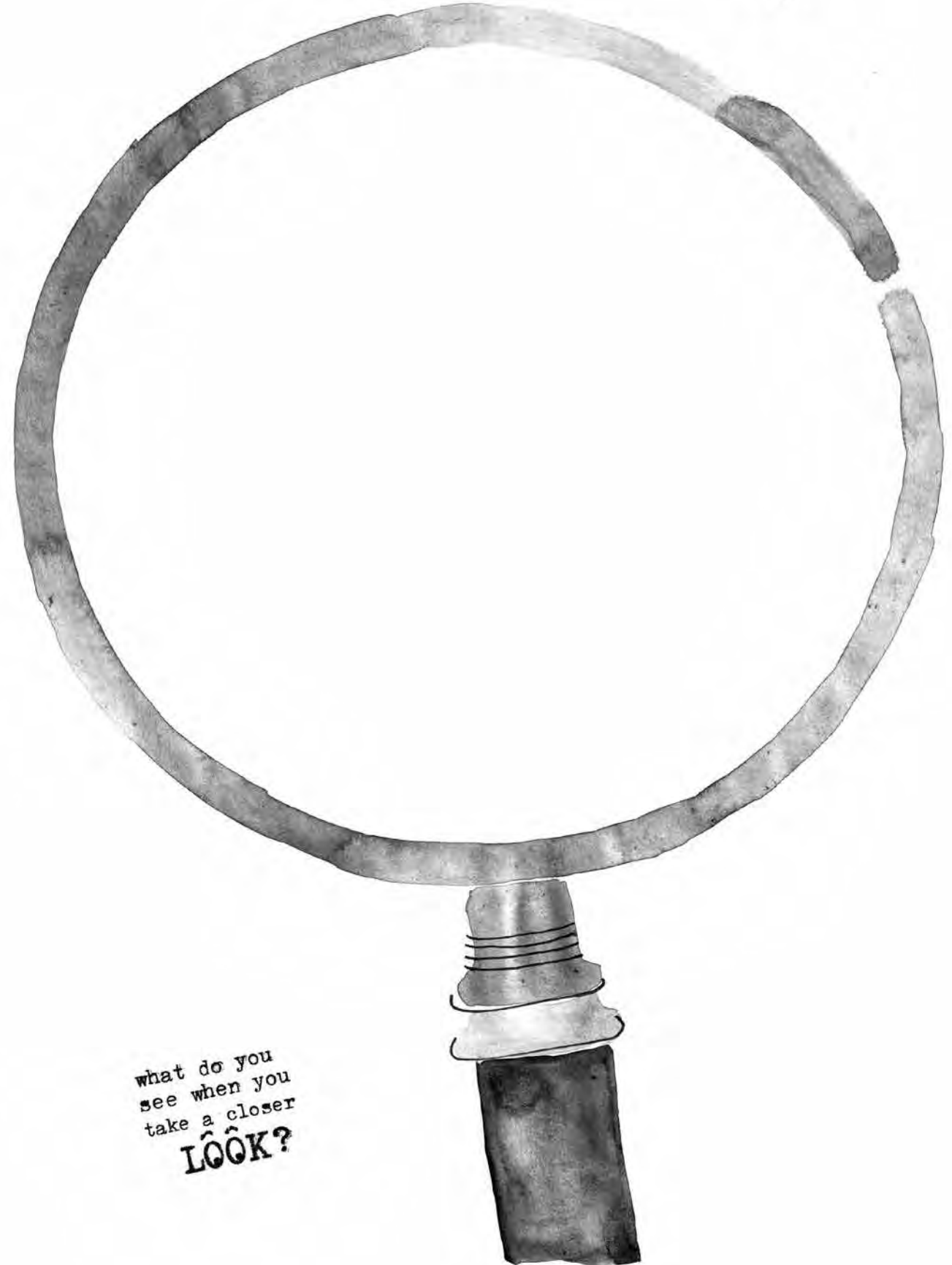
Date:                      Location:

**Specimen 5**

Date:                      Location:

**Specimen 6**

Date:                      Location:



what do you  
see when you  
take a closer  
**LÔÔK?**



# Wildlife and Pets



## DRAW-IMAGINE-DESCRIBE

Celebrating the animals, birds, butterflies,  
insects, beasts and bees of Milton Keynes.



What do they eat?

Where do they sleep?

How do they communicate?



What NOISES do they make?

Do they like being tickled?



Are they real or imagined?

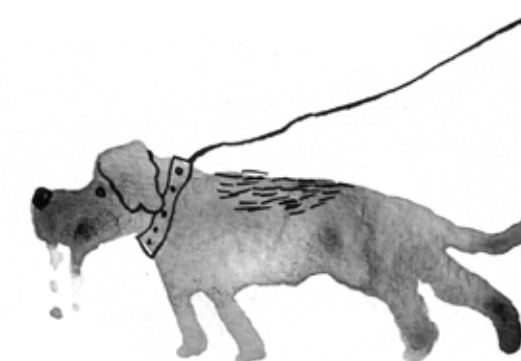


are they feathered, furry  
... or a mixture of both?!

Do they have...  
...glowing colours?  
...tiny wings?  
...giant paws?

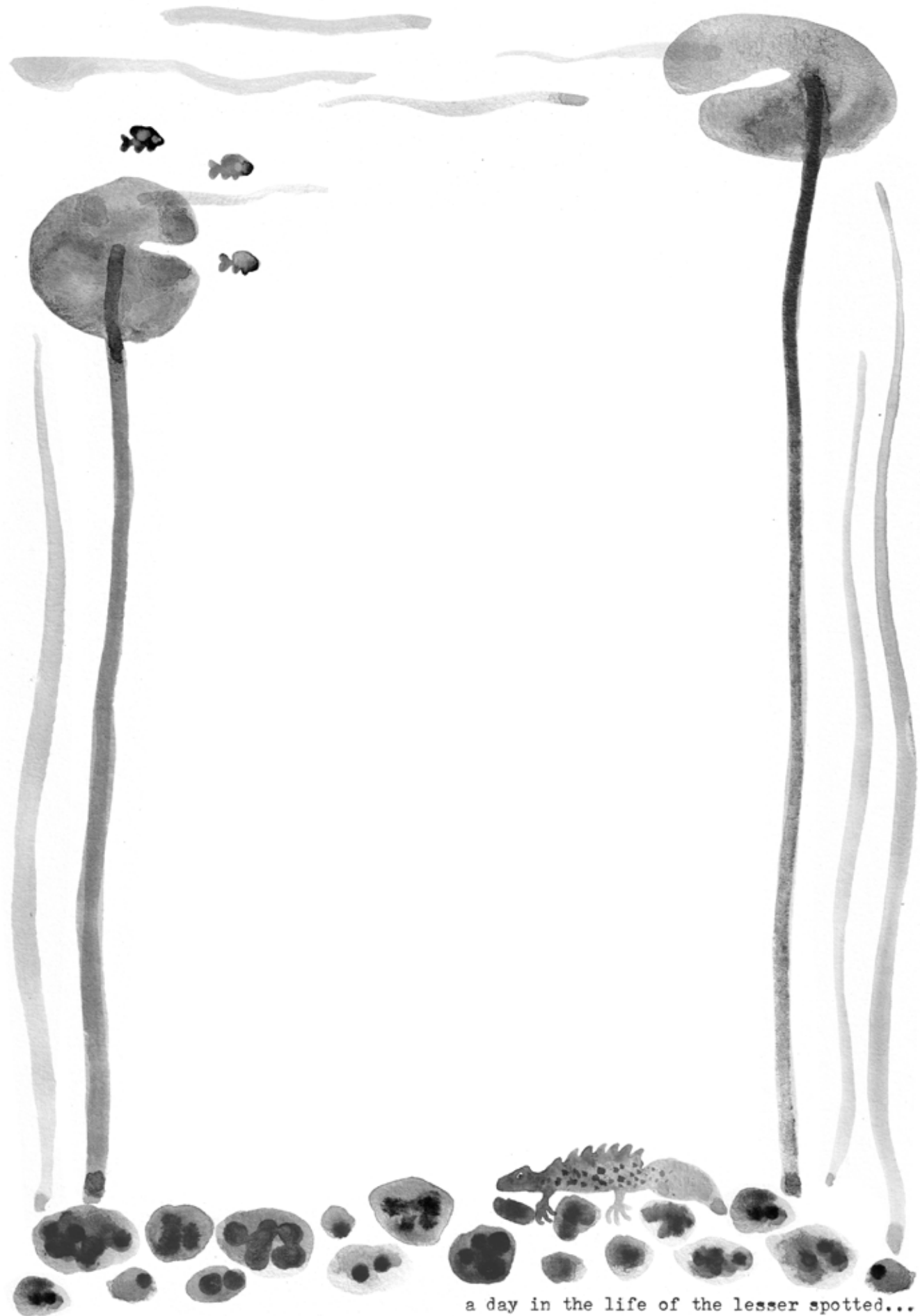


Gentle Scary  
Hybrid Lazy



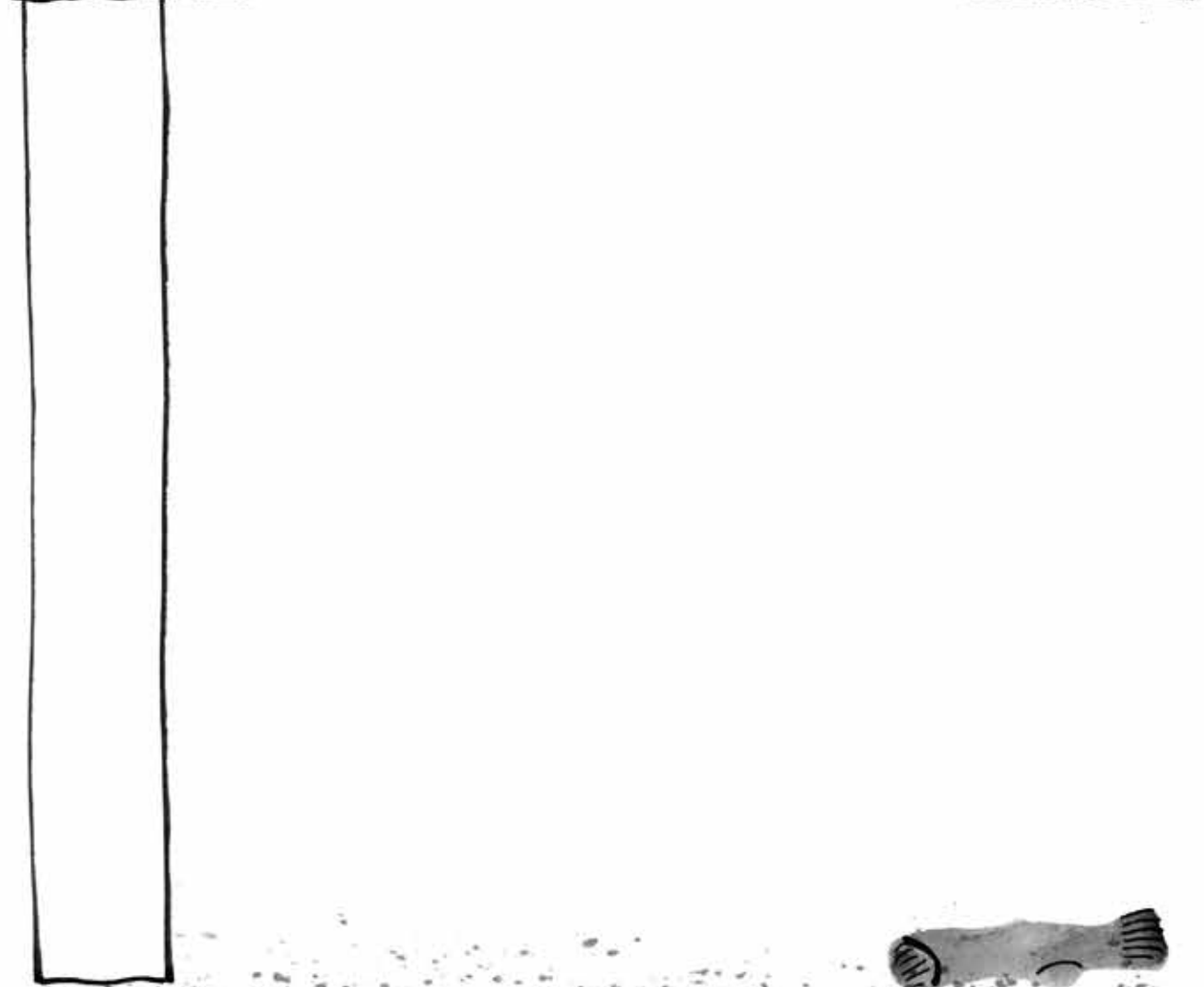
... do they give **slobbery**  
kisses





a day in the life of the lesser spotted...





Monster  
with Sock



## notes

### Takeaway: **The Big Butterfly Count**



The Big Butterfly Count is a UK-wide survey which helps conservationists assess the health of the environment by inviting people all over the country to record the number and type of butterflies they see.

This year the project goes live on 1st July, ready for the main counting event between 14th July and 6th August 2023.

Why is counting butterflies helpful?

Butterflies are key biodiversity indicators for scientists because they react very quickly to changes in their environment. A fall in butterfly numbers shows that nature is in trouble - and having that information gives us the power to make positive change.



Head over to the [Big Butterfly Count website](#) where you will find a free downloadable identification chart, and all the information you will need to take part.

**Thank you for taking the time to help!**







## Debate: MK Transport

Despite efforts to encourage people to use their cars less, in Milton Keynes, over 80% of journeys to work are still made by car, and only 9% of journeys to work are made by bike or on foot!!

Work is currently underway to improve the situation by vastly improving the city's electric vehicle charging infrastructure and improve and expand the city's Redway network of off-road walking and cycling paths.

How else can the people of Milton Keynes be encouraged to use their cars less? Should ours be the first city in the UK to ban private cars altogether?



Or are cars so essential to modern life that banning them would infringe on individual people's freedom of choice?

# MILTON KEYNES

city of...





notes

# Traditions, Festivals, Celebrations



**DRAW-IMAGINE-DESCRIBE**

celebrations and commemorations happen in different ways the world over



...dancing music singing  
...quietness prayer contemplation

Some festivals are celebrated globally

Hanukkah

Eid al-Fitr

Diwali



Others are specific to Milton Keynes:  
India Day

African Diaspora Festival

Art in the Park

Milton Keynes Pride

IF: Milton Keynes International Festival

Christmas



Vesak



Share something about  
a festival or celebration  
that means something to you...

drawing, memory, photo, poem

Who or what is being celebrated?  
What do you eat?

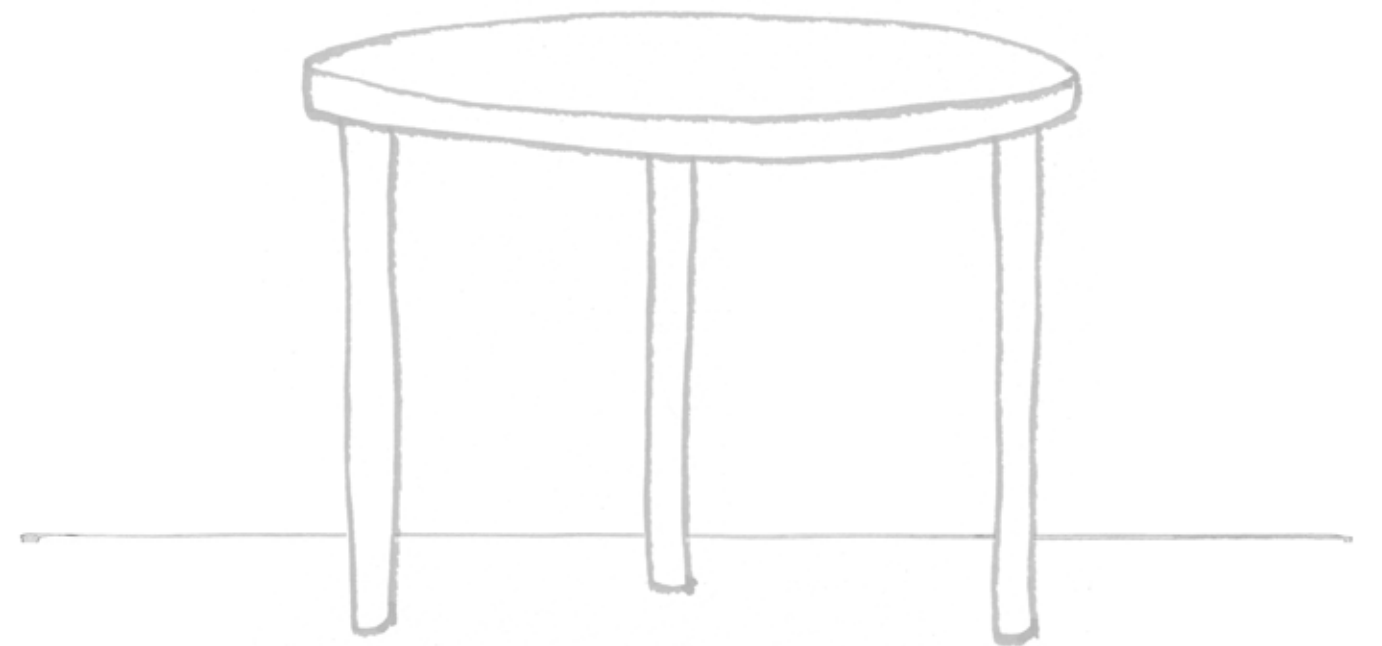
What do you wear?



...what do you watch on TV?!

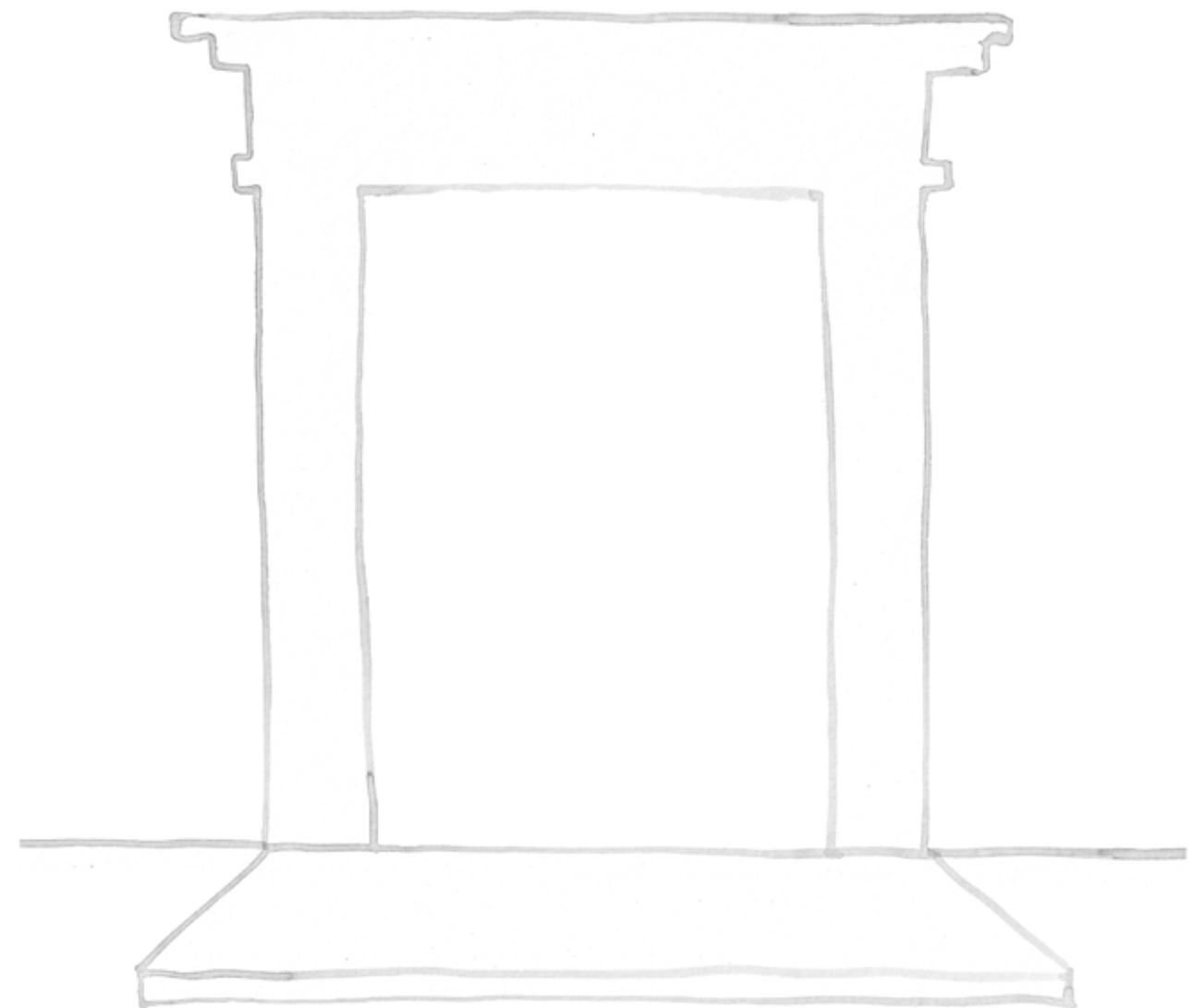




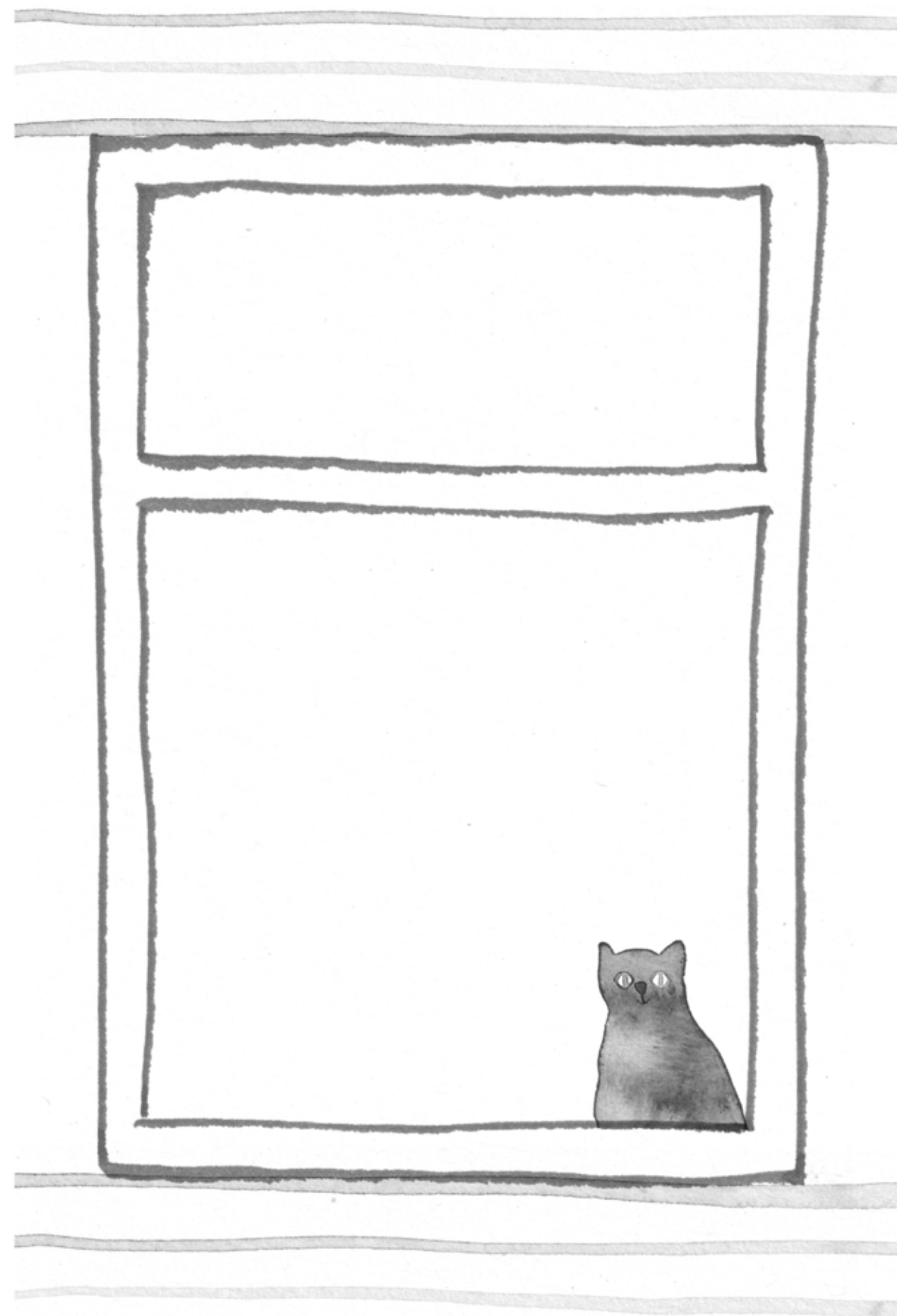
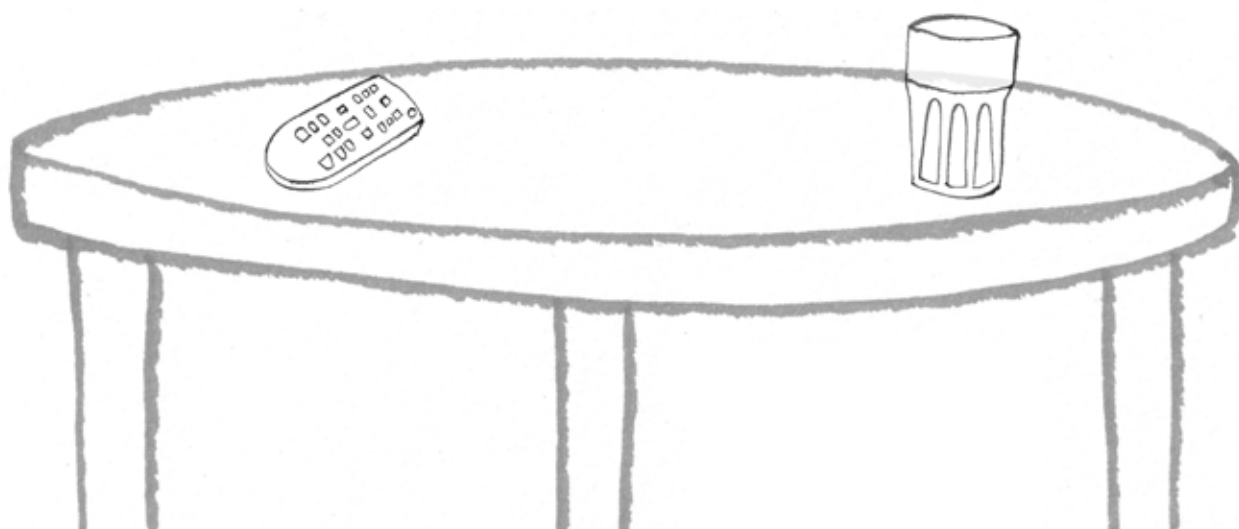
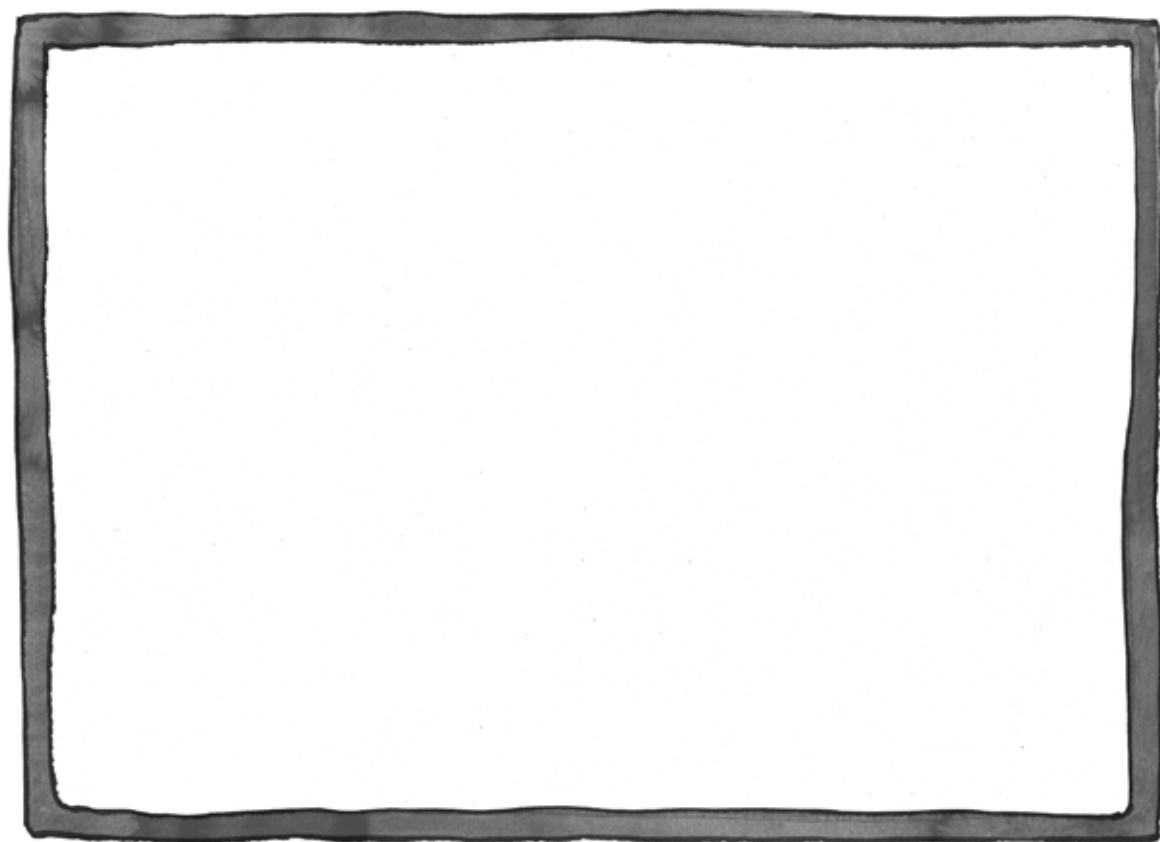


I pray...

notes



favourite TV show to watch...







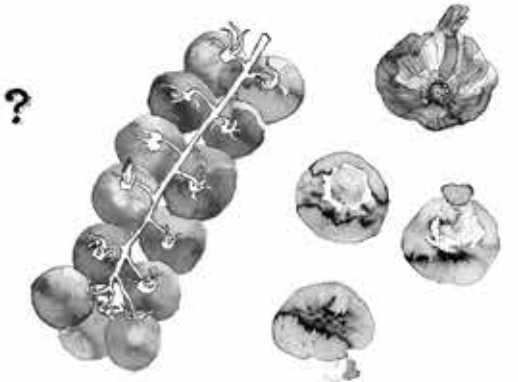
## Sharing Plates



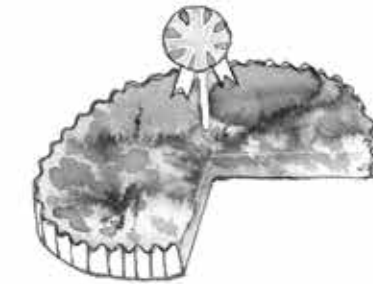
DRAW-IMAGINE-DESCRIBE

The food we eat can be a wonderful reflection of our cultural background, with recipes being passed down generation after generation.

What's your favourite food  
Your favourite recipe?



How did you learn it?  
...has it ever gone wrong?!



fit for  
The King!

... savoury or sweet  
hot or cold...

...seasonal?



...freshly produced or straight from a packet?!



Where or when is it served?

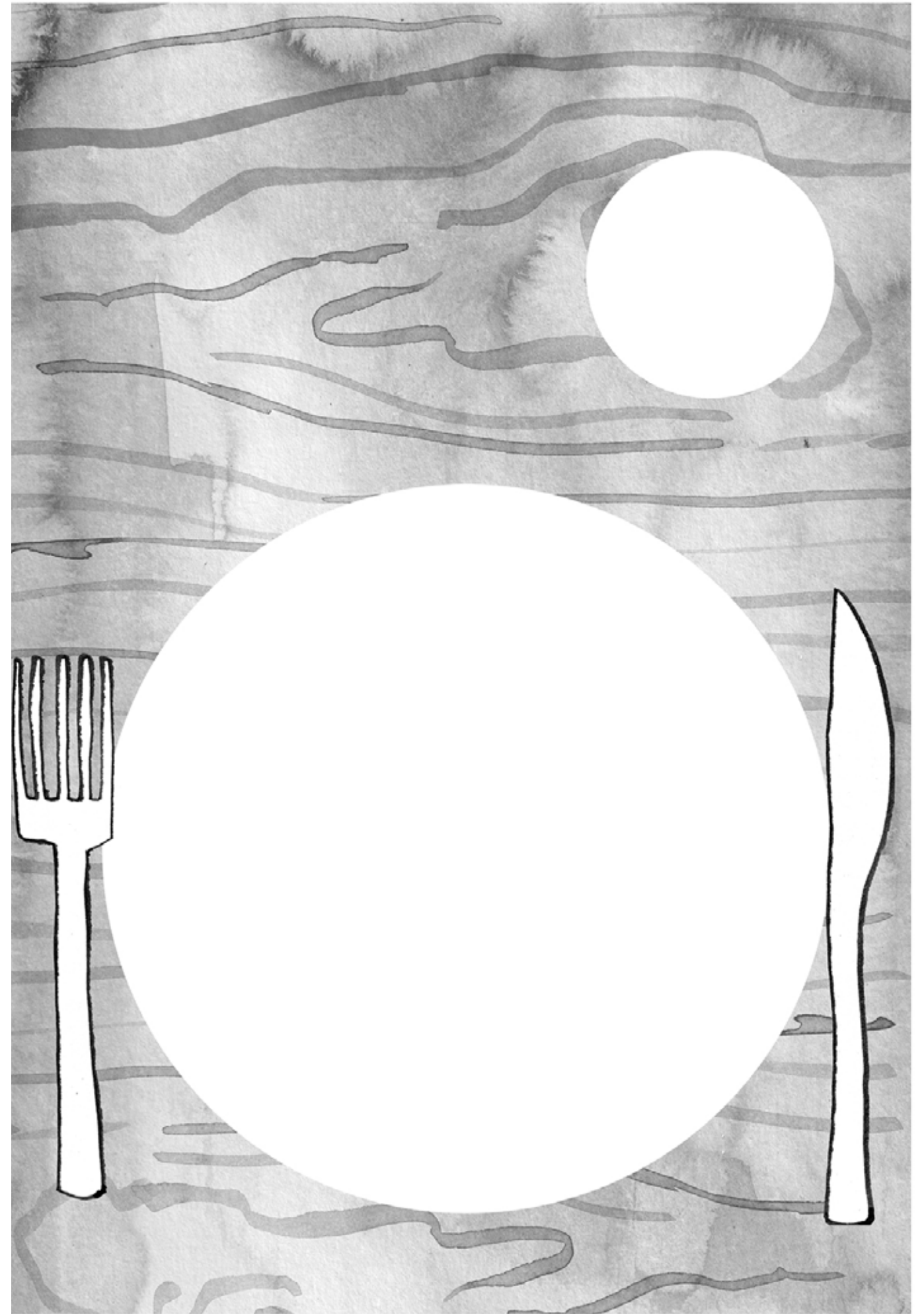


What recipe would you share with future generations?

What would it reflect about you or the culture you live in?

DESERT ISLAND RECIPES

• which recipe (and ingredients) would you bring to a desert island  
to remind you of home





A day in the life of \_\_\_\_\_



I began the day by

Then I

After that I

Then just as I was falling to sleep...





**Groupwork:** Milton Keynes City Guide



Work in groups to create a City Guide to help visitors get the most out of their visit to Milton Keynes.

Think about the kind of person who will be using your guide. What can you do to make it relevant to them specifically?

Think about your use of language (vocabulary and tone), as well as the kinds of activities that will appeal to them.



Is it for... people of your own age, older people; families travelling with pets; sports people; shopaholics; foodies; people with mobility challenges... or maybe The King!

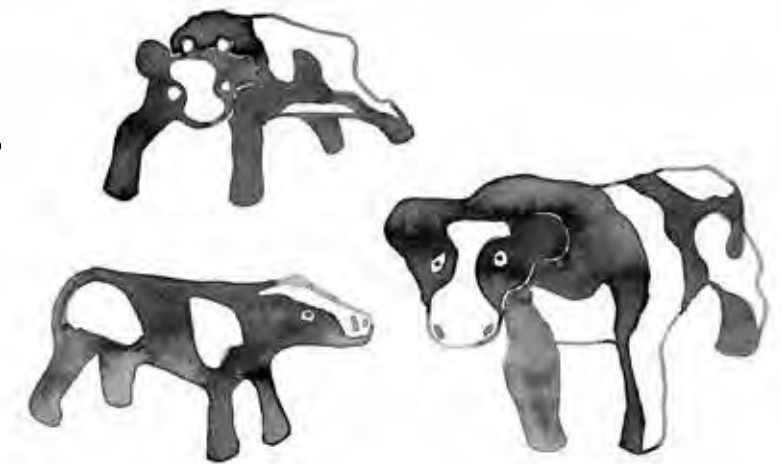
Where will they eat, stay?

How will they get around?

What will they do?

What should they avoid?

Any other tips?



Use photographs, illustrations, maps, QR codes to help bring your city guide to life.



## notes

### Debate: Milton Keynes City Planning



Milton Keynes was designed in late 1960s by a team of idealistic architects, who had strong visions for a new way of living. Today the city is celebrated for its modernist designs, the grid system of its roads, and its abundance of parkland and green spaces.

A short film was made in 1973 during the planning and early building phase of the new town, where planner Fred Roach explains something of the architects' vision, and how it would pan out for the citizens of the new city.

Watch the film.

"... we think Milton Keynes is the most exciting thing going on in Europe and perhaps the world..."

"...one of the most encouraging things is the rich texture, not only physical form but in terms of the variety of people coming into the city ... and that's what this is about - the diversity of it..."

"... the sooner that people forget that the development agency existed, the sooner it means that the people who live in Milton Keynes have adopted their own city - that becomes their city..."



You live in the city of Milton Keynes now - over 53 years since it was first built.

**Did the planners vision work? Does your experience of living in Milton Keynes reflect the architects and planners' future hopes for it? Has the Milton Keynes project worked out well for its present-day citizens?**





# MILTON KEYNES

city of...



Bletchley Park

Peace Pagoda

Westbury Arts Centre

Bradwell Windmill

'O Wert thou in the cauld blast'  
by Ronald Rae

Milton Keynes Library

MK Gallery

Iron Trunk Aqueduct

Concrete Cows by Liz Leigh & Bill Billings

'Chain Reaction' by Ray Smith

Greet Unford Menor

Bradwell Abbey

'The Whisper' by Andre Wallace

notes



# Public Art



**DRAW-IMAGINE-DESCRIBE**

Milton Keynes is home to a collection

of over 230 public artworks.



Many of them reflect something of the values and the culture of the time and place where they were made



Draw or describe ... your idea for a new public artwork to add to the collection

What is it inspired by?  
What does it commemorate?

From what is it made?

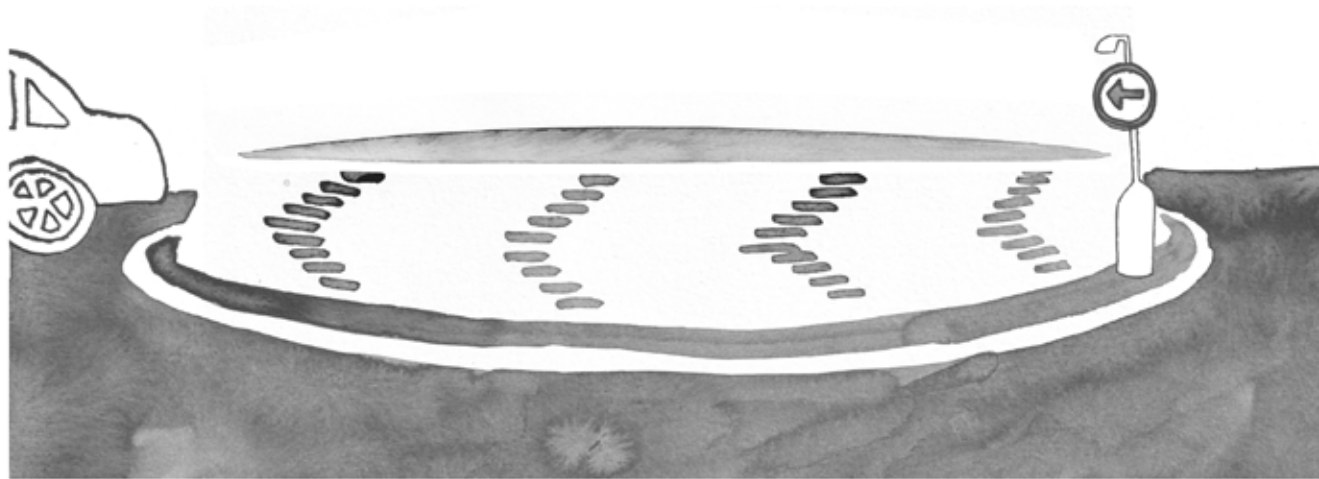


Where will it be installed?  
Is it flat (a mural)  
or 3 dimensional?



How would you like people to feel when they see it?





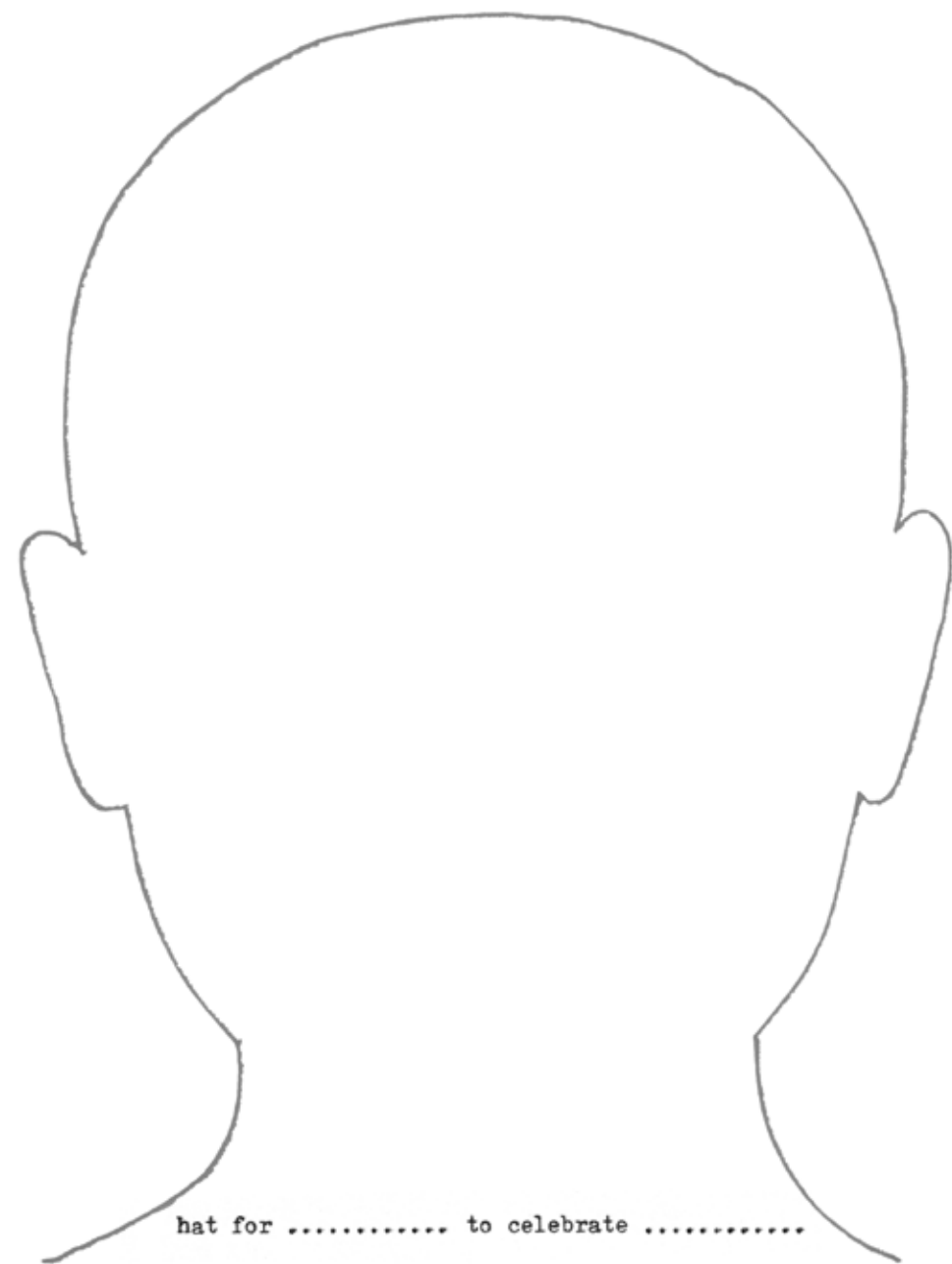
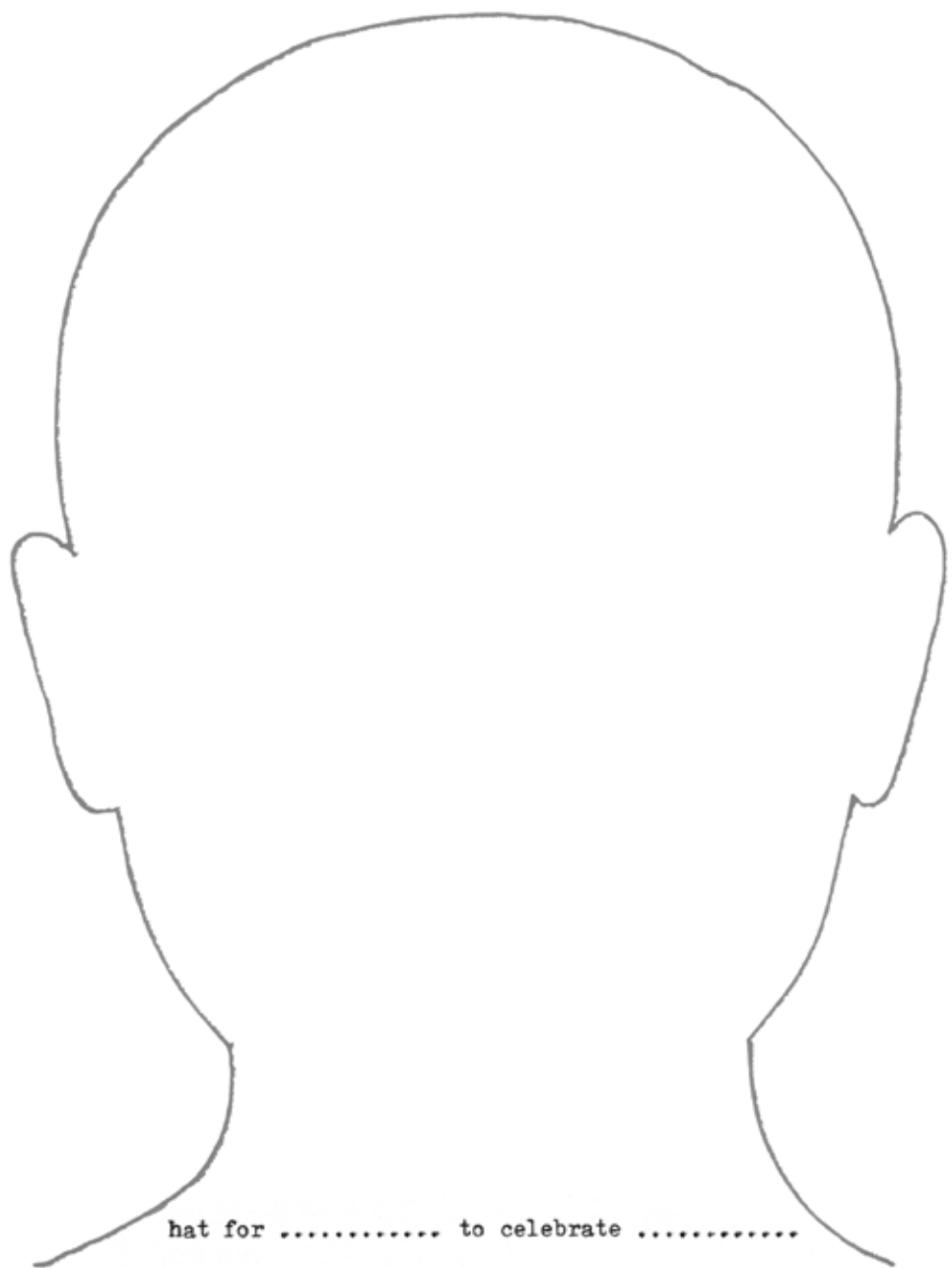
..... by .....



..... by .....

notes





notes



## Takeaway: Seeing things anew



Creativity and imaginative ideas often come about from finding new ways of experiencing familiar things.

### Bus Route Challenge

Did you know there are over 20 bus routes in Milton Keynes? How many of them have you ridden?

Choose a route you have never taken and ride it for the length of its journey.

- > Document your journey with notes and pictures.
- > Share your new discoveries with a friend, family member or teacher.



### Holiday at Home

Milton Keynes is not where you live! You're on holiday!!

You have a whole day in front of you!

Where will you go, what will you do?

Museums, galleries, ice-cream, crazy gold, river swim... Milton Keynes is your oyster!



- > Document your day with notes and pictures.
- > Share your new discoveries with a friend, family member or teacher.



notes



## Debate: Public Art



There are over 230 pieces of public art in Milton Keynes.

### What is public art?

Public art is any kind of artwork that is situated in the public environment.

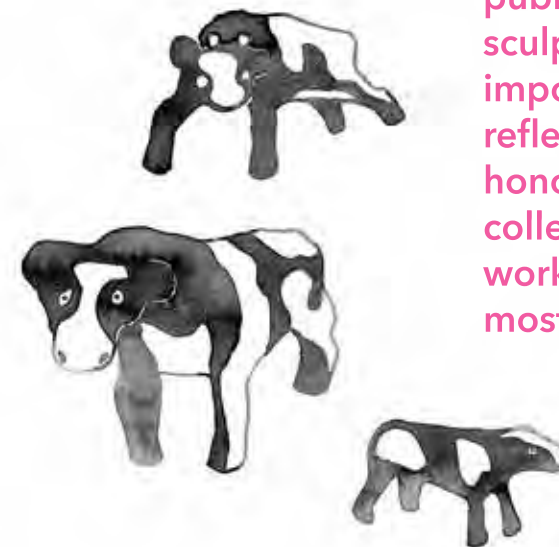
Often public art is made in response to a specific place, context, or event. A good example is 'Alphonso' by Sarah Staton - a sculptural folly made from handmade bricks that celebrates the site's former use as a brickworks.



Monuments, memorials, statues and sculptures are the most common forms of public art, but public art can also be temporary, for example when it takes the form of performance, dance, theatre, graffiti or street posters.

Some people think that public money is wasted on commissioning art. Others believe that art, and creative expression are important parts of human life, and that public art brings boring and mundane urban environments to life.

> What is the value of public art? Do public artworks, such as war memorials, sculptures and painted murals fulfil an important function in society by reflecting our shared values and honouring important moments in our collective history? Which of the public art works in Milton Keynes do you value the most, and why?





notes



## Group Work: Wes Anderson Meme

Wes Anderson is a film director whose strong visual style incorporates symmetry and a distinctive use of colour.

He often uses 'planimetric' composition - where the background seems flat in contrast to the character, who is placed in the centre of the foreground, directly facing the camera.

We didn't discover whether Wes Anderson has visited Milton Keynes, but we think - with its abundance of symmetry, that he would love it!



In April 2023 a new craze burst onto TikTok - people making videos of ordinary moments in their day - in the style of a Wes Anderson movie.



This challenge is to create your own version of the meme, using yourself or your friends as characters, and Milton Keynes as the backdrop.





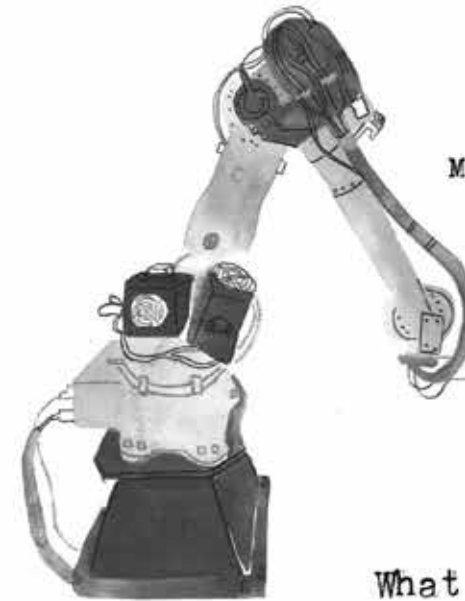
notes

# Pimp my ride robot!



## DRAW-IMAGINE-DESCRIBE

Milton Keynes' Starship Robots have become an everyday fixture in Milton Keynes.



They are useful for deliveries but imagine a coder at MK:U has offered to reprogramme them to increase the range of tasks they perform

What would you like them to do?

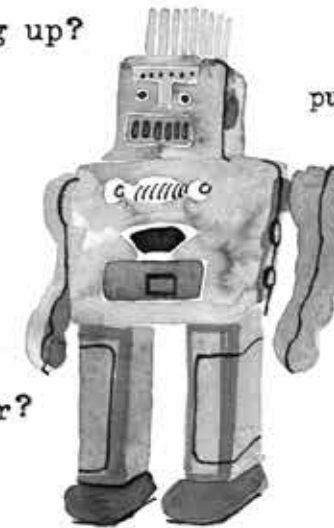
washing up?

putting socks into pairs?

teleportation?

homework?

automatic teeth brusher?



And how should the new improved robots look?

sparkly with wings

rainbow coloured

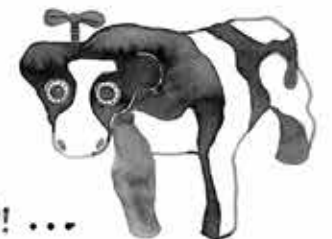
taller

bigger

faster

smaller

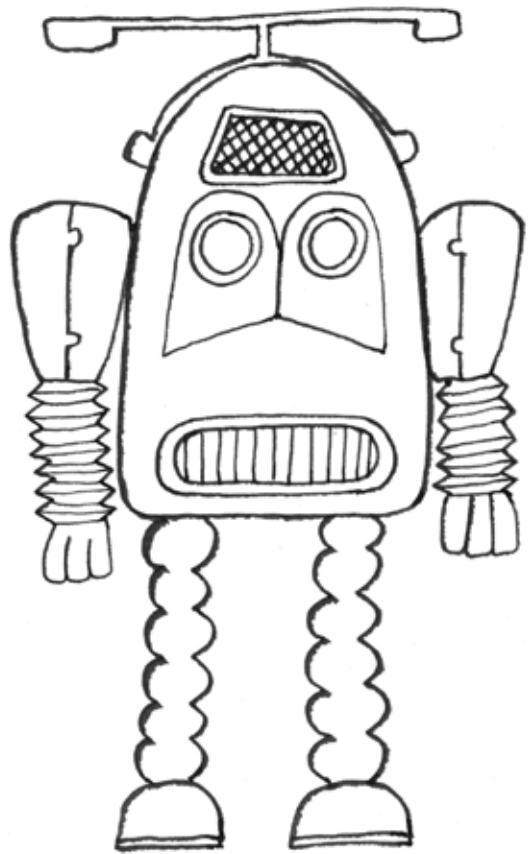
flashing lights



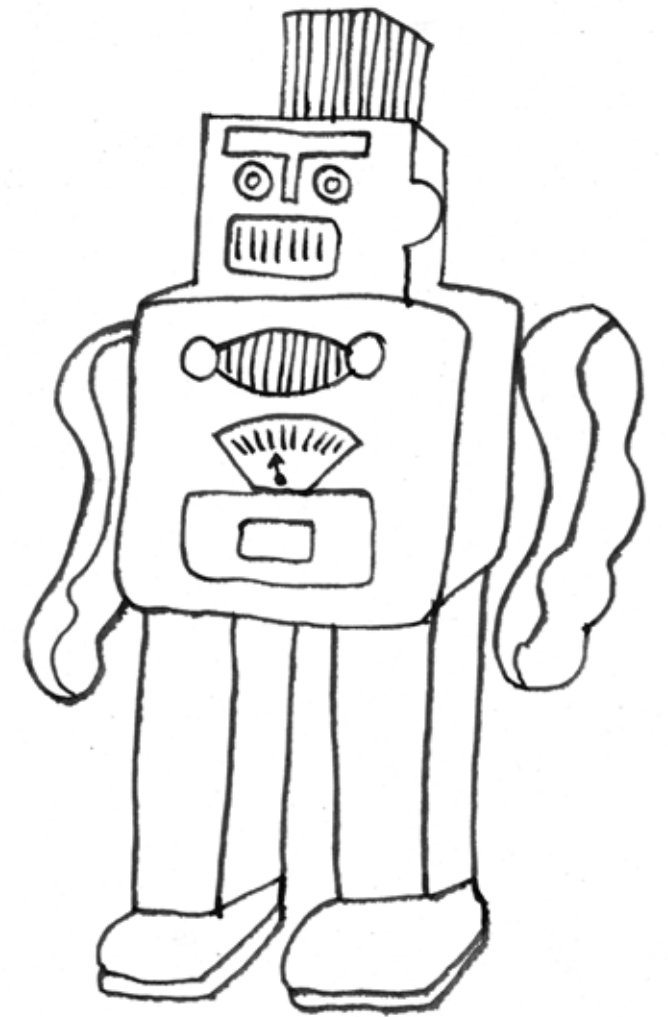
in disguise as a Milton Keynes Cow?! ...



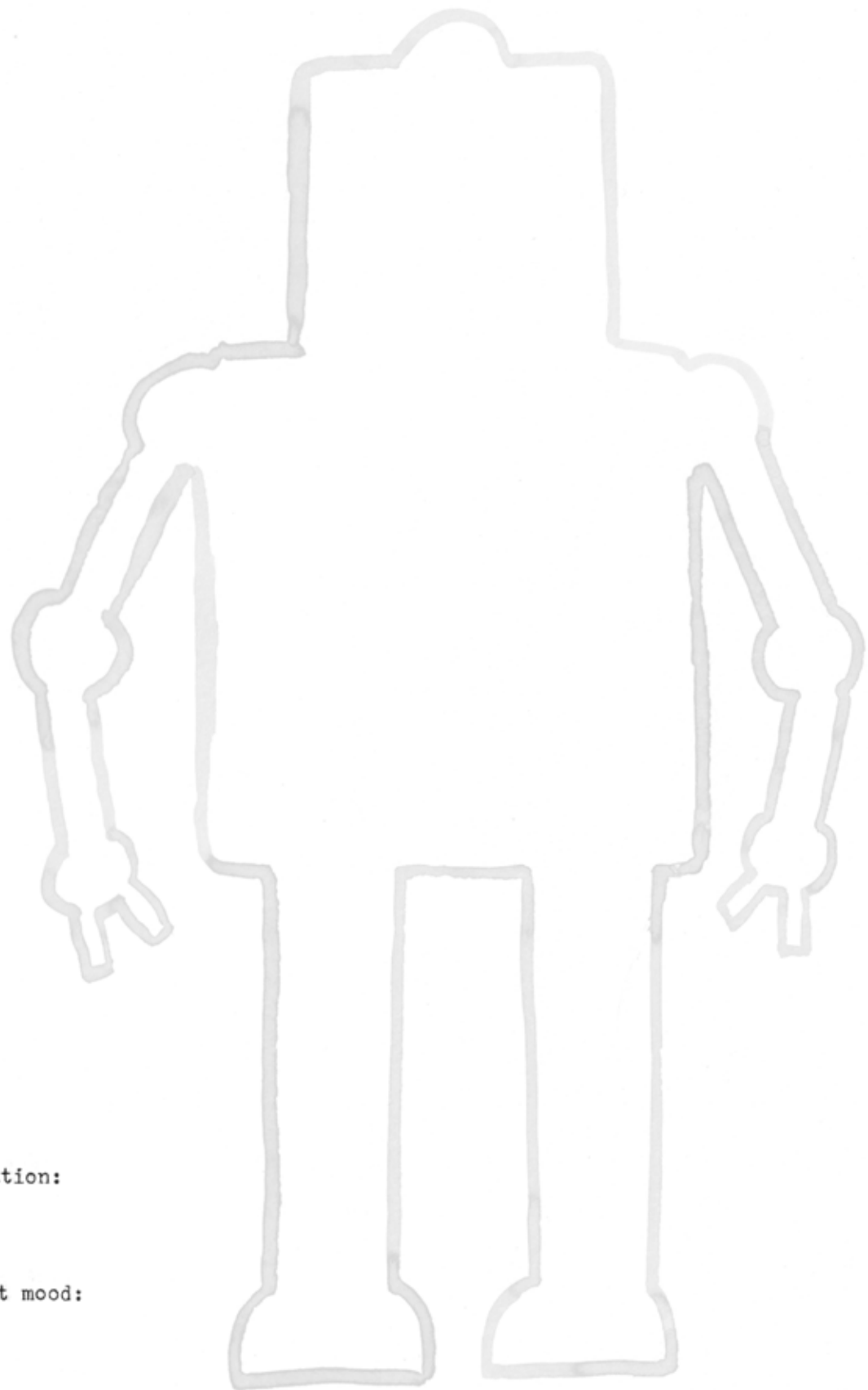




Best Friends (separated at birth)



Best Friends (opposites attract)

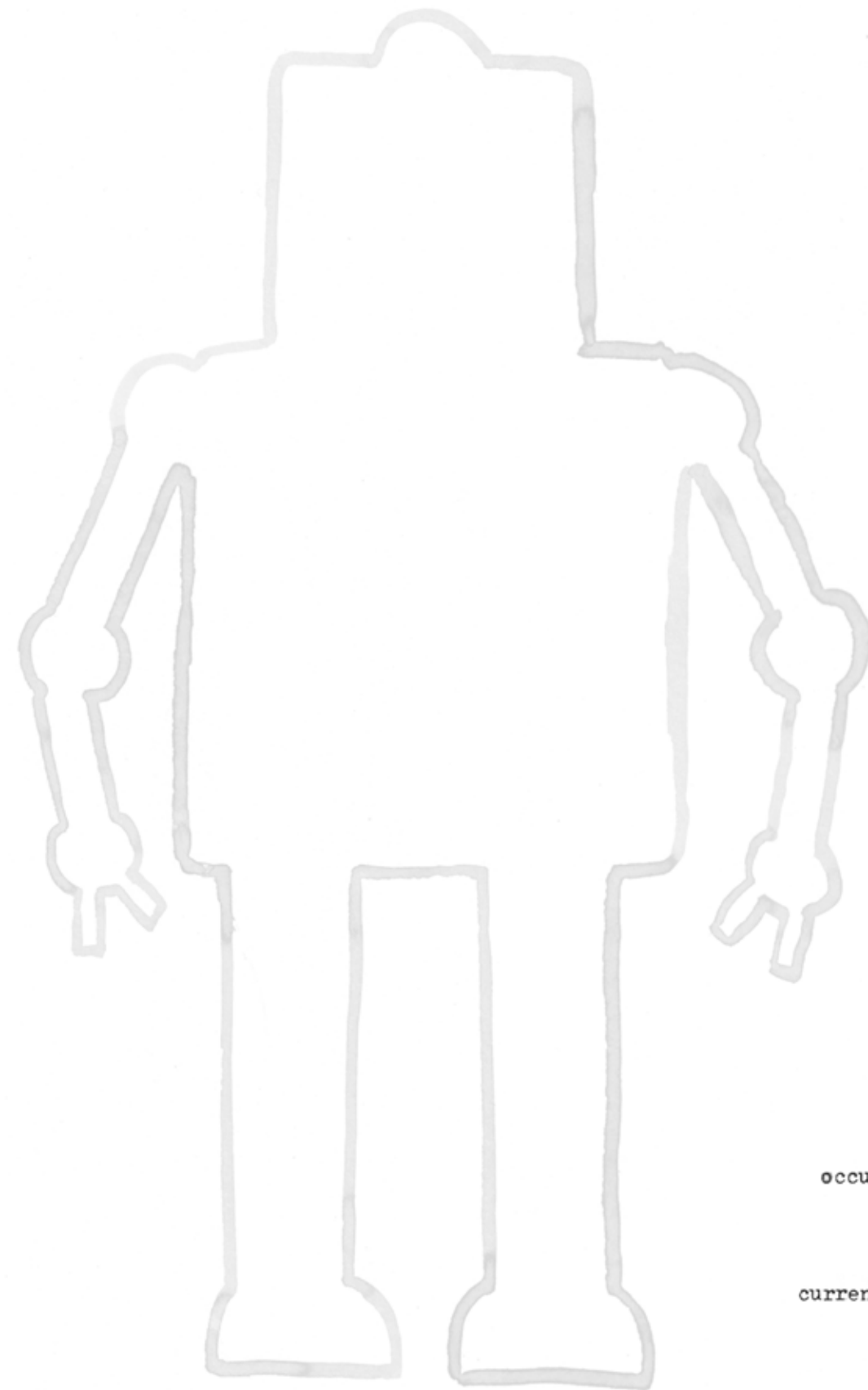


name:

occupation:

current mood:

When I'm not at work I .....



name:

occupation:

current mood:

When I'm not at work I .....



## Groupwork: Time Capsule

Milton Keynes was founded in 1967, yet humans first settled in this area around 4000 years ago.



In 2000, two metal detectorists found an amazingly beautiful and ancient hoard of gold treasure in the muddy field that was to become Monkston Park. Now known as the Milton Keynes Hoard, the Bronze Age treasure reveals much about the Bronze Age people and how they lived.

Imagine you are an archaeologist of the future, looking for clues about life in this area, back in 2023.

Create a time capsule - an updated Milton Keynes Hoard - for the people of the future - that reflects something about life as you experience it today.

What items will it include?

toys, games, tools, ornaments, technologies  
diaries - receipts - newspapers - books



The container for the Milton Keynes Hoard was made from pottery known as Deverel-Rimbury. Some pieces of Deverel-Rimbury are decorated with delicate tools, others with finger marks.

### Consider:

- > The container you use and what it will reveal to future people about now.
- > Where you will bury or hide it, and what clues to its whereabouts you will share?



## Debate: Future of AI

Milton Keynes is famous for its forward-looking approach to city planning, technical development, architecture and innovation. In many ways it could be described as the archetypal city of the future.

The robot fair in September 2023, new advancements in robotics in the shopping centre, South Central - the new Institute of Technology in Bletchley and one of the most successful 3D printing companies in Europe, whose clients include Disney - are some of the examples of Milton Keynes' enthusiasm for innovation and technical advancement.

Yet - some people have expressed concern about the pace of technical advancement, particularly in relation to Artificial Intelligence - not just in Milton Keynes, but globally.

In March 2023, an open letter was published by the Future of Life Institute (FLI) calling for a pause in the development of AI, to allow time to consider what might be the unforeseen consequences, and to better understand the complexities of this new technology in relation to ethics, and legal frameworks.



>Should Milton Keynes continue to fully embrace new technology, or should we look back to the past for inspiration on how to make the world a better place for humans and non-human species alike?





**Takeaway: Good Turn Challenge**

Often we could do with a hand, but we don't think to ask...

It's often been said that 'charity begins at home'  
Help out by offering your friends, family or teacher a helping hand

How many good turns can you do in one weekend?

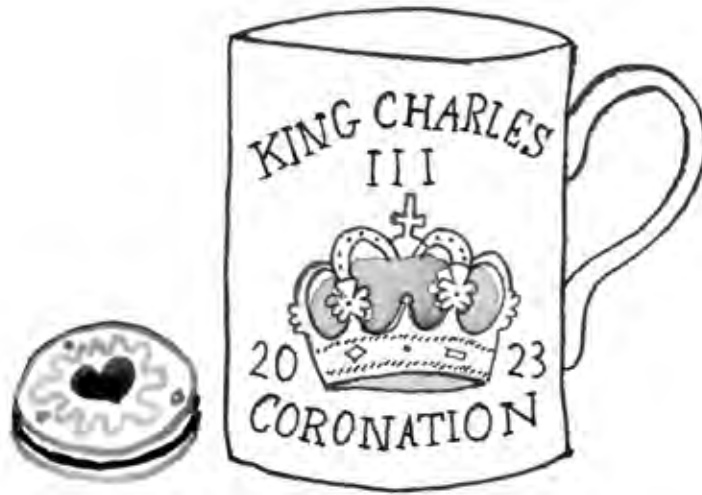
Offer to help...

- Washing dishes
- Clearing the table
- Putting things away

Sweeping leaves...

Breakfast in bed...

What else....?



If you can't find enough good turns, please fill in a special Create Milton Keynes IOU ('I Owe You') and give it to a friend, family member, or teacher at school, for them to use on a future occasion!!

**IOU** To: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

From: \_\_\_\_\_

I promise to...

CREATE MILTON KEYNES

**IOU** To: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

From: \_\_\_\_\_

I promise to...

CREATE MILTON KEYNES

**IOU** To: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

From: \_\_\_\_\_

I promise to...

CREATE MILTON KEYNES

**IOU** To: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

From: \_\_\_\_\_

I promise to...

CREATE MILTON KEYNES

**IOU** To: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

From: \_\_\_\_\_

I promise to...

CREATE MILTON KEYNES

notes



notes



notes



notes



## References

### Nature

#### Takeaway: Butterfly Count 2023



<https://bigbutterflycount.butterfly-conservation.org/>

### Debate: MK Transport



[https://www.mkfutures2050.com/\\_files/ugd/02d3f7\\_54a01293970d4947aef7a3a0f5cd4087.pdf](https://www.mkfutures2050.com/_files/ugd/02d3f7_54a01293970d4947aef7a3a0f5cd4087.pdf)



<https://www.gov1.com/planning/articles/the-argument-against-cars-qEnMS0YaP2BJocdU/>

### Community

#### Group Work: Milton Keynes City Guide



<https://www.destinationmiltonkeynes.co.uk/things-to-do/>



<https://miltonkeyneskids.com/>



<https://www.roamandgolightly.com/blog/diycityguide>

## References

### Community

#### Debate: MK City Planning



<https://player.bfi.org.uk/free/film/atch-milton-keynes-a-village-city-1973-online>

### Public Art

#### Debate: Public Art



<https://miltonkeynesrose.org.uk/>

### Group Work: Wes Anderson Meme



<https://www.newsweek.com/wes-anderson-tiktok-trend-most-wholesome-thing-see-today-1795287>



<https://www.curzon.com/journal/unpacking-wes-anderson-s-cinematic-style/>

### Future

#### Group Work: Time Capsule



[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Milton\\_Keynes\\_Hoard](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Milton_Keynes_Hoard)





# CREATE MILTON KEYNES

a creative resource for schools



**Commissioned by:**

Milton Keynes City Council  
to celebrate the honour of  
Milton Keynes acquiring City Status  
from Her Late Majesty the Queen

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