

Borough Monthly

Issue 15

February 2017



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with Bedford Borough's Mobile
Library Service and Mills & Boon...

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BEDFORD
BOROUGH COUNCIL

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Budget to put residents first

Bedford Borough Council's 2017/18 budget has now been set.

As a result of cuts to government funding (the Council's main government grant is falling from over £30 million in 2015 to just £5.8 million in 2019). By 2020/21, the authority faces a funding gap of £27.5 million), and a sharp rise in the need for services, the 2017/18 budget includes major savings to help close this gap while ensuring a balanced budget and protecting the most vulnerable in society. Key points include:

- An additional £2.7m for adult social care packages, following on from a £3.2m boost last year.
- Investing over £1m extra in Children's social care, supporting young people leaving care and increasing the number of front line social workers.
- Support for those in greatest housing need with an extra £200,000 for emergency accommodation.
- Continued investment in disabled facility grants to enable people to live safely at home
- Refurbishment of the Council's residential homes to provide improved places to live for those who rely on these services.
- A major investment in the change to a 2 tier school system and the replacement of all temporary buildings with permanent ones.

Reduction in government grant



Savings Programme to Help Council Tackle Funding Crisis

Bedford Borough Council has approved a new £multi-million savings programme which will make services more accessible and provide over £10million of savings to help fill the shortfall caused by cuts in government funding.

Despite already delivering annual savings of over £90million, further cuts in government funding mean that the Council needs to change the way it works to meet the challenge presented by less money and a growing need for services. The proposals involve the whole of the Council and provide savings across the board by redesigning the services currently provided by the authority. The savings will run alongside opportunities to make more services available online, providing an expected saving of £10million every

year while ensuring services are as effective and efficient as possible.

The Council has set up the Bedford Borough 2020 transformation programme to support this new digital approach. The Council will now undergo a significant organisational restructure over the next three years, starting with senior staff.

The Council has been working to identify the savings and put in place new business-focused ways of working that meet the needs of residents and businesses. This has involved looking at what we do; how we can be more efficient; and more accessible using digital technology. Changes will cover the people, processes and technology used by the Council in order to meet these challenges.

Mayor of Bedford Borough, Dave Hodgson, said:

“Due to government funding cuts and the rising need for services we are facing a shortfall of £27.5million a year by 2020, despite the savings we have already made.

We are addressing this major financial challenge by putting forward a programme that will re-shape the Council based on residents' needs, provide a clear three year financial programme and deliver the savings needed to balance the budget.

We will open up services so that more and more are available to residents 24/7 through digital means, while maintaining phone and in-person contact for those who need it.”

The programme will see changes introduced over the next 3 years to 2020.

Romance on the Road



James Smiles (Kempston Library Manger) and Arthur Lall (Driver & Library Assistant)

Publishers Mills & Boon selected Bedford Borough's Mobile Library to take part in their 'Romance on the Road' Campaign this Valentine's Day.

From 6 to 18 February the 'Romance on the Road' campaign helped to celebrate the role of mobile libraries and how they make the joy of reading available to those unable to reach a library.

Books, sweets and cards were distributed to users of the Mobile Library at selected stops during the campaign; and on Valentines Day, customers at every stop were offered the chance to get their

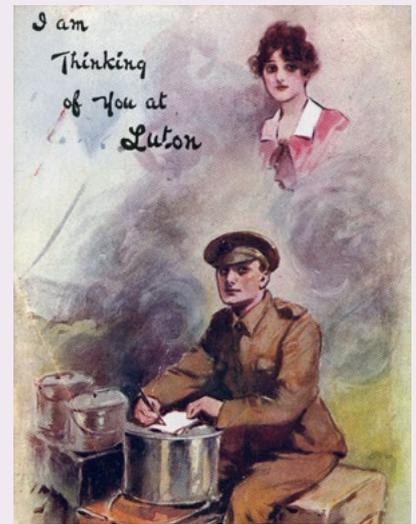
hands on the special treats.

The campaign featured four books from the most popular Mills & Boon genres, providing a little romance during the month of love. The books included were *Vows They Can't Escape* by Heidi Rice, *Miss Bradshaw's Bought Betrothal* by Virginia Heath, *A Forever Family for the Army Doc* by Meredith Webber and *Winning the Nanny's Heart* by Shirley Jump.

For more details about the Mobile Library's routes and how to join please click [here](#).

'Thinking of you, with love...'

That's the title of a new exhibition from Bedfordshire Archives and Records Service, which brings together some of their most personal and emotive records from a variety of collections and time periods - providing a touching insight into the lives of ordinary folk in Bedfordshire.



Postcards, valentine's cards and letters sent between friends and family members will be on display. Among the items in the exhibition are a series of letters from First World War soldier Wilfred Hammond to his family in Tavistock Street, Bedford.

Also on display is a coded love letter written by a local man to his married lover in the eighteenth century; and a handmade valentine sent by an Elstow man to his bride-to-be in 1860.

The exhibition will run until the end of March and can be viewed in the Riverside Building, Borough Hall, Bedford.

Please call 01234 228833 or email archive@bedford.gov.uk for more information.

Local man fined for illegally subletting a social housing property

Taslim Goodluck, formally of Rendlesham Walk, Bedford has been ordered to pay a total of £1,500 after pleading guilty to illegally subletting his bpha house for over two years.

Mr Goodluck purchased his own house in Colchester shortly after obtaining the bpha property for himself and his family. Following his move to Colchester, Mr Goodluck allowed his cousin to live at the Bedford address and collected rent from her for over two years.

Child Sexual Exploitation

The more you know, the more you see

Residents across Bedfordshire are being urged to wise up about online safety as part of an ongoing campaign which aims to protect children from online grooming.

The campaign, which launched in May last year, offers parents information on how to keep their child safe on the web, as well as advising them of the signs of online sexual exploitation and who they can turn to with any concerns.

This year, a big social media drive is scheduled for next month to help support the campaign.

Detective Superintendent Nick Bellingham, of the Bedfordshire Police Public Protection Unit, said: "It's important to recognise that child sexual exploitation (CSE) can happen online as well as in person, and that's why we felt it was important to launch this campaign to help reduce the risk of that happening where possible."

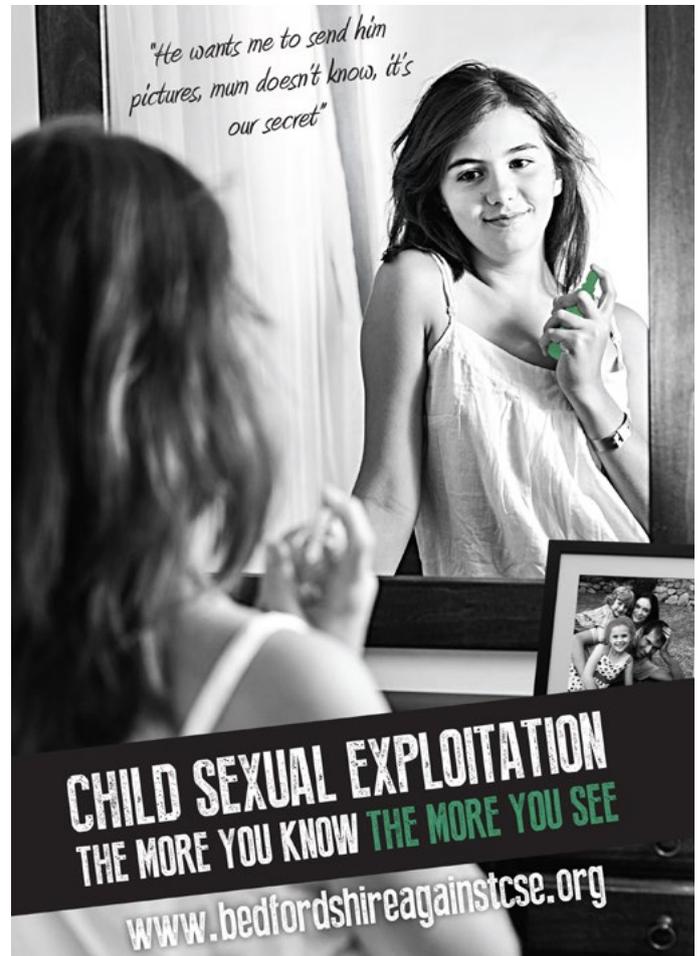
"There are some basic steps that parents can take to help keep their children safe online. Look at their security settings and make sure they are set to friends only and check that they are only speaking to people online that you both know and trust in real life. Most importantly of all, speak to your children openly and honestly about using the internet safely."

The campaign continues to highlight the signs to look for which indicate that a young person is being sexually exploited, such as a sudden or unexpected change in behaviour, or receiving unexplained gifts or money.

Cllr Shan Hunt, Portfolio Holder for Children's Social Care at Bedford Borough Council said: "There is no greater responsibility than keeping young people safe and children accessing the internet can mean they are effectively inviting a stranger into the home, which is of course terrifying. By keeping parents informed on the topic of online grooming and asking them to be vigilant, we stand united in ensuring young people avoid becoming victims of this abhorrent crime."

Parents and young people alike are encouraged to visit the [Bedfordshire Against CSE website](http://www.bedfordshireagainstcse.org) for more information on both on and offline CSE, as well as advice on where to go if you have a concern about CSE.

You can also visit the Child Exploitation and Online Protection's [Think U Know website](http://www.thinkuknow.co.uk) which offers tips and resources for people of all ages on how to stay safe in a digital world.



Child sexual exploitation (CSE) is a type of child abuse in which children are sexually exploited for money, power or status. It sees children and young people aged **under 18** involved in exploitative situations, contexts and relationships where the young person receives 'something' (e.g. accommodation, drugs, alcohol, affection, gifts) as a result of them performing, and/or another performing on them, sexual acts. CSE can occur through the use of technology without the child's immediate recognition; for example being persuaded to post images on the internet or mobile phones.



Bedford Borough Progress 8 results are top

Revised GCSE and equivalent results for 2015 - 2016 have been released by the Department for Education (DfE), and Bedford Borough has come out top for Progress 8 GCSE results!

Bedford Borough is ranked 1st out of 11 against our statistical neighbours, and 25th out of 152 against all local authorities.



Mindful Sport success

The Mindful Sport Programme has now welcomed over 500 participants to their sporting sessions since its inception just one year ago.

The programme is unique to Bedford Borough because it offers participants the opportunity to get active and social, with peer-to-peer support and advice about mental health issues, while helping to improve feelings brought on by anxiety disorders, eating disorders, panic attacks and stress.

Each session on the Mindful

Sport Programme is followed by refreshments so that people can make friends and access further information about local mental health support services.

The Programme has grown from a single yoga session and now includes other activities such as swimming and table tennis. Beginners are welcome at the swimming group where there is an opportunity to build your confidence in the water, one to one with the coach.

The sessions are delivered in partnership with ELFT NHS Trust and Mind BLMK. The "Lets Break The Stigma Campaign" organised by Ben Salmonds of ELFT (who is at every yoga and table tennis session) also provides advice.

For more information on Mindful Sport, contact Sports Development Officer Robert Lindsay, on 01234 718825 or email robert.lindsay@bedford.gov.uk. To view further details about the programme online, visit www.bedford.gov.uk/justturnup.

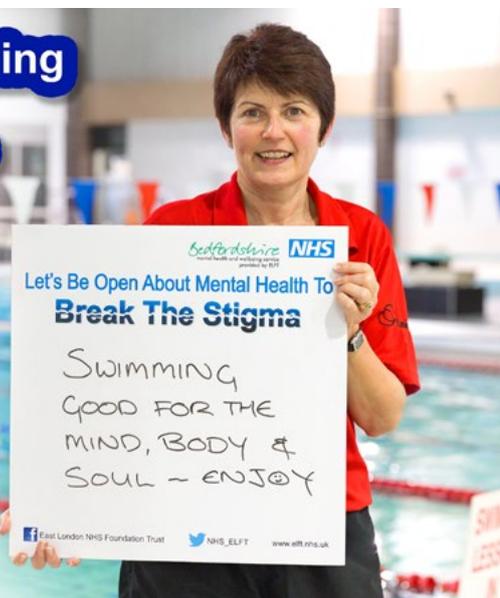
Wellbeing Swimming

3pm - 4pm Mondays

Robinson Pool
Park Avenue,
Bedford,
MK40 2JZ

£2 Per Session

Contact Robert :
01234 718829
robert.lindsay@bedford.gov.uk



The Higgins Bedford presents: 'Edward Bawden and his studio'

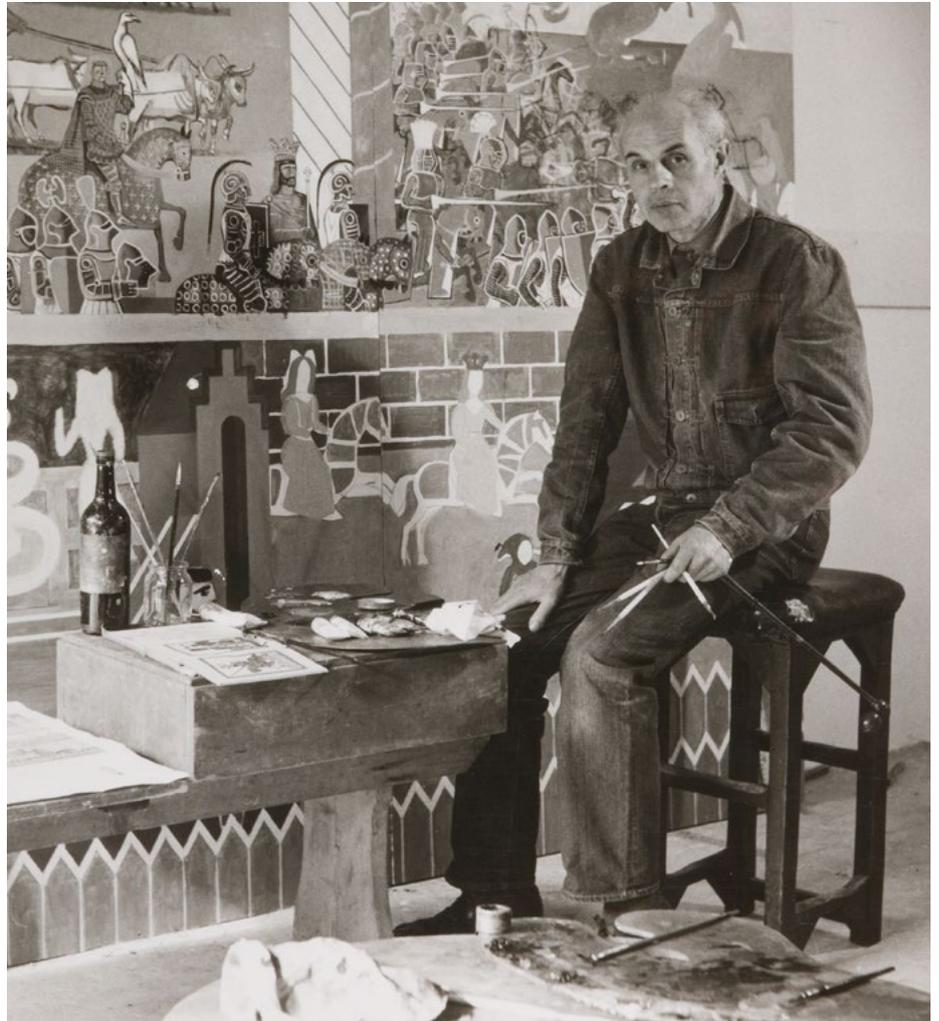
11 February 2017 -
28 January 2018,
Edward Bawden Gallery

The latest exhibition from The Higgins Bedford offers a unique insight into Edward Bawden's studio practice through letters, photographs and his vast portfolio of work.

Edward Bawden donated the entire contents of his studio to The Higgins Bedford (then the Cecil Higgins Art Gallery) between 1981 and 1989. The works included items from the walls of his house, the insides of cupboards, drawers of his plan chests and portfolios. They cover the full span of his career and the many disciplines and mediums that he mastered.

Bawden often took inspiration from his surroundings and the views from his studio frequently featured in his work. He was also meticulously tidy, and the order and discipline he applied to his designs was equally in evidence in his workroom, with its polished mahogany desk, neatly laid out materials, cherished library of reference books and collection of Victorian artefacts. The studio walls were also decorated with Bawden's own wallpaper designs, lino blocks and prints.

The exhibition charts the development of Bawden's career chronologically, looking closely at



his inspirations, obsessions and recurring themes, such as cats, creatures and Kew Gardens.

Bawden's playful, humorous style, combined with his diligent approach, will delight newcomers to his art, as well as existing fans seeking a more personal insight into the man and his work.

The exhibition is on now - admission is free.

The Higgins Bedford

Castle Lane, Bedford MK40 3XD

01234 718618

thehiggins@bedford.gov.uk

www.thehigginsbedford.org.uk

Tuesday - Saturday: 11am - 5pm

Sunday and Bank Holiday

Monday: 2 - 5pm

Closed Mondays



BEDFORD'S MARKETS

A fragrant reason to try Bedford's Markets



Bedford's Wednesday and Saturday Charter Markets
Come down and see what's on offer

