

Borough Monthly

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Blue Plaque celebrates Bedford's BBC War-Time Broadcasts...

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Pictured (L-R) Mayor Dave Hodgson, with David Fowler and the BBC's Laurence Culhane



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Have your say on the draft Mental Health Accommodation Strategy



Bedford Borough Council has launched its consultation on a draft Mental Health Accommodation Strategy.

All local authorities with strategic housing responsibilities need to plan to meet the housing needs of local residents. The draft Mental Health Accommodation Strategy identifies the scale and range of needs to be addressed and sets out the Council's aims in meeting them.

The document identifies a range of needs and solutions will vary, with some residents needing help/support to maintain independent living, whereas others require more intensive care in a residential or care home setting.

The draft strategy is available to view now on the Consultations page of Bedford Borough Council's

website. Paper copies can be found at local libraries or the Borough Council's Customer Contact Centre, in Horne Lane. To comment, members of the public can either:

- Complete the online form on the Council's consultation page
- Email housing.strategy@bedford.gov.uk
- Write to – Consulting Bedford, Borough Hall, Cauldwell Street, Bedford, MK42 9AP.

The consultation period is open now until Monday 11 September 2017. Please note, comments received, including your contact details, will be published.

Wilstead man prosecuted for abandoning vehicle

A Wilstead man has been left hundreds of pounds worse off and with a criminal record after abandoning his car.

Peter Holowatinc was prosecuted by Bedford Borough Council for abandoning a Vauxhall Zafira in Hampton Close, Wilstead, in 2016.

Luton Magistrates convicted Mr Holowatinc, who did not attend court. He was fined £660, as well as being ordered to pay £268 towards the costs of the council, along with a victim surcharge of £66.

Mr Holowatinc was asked to arrange for the removal of his vehicle but he failed to respond to the request and so he was issued with a fixed penalty notice. As Mr Holowatinc failed to pay the fixed penalty this left the council no option other than to prosecute at court.

The council offers a collection service for owners to dispose of unwanted vehicles. For further information, please visit www.bedford.gov.uk/transport_and_streets.



Shoppers and businesses to benefit from council car park improvements

A new more economical and environmentally friendly payment system is set to be introduced at River Street multi-storey car park.

The 465-space building that serves town centre shoppers, workers and visitors will get a new user-friendly, pay on foot system that sees drivers take a chip coin on entry instead of a paper ticket.

When motorists leave the car

park they simply need to use the chip coin to find out how much they owe, before using the same coin to exit. It works exactly the same as traditional pay-on-foot systems, except the chip coins are more durable, secure and environmentally friendly than a paper ticket.

The car park works began on 12 June and is expected to be finished by 27 June.

River Street car park is open 24 hours a day to support the night-time economy and up to two hours parking is free every Saturday. The car park is free to use on Sundays and Blue Badge holders will be able to use the car park in the same way as before, free of charge at all times.

Go to www.bedford.gov.uk/parking for further details on parking in Bedford town centre.

Shared Lives Week



Shared Lives Week takes place this month and Shared Lives Bedford is celebrating by holding events to spread awareness of the Shared Lives model and promote this unique form of care and support.

Shared Lives carers share their home and family life with an adult with learning disabilities who needs help or support to

live well. Shared Lives Bedford enables adults and young adults aged from 16 and with a learning disability to experience life in a family setting either long-term, for a short break or by having support to access community activities such as going to the theatre, cinema, visiting the pub or just going for a walk and a chat. However, for this service to thrive we need to recruit more carers to give more people the chance to experience this unique and individual care and support.

There are 13,500 people who use Shared Lives across the UK. Over recent years, Shared Lives has out-performed other forms of social care, in terms of expansion, and it is hoped that Shared Lives Week 2017 will mean that this growth continues.

If you become a Shared Lives Carer, you will undergo an assessment and be trained to enable people to access and enjoy a more fulfilling, independent life. You will also receive competitive financial payments on a self-employed basis for the support or sessions that you provide. You are also eligible for a Shared Lives Tax Break.

Are you interested in becoming a Shared Lives Carer? If you want to know more about Shared Lives in Bedford, please contact Sheena Blake, Scheme Manager or one of the Shared Lives Bedford Team on 01234 228560, or alternatively email sharedlives@bedford.gov.uk.

Recruiting Adult Social Care staff



Bedford Borough Council recently held a recruitment event for people interested in working in Adults' Social Care.

The Council is looking to expand their highly motivated and committed Reablement Team with 21 different roles available.

Reablement is all about giving people over the age of 18 years the opportunity, motivation and confidence to relearn or regain some of the skills they may have lost as a consequence of poor health, disability/impairment or accident and help them to maintain their independence. To apply anytime, click [here](#).

Milton Ernest gets set to become a Primary



Milton Ernest V.C. Lower School has had a new classroom installed on site, so that the half-form entry village school can become a Primary school.

Cllr Henry Vann, Portfolio Holder for Education, said: *"Ofsted have rated this to be a Good school and we are excited about its future. This project is part of a major programme of investment which is helping us to stay ahead of the game in providing enough school places, where communities and families need them and is helping us deliver the transition to a primary school and secondary school education system."*

Lisa Virnuls, Head teacher of Milton Ernest V.C. Lower School (who is also the Head teacher of Eileen Wade Lower School) said: *"The opening of a new classroom for Year 5 and 6 marks an important milestone in the history of our school. It is a real privilege to be able to build upon the strong foundations children of all abilities have built in our care. The new learning space will enable us to capitalise on what a small school like ours does best: a personalised education that prepares children effectively for the joy of learning so important for the next phase of their education."*

The new build's contractor is Kier and the architect is Lungfish.

For more information about Milton Ernest V.C. Lower School and to view pictures of the transition visit www.miltonernestschool.uk.org.

Here for you and your family

Bedford Borough Council Children's Centre Services contract was re-tendered last year, and the contract was awarded to... the Early Childhood Partnership (ECP)!

The ECP held a launch event on Thursday 25 May at Queens Park Neighbourhood Centre for people to come and meet the ECP team, and take part in lots of fun activities in their Play and Learn sessions.

Bedford Borough Council's vision is to give all children and young people firm foundations in life, through a strong network of family, friends and communities, with the earliest and best support that can be offered throughout their lifetime.

The ECP is working with Bedford Borough Council, Midwifery, Health and other key partners to deliver this vision, through a range of services from pregnancy to 5 years, which include:

- Parents As First Teachers Early Parenting and Child Development Programmes
- Bump, Birth and Baby Stuff Ante Natal Programme
- Pop In Sessions with the Health Visiting Team for advice on your baby's health
- Baby Brasseries to access Breastfeeding Advice
- My Choice Domestic Abuse Programme

- Play and Learn Family Activity drop-ins
- Early Speech and Language Support
- One Support Drop-In for housing advice

The ECP are a consortium of local partners that include FACES, Families First Bedfordshire, Peter Pan Teaching School Alliance and One YMCA Watford. The ECP commenced the contract on 1 September 2016.



'Voices: Different Pasts, Shared Futures'

Refugee Week 2017

The Higgins Bedford has launched a contemporary new exhibition to mark Refugee Week 2017.

The theme is 'Different Pasts, Shared Futures' and the new exhibition is called 'Voices', featuring oral histories from refugees, asylum seekers and other migrants from Syria, Iraq, Rwanda and Palestine.

The exhibition also features a Tapestry of objects which people have shared from their countries of origin.

The launch event included keynote refugee speakers from Syria and Rwanda, music, film and food.

The exhibition has come about through a partnership with Bedford Refugee and Asylum Seeker Support (BRASS). BRASS has been working closely with The Higgins Bedford since 2016 to develop the project, following the successful display 'Objects from Distant Lands'.



'This rug is a link to the old Syria of ours' Baraah, Syria

Blue Plaque celebrates Bedford's BBC War-Time Broadcasts

In recognition of the seven venues in Bedford that were used as outside broadcast bases for the BBC during the Second World War, Mayor of Bedford Borough, Dave Hodgson, has unveiled a blue plaque at the Corn Exchange.

The plaque is one of 40 that have been unveiled across the country on BBC Music Day. This includes places that David Bowie lived in, The Stables at Wavendon and many more.

Mayor Dave Hodgson said: *"Bedford's role in hosting BBC Music during this period is a major piece of both wartime and broadcasting history. It's a fascinating story of how Bedford helped to keep the nation's spirits up in dark times, and it's a part of our past that should make all Bedfordians proud."*



"It is fitting that the plaque is being unveiled on BBC Music Day. I hope that it will help to raise awareness of this important feature of Bedford's history for many, many years to come."

The BBC made 8,000 broadcasts from Bedford Borough during the Second World War.





Read the books, catch the crooks!

Join the Animal Agents Summer Reading Challenge 2017 with Bedford Borough Libraries from Saturday 15 July

This summer there's something peculiar happening at the local library – and that's where the Animal Agents come in!

The Summer Reading Challenge encourages children to read library books over the long summer holiday season and the theme this year is 'Animal Agents', illustrated by the UK's best-selling children's illustrator Tony Ross. A total of 3251 children joined last year's Summer Reading Challenge: 'The Big Friendly Read'.

From solving the case of the graffiti writing to the strange case of a missing lunch, children will join in the fun with the Animal Agents by reading along. As children read library books on the Summer

Reading Challenge they will receive a host of stickers, some with mysterious smells.

By collecting these clues in their detective folder, young readers can help the Animal Agents to find out what's really been going on behind the scenes!

Children can pick up their detective folder when they join the scheme. Children will need to read 6 library books to collect stickers and a certificate, read 12 library books to collect an Animal Agents zip tag and read 18 library books to collect the Animal Agents medal.

The Animal Agents Summer Reading Challenge is taking place at all Bedford Borough Libraries: Bedford Central, Bromham, Kempston, Putnoe and Wootton Library and the Mobile Library.



JOIN FREE AT YOUR LOCAL LIBRARY!

To find out more about the Animal Agents Summer Reading Challenge and other events visit www.bedford.gov.uk/libraries.



ANIMAL AGENTS

SUMMER READING CHALLENGE 2017

SUMMER READING CHALLENGE THE READING AGENCY



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