

Borough Monthly

Issue 16

March 2017

Spring has sprung...

▶ budding gardeners can find out more on page 3



BEDFORD
BOROUGH COUNCIL

In this issue...

Question Time comes
to Bedford

▶ see page 2

Apprentice of the Year

▶ see page 3

New music education hub
at Castle Newnham

▶ see page 5

Are you ready to adopt a
new life or foster a future?

▶ see page 6

BBC Question Time comes to Bedford!

On Thursday 2 March Bedford welcomed popular politics show Question Time, which was broadcast from the Bedford Corn Exchange.



The show focuses on topical debate in which guests from the worlds of politics and media answer questions posed by members of the public. The panel on the night included Liz Truss - MP, Justice Secretary, Conservative, Dawn Butler - MP, Labour, Lord Campbell - Former Leader, Liberal Democrats, Peter Hitchens - Mail on Sunday columnist and Jamie MacColl, Bombay Bicycle Club guitarist.

New Tai Chi classes for those aged 55 and over

New Tai Chi classes are starting this month at Bedford Central Library for those aged 55 and over. The specially designed classes offer a gentle way to stay active and develop strength.

All are welcome, just turn up and pay £3 a session. Call 01234 718829 or visit www.bedford.gov.uk/sport to find out more.

The future of health services in Bedford Borough

Bedfordshire, Luton and Milton Keynes Sustainability & Transformation Plan (BLMK STP) are asking for people's views on health services across the area. This could impact on a wide range of issues including what services are provided at local hospitals in the future.

It is important that local people know about this issue and have their say.

You can find out more [here](#) and have your say [here](#).



Enviro Crime Prosecutions

Zain Hussain of Church Street, Milton Keynes has been ordered to pay £776 at Luton Magistrates Court after being found guilty of abandoning a vehicle in Victoria Road, Bedford in July 2016. The Magistrates imposed a fine of £440 and Mr Hussain was also ordered to pay £292 in costs and a £44 victim surcharge.

Meanwhile three men have also been ordered to pay fines and costs equalling almost £1300 for littering from vehicles in Bedford Borough.

Mr Carlo Stagno of Sidmouth Close, Mr Martin Stimson of Robert Hunt Gardens and Mr Byron Thomas of Orchard Park Estate were each issued with a Fixed Penalty Notice which went unpaid and referred to the court, where they were found

guilty of littering contrary to Section 87 of The Environmental Protection Act 1990.

You can report an enviro crime by emailing environmentalhelpdesk@bedford.gov.uk or calling 01234 718060.



National Apprenticeship Week



As a local authority, we currently employ a number of apprentices, including (pictured above, left to right) Sarah Leggett - Apprentice Administrator with the Family Focus Team based at Kempston Youth Centre, Leah Yorston - Apprentice Library Assistant based at Bedford Central Library and Amy Brumby - Pensions and Payroll Administrator, who were all nominated for the Bedford Businesswomen Awards 'Apprentice of the Year' category, with Amy Brumby proving victorious at the ceremony!

As part of Apprenticeship Week, the Council recently ran a social media campaign highlighting the work of some of our apprentices, who are all helping to provide a top quality service for residents. Read on to meet some more of them below:

Ben Hawking, SEND Caseworker

Ben is part of the SEND (Special Educational Needs and Disability) team in the Children's and Adults' Services Directorate, also studying the Level 2 Business Administration course at Bedford College.

Joseph Bell, Economic Development Apprentice

Joseph joined the Economic Development department in September 2016. He has been involved on a number of projects including uploading and maintaining data to the Bedford Borough commercial property search engine, carrying out market research and sourcing data. Joseph has also been seconded at various stages to the Jobs Hub, where he has developed his customer services skills in meeting clients. He has also worked with the Markets team and engaged with traders as well as supporting the Bedford i-Lab Innovation Centre and i-Kan Business Incubator Centre teams.

Nathan Tennant, Apprentice Plumber, and Ashwin Ganger, Apprentice Electrician

Nathan joined the team, and aims to fulfil a full time role once he has completed his NVQ level 2. Ashwin Ganger has also joined the team, and aims to become a fully qualified electrician. Both Apprentices have proved to be an asset to the Building Works Team which has had a positive impact on the service overall.

National Apprenticeship Week takes place every March, bringing together employers and apprentices to celebrate the success of apprenticeships as a fast-track to a great career.



'Grow Your Own' this season at Mile Road Allotments

Mile Road Allotments now have plots available for budding gardeners!



Facilities on site include a Members Trading Hut for all your gardening needs, which is open on Thursdays, Saturdays and Sundays, from 10am until 12 noon. There is also a community room providing refreshments.

A full plot, including membership, is £48 a year. There are also smaller plots on offer. Concession rates are available for the over 60's and selected benefit recipients.

For more information call 07564 649137 or visit www.mralga.org.



Bright ideas shared on Community Safety

Bedford Borough Community Safety Partnership's 'Bright' event took place in the Harpur Suite on Tuesday 14 March.

The event hosted a number of key speakers who took the opportunity to network with 100 attendees and over 30 local partners and organisations. Presentations at the event included:

- Mental Health Street Triage - Supporting People in Crisis 'A Year On'
- Community Safety Team - Overview of the New Community Safety Plan
- Bedfordshire Police - Challenging Hate Crime

- Bedford Borough Council - Housing and Homelessness
- Community Safety Team - Street Drinking: A Partnership Strategy
- Kings Arms Project - Success Stories & Working Together

Cllr Colleen Atkins closed the conference by summing up the themes of the day - partnership, sharing, prevention, communication - and how, by working together, the different organisations are supporting victims and the most vulnerable in Bedford Borough.



Balliol Lower School take the Polar Plunge!



One very cold and snowy February night, staff and governors of Balliol Lower School quite literally took the plunge in an effort to raise vital funds for the school's charity, 'Friends of Balliol'. This chilly challenge saw a team of 26 swimmers take a midnight dip in the school's outdoor swimming pool as part of a two-hour endurance swimathon.

The aim was to raise funds to support the school and provide extra resources for when the school converts into a Primary School in September.

Kylie Storey, Head Teacher at Balliol Lower School, said: "Everyone managed to stay in the water for their full five-minute leg of the relay - and some even opted for a longer stint and looked like they may actually have enjoyed the experience! This is a very exciting time with Balliol Lower School converting to a Primary School in September 2017. We are keen to create an excellent experience for our pupils and additional resources will help put the icing on the cake."

All donations are gratefully received and every little bit really does help! If you would like to show your support to the 'Polar Plungers' and Balliol Lower School, there is a Friends of Balliol JustGiving page, which can be found [here](#).

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



Peter Pan Nursery School crowned 'Outstanding' once again



A royal celebration took place on Monday 6 March as the staff, children and parents at Peter Pan Nursery School celebrated their 'Outstanding' award from Ofsted for the second time!

Mayor Dave Hodgson was there to join in the party and took it as an opportunity to congratulate the staff on this amazing achievement.

Isabel Davis, Executive Head Teacher at Peter Pan Nursery School, said: *"It was a fantastic turnout of families to help us celebrate this wonderful achievement. To achieve an 'Outstanding' award from Ofsted once was great, to retain the standards for a second time was exceptional. The inspector commented in her report that "Peter Pan is the Jewel in the Crown for Early Years education in Bedford Borough", so the theme for our celebration was jewels and crowns. It has been lovely to have the Mayor of Bedford Borough with us in his 'jewels' and robes and the children really enjoyed talking to him."*

The nursery is now taking admissions for April and September this year. If you would like to put your child's name on the waiting list or arrange an appointment to look around, please email the nursery's Office Manager at admissions@bedfordnurseryschools.com.

New music education hub at Castle Newnham

Building works have started on a brand new Music Hub at Castle Newnham School in Polhill Avenue, following a two-tier conversion from middle school to secondary.

Head teacher Ruth Wilkes, said: *"We are very excited to be working in partnership with Bedford Borough Council as we develop our site for primary and secondary provision. Our year 5 and 6 children will experience 'primary plus' - a dedicated area with its own entrance and play facilities but with full access to the growing range of specialist facilities too. Our secondary pupils (Years 7 to 11) will benefit from a new sports hall, new classrooms, re-fitted food room and*

science labs. We are delighted to be providing the home for the new Bedford Music Hub which will allow us to further develop our excellence in the performing arts."

Cllr Henry Vann, Portfolio Holder for Education at Bedford Borough Council, said: *"This is hugely exciting for pupils at Castle Newnham and for children and young people across the whole of Bedford Borough. Music can make a real difference to children's lives and putting the Music Service in a permanent home, collaborating alongside the new teacher-led Bedford Music Co-operative, will help to put the future of music in the Borough on a permanent*

footing. I look forward to seeing pupils at Castle Newnham and across the Borough thriving once this fantastic facility is completed."

Jenny Brown, from the Bedford Music Co-Op, said: *"Bedford Music Co-operative is looking forward to the day when all Hub partners have a shared base. This will move forward the ambition to work together for the musical life of children and young people, and will enable truly co-operative strategy and delivery."*

Lungfish Architects have designed the project, which is being constructed by Kier.

Are you ready to adopt a new life or foster a future?

Here in Bedford Borough, there is an increasing need for more foster carers and adopters; people who are passionate about improving the lives of children and young people locally.

Adoption and Fostering is open to more people than you might think, with one in 10 adopted children now placed with a same sex couple.

In celebration of LGBT Fostering and Adoption Week, which took place between 6 -12 March, the Adoption and Fostering team are asking for people to come forward, regardless of their race, religion, gender, sexuality or marital status, whether they have or don't have children, work full or part-time, are currently unemployed or retired.

Children need stable, caring role models to care for them. If you are energetic with a desire to help a child or young person flourish by giving them a fun,

nurturing, home to grow up in, then you may be the person the team are looking for.

If you would like the chance to become an adopter or foster carer, or know someone that would, please get in touch. The team are currently looking for people to care for children of all ages, including sibling groups and teenagers.

Call 01234 718718 or email adoptionandfostering@bedford.gov.uk.



New look for domestic abuse website

A new look website created by the Bedfordshire Domestic Abuse Partnership re-launched on Wednesday 8 March - International Women's Day.

The new site is more interactive, for professionals and those in need of help. The renewed site makes it quicker to find support services and information on where to get help while keeping the crucial 'hide my visit' button to ensure visitors to the site can remain confidential.

In the last six months, Bedford Borough and Central Bedfordshire's joint website has seen a marked increase in visits – with 3,211 visitors between September 2016 and February 2017. Of those visitors, 75% were new to the site.

If you would like to view Bedfordshire Domestic and Sexual Abuse Partnership's new-look website, visit www.bedsdv.org.uk.

You can also follow the Partnership on twitter at [@bedsdv](https://twitter.com/bedsdv).

£623,000 to tackle Homelessness and Rough Sleeping

The Council's work to reduce homeless and rough sleeping has received a boost after successfully bidding for £623,000 - 2 years additional funding to help tackle the issue.

The new Rough Sleeper Street Outreach Service will provide outreach and support to rough sleepers across Bedford Borough, Central Bedfordshire, Luton Borough and the Borough of Milton Keynes.

Working in partnership across this area, the service will work to prevent

or reduce the length of time anyone spends on the streets by assessing individual needs and offering support around key issues such as accommodation, health and benefits. In more complex cases 'Crisis Intervention Workers' will ensure individuals have more intensive support. This will increase their ability to sustain any accommodation secured for them, providing better access to longer term support to meet their specific needs.

In addition, the new service will

make contact with all identified and potential rough sleepers across the region and manage referrals from partner agencies, the national 'StreetLink' helpline and the general public.

It is estimated that the service will work with an estimated 700 people in the region over the next two years; targeting not only rough sleepers but also those at risk of becoming rough sleepers to prevent them moving on to the streets.

Could you be a fantastic foster carer?

We offer support, training and a competitive financial package

What is fostering?

Fostering is when you look after a child or young person who is unable to stay with their own (birth) family.



Who can foster?

Almost anyone can become a Foster Carer. Some experience in childcare would be useful, but not essential.

Start your foster journey with us today

Give us a call today

01234 718 718

Or send us an email

@ adoptionandfostering@bedford.gov.uk

🌐 www.bedford.gov.uk/fostering



Fostering in Bedford Borough