

Borough Monthly

Issue 23

October 2017



Celebrating our fantastic volunteers...

▶ find out more on page 4



BEDFORD
BOROUGH COUNCIL

In this issue...

Investment in new
business start-ups

▶ see page 2

Mindful Yoga for children
and young people

▶ see page 5

New car park for
Bedford town centre

▶ see page 6

Black History Month 2017
at The Higgins Bedford

▶ see page 8

Enforcement action tackles litterbugs and abandoned vehicles

Five individuals have been ordered to pay fines following enforcement action taken by Bedford Borough Council.

Mr Tino Tenda Kawome of Baker Way, Witham and Mr Amardeep Sanghera of Arkwright Road, Irchester were each found guilty of abandoning their vehicles in Bedford. Both men were sent letters asking that their vehicles be removed.

Following their failure to act Luton Magistrates Court imposed a fine of £440 on Mr Kawome and ordered him to pay £727.02 in costs and a £45 victim surcharge, while Mr Sanghera was fined £120 and also ordered to pay £300 in costs and a £30 victim surcharge.

Meanwhile three men were found guilty of littering offences and were ordered to pay up. Mr Kajetan Kosomudzki of Alamein Avenue, Bedford was ordered to pay £869.41 after twice littering out of his car in Hurst Grove, with a fine of £440 plus costs and a victim surcharge.



Mr Adam Hyski of Ballinghall Close, Bedford was also convicted for dropping littering from his car and ordered to pay £560.75 after non-payment of a Fixed Penalty Notice, with a fine of £200 plus costs and a victim surcharge and Mr Mark Pollard of Dennis Road, Kempston was ordered to pay £626.39 following non-payment of a Fixed Penalty Notice for dropping a cigarette butt on the ground, with a fine of £220 plus costs and a victim surcharge.

Investment in new business start-ups

Investment in a new business incubator centre for Bedford has been approved at a meeting of the Borough Council Executive.

The new 'Bedford i-Hub' on Cauldwell Street will provide flexible office space for a wide range of new business start-ups and businesses in the early development stage, and bring a redundant building back into use. The i-Hub will join other successful Bedford Borough Council i-Brand serviced buildings including the 'i-Lab', 'i-Kan' and 'i-Create', which currently provide a business base and support for over 140 businesses.

Mayor Dave Hodgson said: *"Supporting economic growth is a Council priority. It's all part of our work to foster an environment in which businesses can succeed in Bedford Borough, bringing jobs and opportunities for people locally."*

'Cygnet' Bus Smartcard launches

The new 'Cygnet' smartcard launched this month, enabling bus users to switch freely between two local bus operators without the need to buy multiple tickets.

Bus operators Stagecoach and Grant Palmer have been working with Bedford Borough Council to launch this new smartcard, which will allow for unlimited travel on any bus within the designated area, across a day or a week.

The Cygnet travel zone equates to the area currently covered by the Stagecoach Megarider and includes the whole of Bedford and Kempston, as well as surrounding villages such as Bromham, Clapham, Cople and Elstow.

The 'Cygnet' smartcard is £5 for a day ticket, with the weekly ticket priced at £17. You can buy your smartcard on Stagecoach and Grant Palmer buses for 50p, which you can then re-use.

New figures show over half of children awaiting adoption in the East of England are in sibling groups

Adoption Week took place between 16 and 22 October, and this year's campaign focused on the need for more adoptive parents for sibling groups.

Figures from First4Adoption show that sibling groups wait longer than single children to be placed with a 'forever family' and 55% of children in the East of England waiting for adoptive families are brothers and sisters in groups of 2 or more.

Cllr Shan Hunt, Portfolio Holder for Children's Social Care at Bedford Borough Council said: "We would like to talk to people who are interested in adoption, so that we can take them through the process step-by-step. We are also asking anyone who may be considering adoption to think about whether they could parent siblings. There's no denying that having more than one child comes with real challenges, but it also has advantages and brings great rewards."



There will be an information evening at Borough Hall, on Wednesday 15 November, from 6.15pm to 8.30pm. Please phone 01234 718718 to book an appointment.

Adoption in Bedford Borough

You don't have to live in Bedford to adopt a Bedford Borough Child

Start your adoption journey with us today



Give us a call today

01234 718718

Or drop us an email

adoptionandfostering@bedford.gov.uk

www.bedford.gov.uk/adoption



Bedford Borough Council and Fusion Lifestyle join forces to help homeless young people



A partnership between Bedford Borough Council and Fusion Lifestyle has helped to provide a series of outdoor activities for young adults aged 16 and over as part of a programme to tackle homelessness and provide skills to help enter employment.

26 participants joined the scheme, which was set up and managed by the Council through the King's Arms Project - a Bedfordshire based charity that runs services for the homeless and disadvantaged - taking part in the activities at Kempston Outdoor Centre over a period of eight weeks.

Celebrating our fantastic volunteers!



Last month Bedford Borough Council celebrated volunteers from across the Borough, supported by The Longholme Café.

In 2016/17, over 1600 volunteer events/sessions were held including park task days, painting and restoration events and 65 community clean-ups.

This year also saw new and renewed volunteer groups establish themselves -including The Higgins Garden Volunteers and the Green Man Garden Volunteers from Addison Park. Existing groups have continued to thrive at Harrold Odell and Priory Country Parks, alongside The Friends of Mowsbury Hillfort and Putnoe Wood, and Bedford Park volunteers.

This is not to forget the important role of Community Champions across the Borough; individuals who have signed up to look after their local street,

parks or green spaces with support from the Clean, Safe and Green Team.

Mayor Dave Hodgson said: *“It was a privilege to meet so many of our wonderful volunteers at this celebration evening. They have played a key role locally in maintaining and improving local facilities and events, and in enabling us to make the most of national campaigns such as Love Parks Week. Our volunteers contribute so much to the Borough, and I’d like to take this opportunity to say thank you for all their hard work and dedication.”*

If you’d like to find out more about how you can get involved in volunteering, please visit www.bedford.gov.uk/volunteering.


Do you need help with design? Want to get something printed?

Use Bedford Borough Council’s ICT Design & Repro Team



- Posters and Flyers
- Business Cards
- Leaflets
- Letterheads/ Compliment Slips
- Brochures
- Duplicate/Triplicate Carbonless Pads
- Envelopes
- Vinyl banners
- Large Posters (up to A0 size)
- Promotional Items
- Pop Up Display Stands

and much more!
...literally anything you want printing, we can do it!

 01234 228154

 design@bedford.gov.uk



Mindful Yoga for children and young people

A new physical activity session designed to support families with a child experiencing mental health and wellbeing issues has launched in Bedford Borough.

Young people's Mindful Yoga runs every Tuesday from 4-5pm at the John Bunyan Sports and Fitness Centre.

The yoga is delivered by a specialist qualified children's Yoga teacher and is structured around relaxation and confidence.

The new sessions are being run in partnership with Bedford Borough Council and Bedfordshire CAMHS (Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services), part of East London NHS Foundation Trust.

Children will take part in the session while parents are encouraged to stay in the café and speak with CAMHS staff, who can offer advice and signpost to local services.

There is no pre-registration required and families can 'just turn up' and take part. Mindful Yoga costs just £2 per person per session and welcomes young people aged between 12 and 18 years of age. Anyone who feels they may be experiencing conditions such as stress, anxiety, depression or other mental health-related problems may attend. A diagnosis is not required.

This is a new session which is part of the Mindful Sport programme and the #JUSTTURNUP initiative. The programme also offers an adult yoga session on a Wednesday afternoon, along with other sports aimed at supporting mental and physical wellbeing. If you would like any further information about the new Mindful Sport Sessions, or local mental health services, then please contact Robert Lindsay at Bedford Borough Council on 01234 718829.



How active are you? We would like to know...

Please take a few minutes to tell us what sports and activities you like to take part in or would like to see provided locally. Bedford Borough Council would like to hear from everyone – your comments will help us plan, organise and deliver sports and activities in the future to best suit your needs. We are really keen to hear from all members of your household, so please encourage friends and family to complete this survey too at www.forms.bedford.gov.uk/activity.

Christmas Lights Switch On



Bedford's annual Christmas Lights Switch On event will take place on Thursday 23 November this year, at 7pm, along The Embankment.

Everyone is invited to attend this free Christmas event when another magnificent firework display will mark the start of the Christmas period.

Entertainment before the switch on, organised by BedfordBID, will take place from 3pm to 7pm in Harpur Square and will include a snowboard simulator, Christmas balloon modelling,

a Cairngorm reindeer and lots of Christmas games.

Father Christmas will be at the switch on event, so get there early to get a good spot and help welcome him to Bedford!

There will be free late night parking at the Harpur Centre and Council-owned car parks (except River Street) from 6pm on the 23 November. The Christmas Light Switch On will also mark the beginning of late night shopping in Bedford Town Centre, to view the full schedule [click here](#).

Powerful messages from the first Bedfordshire against CSE Conference



Pictured left to right: David Moss, Sammy Woodhouse and Lisa Robinson



Lorin La Fave

Safeguarding professionals joined together last week to attend the first-ever Bedfordshire against CSE Conference on child sexual exploitation, which particularly focused on how to protect young people from online grooming.

The one-day conference was an initiative between Bedford Borough, Luton Borough and Central Bedfordshire Councils, Bedfordshire Police and the Bedford Borough, Central Bedfordshire and Luton Safeguarding Children's Boards – as part of the ongoing county-wide campaign 'The More You Know, The More You See'.

The conference's hosts for the day were David Moss, a member of Luton's Care Leavers' Information Panel and Lisa Robinson, CSE Coordinator for Bedfordshire.

Sammy Woodhouse, survivor of the Rotherham abuse scandal, advised delegates that there was too much victim blaming and that survivors of abuse should be treated as individuals.

Lorin La Fave, the mother of Breck Bedner, who was groomed via the internet and murdered by someone he met online, talked about the importance of teaching young people to look out for the signs of exploitation and grooming.

Richard Denton, Children and Young Persons Development Co-ordinator for Bedfordshire Police, gave input on how to keep children safe online and the University of Bedfordshire delivered a session on how to improve the way in which police and partner agencies engage with young people.

Anyone with any concerns for a young person's safety or who would like any general advice on the topic of child sexual exploitation, please visit www.bedfordshireagainstcse.org. Alternatively, call the Police on 101.

Master plan to help shape Bedford town centre

Bedford is set to deliver an ambitious programme of work focused on using publicly-owned land and underused buildings and assets in order to regenerate Bedford town centre.

A Town Centre Masterplan is being developed, looking at opportunities to regenerate these areas and will set out exciting new ideas about how the centre could evolve in the future.

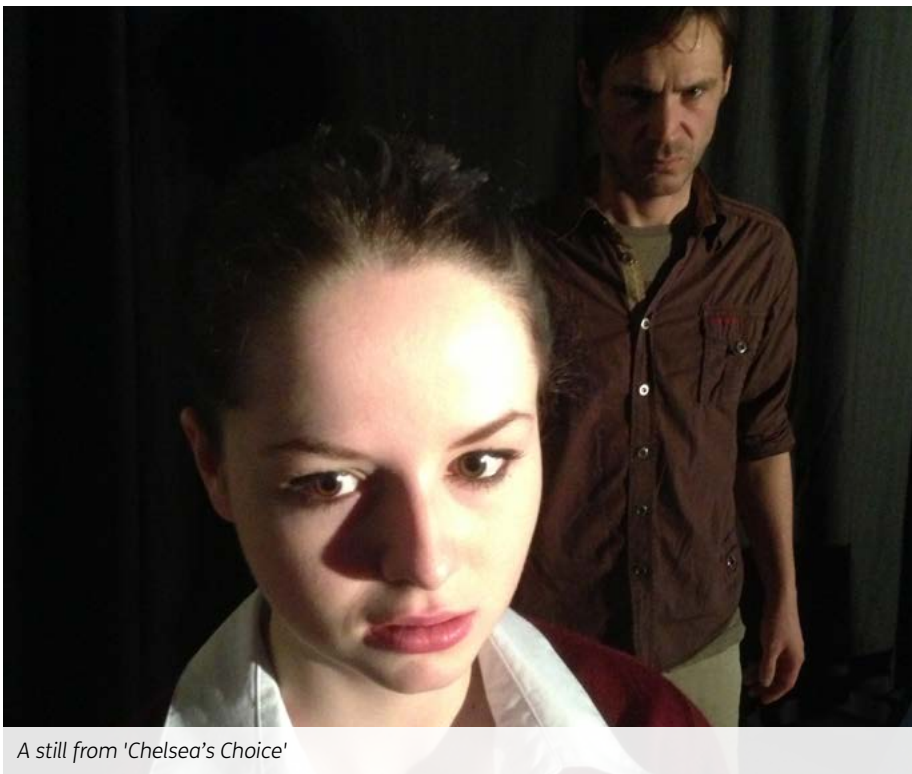
The suggestions put forward include:

- Better use of brownfield sites
- Improvements to the area around the train station
- Protecting and enhancing Bedford's historic buildings
- New homes, shops and business hubs

The plans will focus on key areas of Bedford town centre including south of the River Great Ouse, Bedford Station and Queens Park and set out to promote an attractive mix of residential, economic and community uses that support the growth and development of the town. Look out for more information soon!

Theatre productions help to highlight the issue of child sexual exploitation

Bedford Borough Council and the Bedford Borough Safeguarding Children Board (BBSCB) have commissioned two free theatre productions to highlight grooming and help people spot the signs of sexual exploitation.



A still from 'Chelsea's Choice'

Chelsea's Choice
Monday 13 November
6.30pm at Bedford Girls School

'Chelsea's Choice' is an educational play which highlights the serious and emotional issue of child sexual exploitation. The production shows how young boys and girls are groomed by adults for the purposes of sexual exploitation using various methods, ensnaring young people and taking complete control of their lives. It tells the harrowing true story of Chelsea from Northamptonshire, who was groomed and held captive for the sexual gratification of her captors.

If you would like to book a place please contact Sue Huckle at the Bedford Borough Safeguarding Children Board on 01234 276512 or email sue.huckle@bedford.go.uk.

Crashing
Wednesday 22 November,
6.30pm at Wootton Upper School

'Crashing' highlights how child sexual exploitation can affect boys and young men. It tells the story of Eddie, who at 15 years old lost his mother to cancer, his father to depression and found himself out on the street. While sleeping in a shop doorway Eddie is approached by Michael. Michael is kind, fun and owns a shop with an empty flat above. He offers Eddie the chance to stay there to get back on his feet, but unfortunately Michael has another agenda.

Apple Day 2017



Bromham Mill and Gallery once again hosted the hugely popular Apple Day on Sunday 15 October. Thousands of people attended the event, celebrating all things apple-related!

There were lots of stalls to browse, including crafts, jewellery and artwork, as well as a handmade market and local wildlife stalls including the Bedfordshire Beekeepers and the Raptor Foundation. There was also an array of food stalls from a hog roast, cheese and chutney, doughnuts, homemade burgers, a cider bar and of course apples!

Visitors also enjoyed an owl display, a petting zoo, giant games arena, sheepdog demonstration, lurcher and terrier display and live music.

Bromham Mill's
Apple Day

Have you booked your Flu vaccine yet?

Last month we highlighted the importance of carers and those aged 65 and over booking a free flu vaccine. Now health leaders across Bedfordshire are urging pregnant women and young children to get their free flu vaccine before winter arrives.

If you are pregnant or planning to become pregnant, then you will be eligible for the free flu vaccine. Children between the ages of two and eight years are also eligible and will receive a free flu nasal spray.

For the best protection flu vaccines should be taken early, ideally between September and November. Pregnant women and children are more at risk of developing serious complications such as: Pneumonia, Meningitis, Severe ear infections and Tonsillitis. In pregnant women it may cause Miscarriage, Premature birth and even Stillbirth. Taking the flu vaccine while pregnant will also protect babies for several months after they are born, which

is important as newborns cannot receive the flu vaccine before they are six months old.

For more information about how to get a free flu vaccine contact your local GP, midwife or community pharmacy. Children aged four to eight years of age will receive their vaccine at school by a qualified nursing team, provided permission has been given by their parents.

For more information about flu and the flu vaccine please visit the [NHS choices website](#).

Black History Month 2017 at The Higgins Bedford



'Sankofa: Bedfordshire's Black History Uncovered' exhibition opened on Saturday 30 September.

The exhibition celebrates the 30th anniversary of Black History Month in the UK and explores Bedfordshire's own Black History through the inspirational people within the African and Caribbean community.

A programme of events and activities ran throughout October to compliment the Sankofa exhibition, including debates, talks and workshops.

Please visit www.thehigginsbedford.org.uk for further information.

