

# Borough Monthly

**Issue 17**

April 2017



***If statues could talk, what stories would they tell?***

▶ *find out more about Talking Statues on page 3*



**BEDFORD**  
BOROUGH COUNCIL

## **In this issue...**

New Primary School  
takes shape

▶ see page 3

First units completed  
at Riverside North

▶ see page 4

Free sporting activities  
for women

▶ see page 6

Local Plan 2032:  
Planning for the Future

▶ see page 7

# UK GENERAL ELECTION

## REGISTER TO VOTE BY 22 MAY



### Have you registered to vote yet?

The deadline for registering to vote is 22 May 2017 in order to be able to vote in the General Election on Thursday 8 June.

It's quick and easy to register, taking just a few minutes.

Register online today at [www.bedford.gov.uk/register-to-vote](http://www.bedford.gov.uk/register-to-vote).



## Property developer pleads guilty to £32,600 development charge dodge attempt

Stephen Singh, 49, of High Street, Clapham, pleaded guilty at Luton Magistrates Court to providing false information in an attempt to avoid paying a Community Infrastructure Levy of £32,600.

In January 2016, Stephen Singh purchased 13a High Street, Clapham, an empty office block with a workshop and converted the property for residential use. The development incurred a community infrastructure levy on the basis of the Council's adopted charging schedule.

When informed of the charge Mr Singh completed a form to claim exemption from the charge on the grounds it was a self-build project intended for him and his family to live in. However, an investigation by the Council's Fraud Investigation Team revealed Mr Singh had already rented the property to a tenant for £1,250 per month.

Mr Singh pleaded guilty to the charge and in mitigation his solicitors confirmed he had now paid the bill and claimed he had acted out of naivety. The Council's prosecutor provided evidence

that Mr Singh had experience of developing and managing a property portfolio across Bedford and had deliberately lied in an attempted to avoid paying the correct contribution towards local infrastructure.

After hearing his guilty plea the Court convicted Mr Singh of the offence and ordered him to pay a £700 fine, £750 in costs and a victim surcharge of £70.

If you suspect someone of Fraud you can report it to the Council by calling Freephone number 0800 917 8491 or by filling in a form online at [www.bedford.gov.uk](http://www.bedford.gov.uk).

## New Primary School takes shape

### Great Ouse Primary Academy – opening September 2017

Staff and developers were joined by Mayor Dave Hodgson on a visit to the site of new school, Great Ouse Primary Academy.

Principal Paul Ives was joined by the Mayor of Bedford Borough, Dave Hodgson and representatives involved in the building project. The school is being built by developers and will be handed over to Bedford Borough Council, at which time the site will be leased to the Sharnbrook Academy Federation.

This major project will provide a new 420 place Primary school for 4-11 year olds and 32 place FTE Pre-School, serving local communities in and around King's Field, St Andrews and North Bedford.

Mayor of Bedford Borough, Dave Hodgson, said 'Good schools are central to their local communities, and it is wonderful to see Great Ouse Primary taking shape amongst the new housing here. The school is on track for its opening in September, and the school is shaping up to provide an excellent learning environment for local children.'

Great Ouse Primary Academy is due to open in September 2017 as a member of the Sharnbrook Academy Federation. For more information please visit [www.greatouseprimary.co.uk](http://www.greatouseprimary.co.uk).



Mayor Dave Hodgson, staff and developers



Paul Ives, Mayor Dave Hodgson, Colin Foster (Chief Education Officer)

# Meet Bedford's Talking Statues!

Talking Statues Bedford is a new project that gives voice to the statues in Bedford, a concept that has been brought to life in major UK cities like London, Leeds and Manchester and Chicago in the USA. Arts producers Sing London have been working with the Council and The Higgins Bedford (among other sponsors) to animate seven statues across Bedford, giving some of our most well-loved statues a voice courtesy of famous actors including Al Murray, Matt Berry and Colin Salmon. Together, they all tell Bedford's story.

To listen to the statues, simply swipe your phone when passing on the nearby QR-coded plaque, or type the short url into your phone browser to receive a call back and hear what the likes of John Bunyan, the silver faces and Glenn Miller have to say! Some of the approaches have been described as dramatic, others comic and some are simply make believe! To find out more about the concept, visit [www.talkingstatuesbedford.co.uk](http://www.talkingstatuesbedford.co.uk).



## Running out of orange recycling sacks?

Orange recycling sacks are now available at the following locations free of charge, meaning that you no longer need to call the Council or go online to get replacement sacks!

- Bedford Central Library
- Putnoe Library
- Wootton Library
- Bromham Library
- Kempston Town Library
- The Customer Service Centre, Horne Lane, Bedford
- Borough Hall, Bedford
- Some Parish Councils.

To find out more go to [www.bedford.gov.uk/orangesacks](http://www.bedford.gov.uk/orangesacks).



## First units completed at Riverside North



The first completions have taken place over at the Riverside North development

The cinema, hotel and the first of the restaurant units have been handed over to operators Vue, Premier Inn, Coal Bar & Grill, Miller & Carter, Bella Italia and Gourmet Burger Kitchen, in order for them to fit out their space.

The remaining restaurants, apartments and public spaces are now in the final stages of development and residents and operators will start to occupy them over the next two months. When it opens, the development is expected to bring a much needed boost to the town centre.

# One Public Estate Programme granted further funding

Bedford Borough Council and Central Bedfordshire Council have won further funding as part of the One Public Estate (OPE) programme.

The One Public Estate programme is a pioneering initiative aimed at improving the management of public sector land and property that is currently underused or has the potential for improvement and development.

Over half a million pounds was awarded last year to enable a programme of initiatives aimed at improving the management of public sector assets; and this month a further £197,500 was granted as part of the second phase of the national project.

Bedford Borough Council and Central Bedfordshire Council joined the OPE programme in April 2016. Since then this has progressed with an ambitious programme of work focused on regenerating Bedford town centre and delivering projects aimed at improving health and social care integration across Bedfordshire.



The OPE programme involves working in partnership with a number of organisations including Bedfordshire Police, the NHS, Network Rail, and local housing associations; and in their first year the team have celebrated a number of successes through cross organisational working.

Early successes for the OPE programme include:

- Former bpha offices in Horne Lane in Bedford town centre have been converted into twenty three residential units, providing low cost housing and creating eleven jobs.
- A number of Bedfordshire Police staff have been relocated to Borough Hall in Bedford following an extensive renovation. This has been integral to work surrounding Greyfriars police station in Bedford town centre that will be taking place as the project progresses.
- The Raleigh Training Centre is being refurbished to create a dedicated training suite and meeting space available to all Bedfordshire public services.
- Development of a complex needs service centre is underway on the former site of the Clarence Hotel, St John's Street Bedford.
- Planned conversion of Endsleigh House in Bedford (former nursing accommodation site) to residential units has been agreed. The site is expected to yield over 40 residential units.
- Work has also started to plan for an Integrated Health and Care Hub on the Biggleswade Hospital Site.
- Work has also started on planning for an Integrated Health and Care Hub in Dunstable, which will allow GP Practices to work closely together with other health and social care teams.

**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**



# Have your say on our Mobile Library and Library Link services!



Bedford Borough Council is asking for residents' views on changes to the Mobile Library and Library Link Service timetables.

The Mobile Library service operates five days a week, visiting 40 communities and making a total of 182 stops per month. The Library Link service serves residents who are unable to reach their local library and operates 20 routes around the Borough each month, making regular visits to individual housebound users, residential homes and sheltered housing schemes.

Having reviewed the locations, proposed changes to the timetable would mean some stops will be more frequent and some less frequent. However, no village or care home will lose its service.

Information about the proposed changes will be available in the vehicles, in libraries, at the Customer Contact Centre and Borough Hall, as well as online at [www.bedford.gov.uk/mobileconsultation](http://www.bedford.gov.uk/mobileconsultation).

The consultation period will run until 9 June and outcomes will be published online, as well as being made available in libraries and in the vehicles themselves.

## How to find out more and have your say:

Online: [www.bedford.gov.uk/mobileconsultation](http://www.bedford.gov.uk/mobileconsultation)

By post: Consulting Bedford  
6th Floor, Borough Hall  
Cauldwell Street, Bedford  
MK42 9AP

By email: [consultingbedford@bedford.gov.uk](mailto:consultingbedford@bedford.gov.uk)

# Free sporting activities for women this month in Bedford Borough

Bedford Borough Council has joined forces with Fusion Leisure and the 'This Girl Can' campaign from Sport England to offer a week of free activities and sports sessions for women in Bedford Borough.

Bedford Borough Council's Sports Development Unit and Fusion Lifestyle are working together to offer a wide variety of sessions for women by women. All 29 sessions are based at Fusion Leisure's facilities across Bedford Borough.

Every session is free of charge for women and girls, in order to encourage them to try something new and get active! There is so much on offer, including – Zumba, Nordic walking, badminton, and even rugby.



This initiative has been supported by a generous grant from 'The Eileen Alexander Legacy Fund' from The Bedford Physical Education Old Students' Association which aims to promote physical activity in Bedford Borough.

The week of activities takes place between Sunday 23 April and Sunday 30 April 2017. There is no need to pre-book but please be aware that all sessions are on a first come first served basis and some sessions have limited numbers. Further information will be provided at the end of every session about how you can continue with the activity.

To find out more and see a full list of classes available please visit our 'She wants to, she can do!' web page.

For more information about other local opportunities in sport please visit: [www.bedford.gov.uk/sport](http://www.bedford.gov.uk/sport).

# Planning for the Future

## Residents asked to give their views on development in Bedford Borough - Local Plan 2035 Consultation

Bedford Borough Council is asking residents for their views on where growth and housing development should take place in the Borough over the coming years, as part of the Local Plan 2035.

The plan will set out how much growth and development there will be in Bedford Borough until 2035. As well as building houses and flats, this also includes providing jobs and the development of facilities such as schools, transport and shops to support new communities.

Councils are expected to produce Local Plans to demonstrate how the need for housing will be met and where it will take place. Three consultations have already taken place to establish the scope of the plan and collect evidence on options for where future sustainable growth should be located. This fourth stage primarily focuses on the development of housing across Bedford Borough.

The Strategic Housing Market Assessment shows that as a local area we will need an additional 19,000 homes by 2035. Over half of the housing need can already be met by existing planning permissions or allocations, meaning that the Local

Plan 2035 needs to allocate land for around 8,000 additional new homes.

The consultation offers an opportunity for residents to comment on a preferred development strategy that includes one or more new settlements; development of the former Stewartby Brickworks site and expansion of selected villages. Comments are also invited on a range of new and updated technical documents following the release of new national population and household projections in 2016.

The consultation will period run until 9 June 2017. The easiest way to have your say is to visit our online consultation page [www.bedford.gov.uk/localplan2035](http://www.bedford.gov.uk/localplan2035).

You will be able to save a copy of your response for your own records and you will receive an acknowledgement so you know we have received your submission.

Alternatively, comments can be made by filling in the Word format questionnaire available on the website. If you prefer this method, please attach the completed Word document and send it to [planningforthefuture@bedford.gov.uk](mailto:planningforthefuture@bedford.gov.uk).

If you cannot do this you can print and post your completed questionnaire or write a letter.

Please attach a stamp and post it to:

**Local Plan 2035 Consultation  
Planning Policy Team  
Borough Hall  
Cauldwell Street, Bedford  
MK42 9AP**

Or call our Local Plan phone number on **01234 718300**. Leave a message and we will return your call.

All comments should be received by 5pm on 9 June 2017.

Responses will be acknowledged and published.



**Local Plan 2035**  
Planning for the future

