

Borough Monthly

Issue 33

November 2018

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BOROUGH COUNCIL

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Christmas Festival of Fire and Light on Bedford Embankment

Thursday 22 November, from 7pm



Bedford's Christmas Lights Switch On event will take place on Thursday 22 November, at 7pm, along The Embankment.

Everyone is invited to attend this free Christmas event when Bedford Borough Council in partnership with BedfordBID will light up the town with another magnificent firework display to mark the start of the Christmas period.

This year's fireworks display is set to be the most spectacular yet, marking the start of the Christmas period in Bedford town centre with the switch-on of the Christmas lights.

Entertainment before the switch on, organised by BedfordBID, will take place from 3pm – 7pm in Harpur Square and Boots Corner. Visitors can meet

Father Christmas and his reindeer, have pictures taken in the Snow Globe, see the iridescent Bubble Man and meet a Marvel and DC Comic character.

Mayor of Bedford Borough Dave Hodgson said *"Make sure you come down to the Embankment with friends and family, and get in the festive mood with the Christmas lights switch-on. It's always great to see the crowds enjoying our beautiful riverside and the spectacular fireworks."*

There will be free late night parking at the Harpur Centre and Council-owned town centre car parks (except River Street car park) from 6.00pm on 22 November. The Christmas Lights Switch On will also mark the beginning of late night parking/shopping in Bedford Town Centre.

Bedford Sports Awards 2018

Do you know someone who deserves sporting recognition?

Nominations for the Bedford Local Sports Awards 2018 are now open.

These Awards acknowledge the achievements of local sports people and recognise the work of local individuals who create experiences and opportunities in sport for others.

To nominate your sport, club, coach or school all you need to do is fill in a quick and easy online nomination form.

Categories include:

- Sports Personality of the Year
- Sports Club of the Year
- Sports Coach of the Year
- Young Sports Volunteer of the Year
- Community Sports Award
- Disability Sports Award

A number of the Awards are sponsored by local businesses and organisations.

The Awards Presentation Evening, organised by Bedford Borough Council, will be on Monday 10 December 2018. This will be a glittering celebration event at Bedford Corn Exchange, reflecting all that is good about Sport in Bedford.

Cllr Sarah-Jayne Gallagher Portfolio Holder for Leisure said *"If you know someone you would like to nominate for a Sports Award please get in touch. This is a great way to recognise an individual, club or sport who has made a difference to your sporting journey."*


The deadline for nominations is Wednesday 21 November. For more information on the Sports Awards and how to submit a nomination please visit www.bedford.gov.uk/sportsawards



Could you be a Reablement Support Worker?

Reablement is about providing personal care to help people regain skills they may have lost due to an accident or poor health, increasing their confidence and independence.

Flexible shifts available. Full training will be given.

 Give us a call on 01234 718333

 Visit www.bedford.gov.uk/reablementapp to download an application pack



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Beacon of Light, Bedford

A weekend of events in Bedford, marking the centenary of the end of the First World War, will culminate in the lighting of a 'Beacon of Light', as part of the 'Battle's Over' National Tribute on Sunday 11 November.

Following the lighting of a beacon by the Queen at 7pm beacons will be lit up and down the country. So far more than 800 beacons are confirmed across the United Kingdom, with over 1,000 expected to take part. Bedford will join the event with a beacon lighting tribute at the War Memorial on Bedford Embankment.

Locally the event will be hosted by Bedford Borough Council with everyone invited to attend the free celebration.

The Royal British Legion has also organised a number of events taking place over the weekend including:

- A Festival of Remembrance at the Corn Exchange on Friday 9 November. All are welcome and tickets are available from Bedford Corn Exchange
- The installation of a commemorative bench on The Embankment.
- Service of Thanksgiving at St Peter's Church, 2:30pm on the 10 November. All invited.

- An overnight vigil, by the War Memorial on The Embankment.
- Remembrance Service, The Embankment, at 10:30 on the 11 November.

Mayor of Bedford Borough, Dave Hodgson, who will light the beacon in Bedford, said: *"We're lighting this beacon in tribute to the many who lost their lives during the darkness of the First World War. Everyone is invited to this event which will help foster a real sense of community spirit, bringing together people young and old to mark 100 years of remembrance."*



Carbon Emissions Reduced by Over Half

In 2011 Bedford Borough Council set a target of reducing carbon by 40% but the Council has gone even further and hit a 53% reduction in carbon emissions since 2009/10.

Works across the Council's buildings have included lighting upgrades, installation of solar panels, and Borough Hall has been converted from oil fired boilers to a biomass boiler.

Further projects delivered by the Council have seen improved lighting installed at a number of the car parks including Lurke Street, Queen Street and River Street which have already seen huge savings; with a 50% saving in just one year at Queen Street.

Mayor Dave Hodgson said *"The vast array of measures we've taken to cut our carbon emissions have both reduced our environmental impact and saved taxpayers money. It is vital that the Council does its bit to protect both the local and wider environment and through hard work and targeted measures, we've achieved dramatic results in cutting our emissions."*

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



Raising Awareness of Child Neglect in Bedfordshire

The NSPCC and Bedfordshire safeguarding boards have launched a Neglect Matters campaign to combat child and adolescent neglect across the county.

The children's charity has teamed up with local authorities and health organisations to push the issue of neglect into the public eye and let Bedfordshire's young people know where to find help.

Neglect is the continuing failure to meet a young person's basic needs and is the most common type of child abuse with one in ten children experiencing it.

Neglect happens when parents or carers can't or won't meet a child's needs. Sometimes this is because they don't have the skills or support they need, and sometimes it's down to problems such as mental health issues, drug and alcohol problems or poverty.

A young person who is being neglected may be left hungry or dirty, without adequate clothing, shelter, supervision, medical or health care.

In 2016/17, reports of neglect to the NSPCC's Helpline in Bedfordshire reached record numbers; the NSPCC referred an average of three reports of child neglect every week to Bedfordshire police and social services.

The Neglect Matters campaign launches on October 30 and aims to raise awareness of neglect with free awareness sessions for professionals in Luton, Central Bedfordshire and Bedford.

Local organisations can host the sessions for staff who come into frequent contact with families and

children, such as those working in libraries, leisure centres and support roles in children's centres.

As well as helping people to understand the basic signs and symptoms of neglect, the sessions will include information on reaching adolescents. This is because teenagers are often viewed as being more resilient than younger children, but research shows they still need dedicated care to meet their physical and emotional needs, support their education, and keep them safe.

A guide for young people, called Feeling Invisible, will also be distributed, and adults in Bedfordshire will be able to get advice about how to recognise neglect in GP surgeries, community spaces such as sports centres and libraries, and online.

The NSPCC's campaigns manager for Bedfordshire, Emma Motherwell, said: *"It is so important that we understand the true nature and scale of child neglect in Bedfordshire, so we can collectively tackle the fundamental causes and reach out to young people who need our help."*

"Neglect can have a huge impact on a young person's physical and mental health, and can even be an indicator of other forms of abuse. Neglect is the most common reason for taking child protection action."

"If you suspect a young person is being neglected, please contact the NSPCC Helpline, so we can alert the authorities to quickly step in and help them."

Cllr Shan Hunt, Portfolio Holder for Children's Social Care at Bedford Borough Council, said:

"No child should ever experience neglect. It is important that people are aware of signs and know how to raise their concerns."

"Ensuring the safety of all children and young people in the Borough is a priority for the Council and has led to the launch of this campaign with the NSPCC so that young people know how and where to find help."

For more information on the neglect sessions email emma.motherwell@nspcc.org.uk.

Adults can contact the NSPCC Helpline 24 hours a day, 365 days a year on 0808 800 5000, or help@nspcc.org.uk.

Children and young person who are concerned they or a friend are being neglected can call Childline for help on 0800 1111 or visit www.childline.org.uk.

Stay Connected!

Don't forget for regular, timely information on the Council, you can follow us on Twitter [@bedfordtweets](https://twitter.com/bedfordtweets), Facebook [@bedfordboroughcouncil](https://www.facebook.com/bedfordboroughcouncil) and via our website, www.bedford.gov.uk.

Stay
connected

'We Are Five' Exhibition and Events at The Higgins Bedford

6 October 2018 – 24 March 2019:

'We Are Five' - The Higgins Bedford Art Collection Favourites chosen by the people of Bedford

Wednesday 28 November: We Are Five Gallery Tour

An exhibition marking five years since the redevelopment of The Higgins Bedford has opened.

'We Are Five' celebrates 5 years since the major redevelopment of our local museum and art gallery, which re-opened in June 2013.

It features artworks chosen by some of the communities, organisations and individuals the museum has worked with, including works that have not been on display since The Higgins Bedford reopened. The exhibition is free to visit.

There will be a series of events as part of this exhibition including Gallery Tours led by Victoria Partridge, Keeper of Fine and Decorative Art at The Higgins Bedford.

These tours will include some highlights from the exhibition including popular paintings by John Sell Cotman, Joan Miró and Lucian Freud. A Gallery tour will begin at 12pm on Wednesday 28 November and will cost £2.90 with concessions at £2.40.

Cllr Sarah-Jayne Gallagher, Portfolio Holder for Leisure and Culture said "The exhibition highlights the many different community groups that have worked with the museum in the five years since its reopening. It's wonderful that The Higgins has become such a lively cultural hub at the heart of our town.

"It is fantastic that alongside community favourites, some artworks not seen at The Higgins Bedford since the redevelopment will be on display. These include one that I was lucky enough to choose and is featured on the exhibition poster; 'Theatrical Costume Study' 1919 by Charles Ricketts."

H
The Higgins
BEDFORD

FREE ENTRY

We Are Five:
The Higgins Bedford Art Collection
Favourites chosen by the people of Bedford

**6th October 2018 to
24th March 2019**

Wixamtree Gallery

The Higgins Bedford
Castle Lane
Bedford, MK40 3XD

Charles Ricketts (1866 – 1931) Theatrical Costume Study, 1919. Courtesy of the Trustees of Carol Higgins.

Email thehiggins@bedford.gov.uk
Website www.thehigginsbedford.org.uk
or call us on **01234 718618**

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Flu Vaccine for Children

Parents in Bedford Borough are being urged to get their children vaccinated against seasonal flu.

Flu can be an unpleasant illness causing fever, stuffy nose, dry cough, sore throat, aching muscles and joints and extreme tiredness often lasting for several days. Flu in children can cause serious complications such as bronchitis and pneumonia, and some children may need to go to hospital for treatment. Vaccinating your child will help protect them as well as more vulnerable family and friends by preventing the spread of flu.

From the age of two, the vaccine is given as a simple spray into the nose which is quick and painless and does not require an injection. It is offered in this form because it provides good overall protection for children against the flu virus, has a good safety record, and is easier to administer than injected vaccines.

Children should be vaccinated every year to ensure they are protected, as the flu virus can change each year.

Children who are eligible for the flu vaccine, usually given as a nasal spray, include:

- All children aged two and three (and four year olds provided they were three on the 31 August 2018). This is available from your local GP or community pharmacy.
- All children in reception and school years 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5. This will be offered at school by a qualified nursing team if permission has been given by their parents.
- Children up to the age of 17 with a long term health condition. This is available from your local GP, community pharmacy, or your child's school if they are in one of the year groups listed above.

Muriel Scott, Director of Public Health for Bedford Borough Council said: *"Children are more vulnerable to flu and related complications such as pneumonia. We want to reduce the number of our children being admitted to hospital due to flu, and encourage the uptake of the vaccine to keep our children safe and well."*

Councillor Louise Jackson, Portfolio Holder for Public Health at Bedford Borough Council, said: *"It is really important to protect children against flu as they are vulnerable to developing serious complications. The flu vaccine is completely free for all children aged two to nine. Being vaccinated will help protect your child from flu, and will also prevent the spread of flu to other members of the family and the community."*

This can help to avoid valuable days missed by children at school and parents and carers at work to look after them."

For the best protection, flu vaccines should be taken early, and will be offered in schools between October and December 2018.

The flu vaccine does not give you the flu but some people may experience minor symptoms afterwards, as with other vaccines.

For more information about flu and the flu vaccination please visit the NHS Choices website:

- www.nhs.uk/conditions/vaccinations/child-flu-vaccine/
- www.nhs.uk/conditions/vaccinations/child-flu-vaccine-questions-and-answers/
- www.nhs.uk/conditions/vaccinations/who-should-have-flu-vaccine/

Public Health England **NHS**

flu: 5 reasons to vaccinate your child

- ✓ **1. Protect your child.** The vaccine will help protect your child against flu and serious complications such as bronchitis and pneumonia
- ✓ **2. Protect you, your family and friends.** Vaccinating your child will help protect more vulnerable family and friends
- ✓ **3. No injection needed.** The nasal spray is painless and easy to have
- ✓ **4. It's better than having flu.** The nasal spray helps protect against flu, has been given to millions of children worldwide and has an excellent safety record
- ✓ **5. Avoid costs.** If your child gets flu, you may have to take time off work or arrange alternative childcare

What should I do?
Contact your GP if your child is aged two or three years old and you haven't heard from their GP by early November.
If your child is at primary school and is eligible, the school will send you a consent form. Please sign and return it.
If your child has a health condition that puts them at greater risk from flu, they are also eligible for the flu vaccine.

For more information visit www.nhs.uk/child-flu

STAY WELL THIS WINTER **Flu Immunisation**
Helping to protect everyone, every winter

Wilstead Primary School to lead the way in Royal Shakespeare Company's 'Associate Schools' Programme

Wilstead Primary School is one of five new schools nationwide to be selected as a 'lead' school as part of the RSC's national Associate Schools Programme.

The RSC Associate Schools Programme is the RSC's long-term partnership programme with over 250 schools and 11 regional theatre partners nationwide that aims to transform experiences of Shakespeare and theatre for children, young people and their teachers.

Lead Associate Schools all demonstrate outstanding practice in using Shakespeare's work and RSC teaching approaches to raise the achievement and aspirations of children and young people.

Each Lead Associate takes on a leadership responsibility in their regions, recruiting their own network of local schools to join the programme as RSC Associate Schools.

Teachers in Wilstead Primary School and their network of schools work with the RSC practitioners to unlock Shakespeare's work in and through performance - pushing desks to one side, getting the children up on their feet, speaking the words out loud and exploring the plays through techniques taken from the rehearsal room. Students and teachers take part in a regular programme of workshops and performance projects that are designed by Wilstead Primary School to suit the needs of the children in their region.

Fiona Clayton, Programme Lead for the Associate Schools programme in the RSC's Education



Department said: *"The RSC is delighted to be working in partnership with Wilstead Primary School as part of the Associate Schools programme. Lead Associate Schools demonstrate a deep commitment to the teaching, learning and performance of Shakespeare plays and we have been very impressed by the Shakespeare work the school has already done. We are very much looking forward to working with Wilstead Primary and other schools in the area to develop an inspiring programme of work that makes Shakespeare exciting, accessible and fun for everyone."*

Speaking about the newly appointed Lead Schools, Director of Education for the RSC, Jacqui O'Hanlon, said: *"Our Associate Schools Programme is based on a simple truth: that schools believe other schools when it comes to what makes the biggest difference to teaching practice, to aspirations and to the lives of the children they teach. Now in its third year, we are thrilled to announce our new cohort*

of Lead Associate Schools who demonstrate on a daily basis the impact of an arts rich curriculum on whole school communities. Lead Associate Schools are full of children, teachers and governors who inspire each other and their local communities with Shakespeare's work. We are incredibly proud to work in partnership with such talented, passionate partners at a time when there has never been a more urgent need for work that brings us together and gives us a voice."

Leon Robichaud, Headteacher of Wilstead Primary School, said: *"We are very honoured to see that the hard work we are doing at Wilstead is being celebrated and also extremely excited to begin working with other schools. By working closely with the RSC we hope to light a fire which not only ignites an enjoyment of Shakespeare, but at the same time spark a stronger relationship with literacy for as many young children as possible in Bedford and the surrounding areas."*

Cllr Henry Vann, Portfolio Holder for Education at Bedford Borough Council, said: *"Creativity is one of the UK's greatest success stories and I am utterly thrilled to hear that Wilstead Primary school has been selected as one of five new schools to be part of the RSC's national associate schools programme. I am excited to see what the programme will bring to children and young people in schools in Bedford Borough, opening up opportunities and celebrating creativity."*

Landmark conference to tackle youth exploitation

Around 300 professionals who work with children and young people in Bedfordshire have come together for a landmark conference aimed at clamping down on youth exploitation in the county.

Thursday's event at the Corn Exchange in Bedford saw experts from the police, local authorities, charities and the wider public come together to share their experience around protecting vulnerable young people.

It builds on months of work by the various groups to foster closer links between different agencies in Bedfordshire to combat issues such as county lines, modern slavery and child sexual exploitation.

Assistant Chief Constable Jackie Sebire, from Bedfordshire Police, said: *"We know that Bedfordshire faces a challenge in areas such as organised crime, gangs and serious youth violence.*

"We have had two murders in Bedford in recent weeks and one as recently as last night. This sort of violence is something that all of us as professionals should be concerned about and be doing all we can to tackle.

"It would of course be helpful if our funding better reflected the challenges we face, but we also have to make better use of the resources we have and partnership working is a key part of that.

"The different skills and information held by the police, other public sector bodies, charities and communities can all be harnessed to help us get a better understanding of the risks faced by young people in our county.

"No one agency is able to address these issues alone, and events like this one are really important in building those links across the various groups, tapping into different skills and making Bedfordshire a safer place for our young people."

Cllr Colleen Atkins, portfolio holder for community safety at Bedford Borough Council, said: *"Working in partnership is key, and this Bedfordshire Youth Workshop provided a great opportunity for knowledgeable and skilled staff in different organisations to meet and work together to find solutions for the risks facing young people across the area."*

Laura Church, chair of the community safety partnership and corporate director at Luton Council, said: *"Events like the Bedfordshire Youth Workshop are a really good way for all the relevant partners to come together, to share their expertise and knowledge in order to try and tackle the important issue of the exploitation of young people"*.

Bedfordshire Police, the three community safety partnerships in the county, covering Bedford Borough, Central Bedfordshire and Luton, and the Bedfordshire and Luton youth offending services worked together to organise the event, which builds on different initiatives already underway.

As well as senior professionals and experts, the conference heard from Channitta Lendore, whose brother Isaac Stone was killed by a gang in Bedford in 2014. She now works with young people to tackle knife crime through her enterprise Dynamic Decisions.

There were also passionate presentations from St Giles Trust and Right Time to Shine, two social enterprises where former gang members are working with young people to turn their lives around.

The conference heard about the threats posed to young people from older criminals looking to exploit them, which can underpin various types of criminality.

As well as issues such as modern slavery and child sexual exploitation, this can also include county lines drug dealing, where children not even in their teens yet have been approached by older men to deal drugs.

Young people can also be recruited into gangs by older members and encouraged to start breaking the law.

ACC Sebire said: *"Older criminals are exploiting teenagers and even younger children in Bedfordshire, often using them to further their criminal enterprises.*

"This sort of exploitation is an absolute priority for the force and our partners to tackle, and the work we have seen at the conference and which is already underway across these different areas is hugely important to help us achieve that goal."

How we are working together to stop youth exploitation

Gangs: The Serious Youth Violence Panel is a multi-agency meeting covering Bedford and Central Bedfordshire, which looks at all aspects and concerns associated with weapons. Youth violence in Luton is assessed by a similar group, the Multi-Agency Gang Panel (MAGPan). Recently, senior gang members in Bedford have been jailed to a total of 185 years imprisonment as a result of the force's Operation Kruse investigations. Bosen is a dedicated unit to tackle gun and gang crime in Luton and recently secured a nine-and-a-half year sentence for a man from Luton for drugs and firearms offences.

Child Sexual Exploitation: Police and partners recently launched the 'It Happens to Boys Too' campaign to highlight the risk of CSE to boys. There are regular multi-agency meetings in this area.

County lines: Bedfordshire Police has made more than 20 arrests linked to county lines operations since June. The force is aware of children not even in their teens yet being targeted by older gang members in Bedfordshire to deal drugs. There is a multi-agency board which meets every month looking at how police and partners can tackle county lines and organised crime groups.

Modern Slavery: The Bedfordshire Anti-Slavery Partnership was established last year to coordinate efforts around tackling modern slavery. Justine Currell is an executive director of the anti-slavery charity Unseen as well as the Deputy Police and Crime Commissioner in Bedfordshire.

Empty Homes Consultation

Bedford Borough Council would like your view on The Draft Empty Homes Strategy 2019-2024. This draft strategy aims to bring long-term empty homes back into use.

Together with our partners we are looking for innovative solutions to increase housing supply and improving local environments.

This draft strategy takes into account developments in legislation and best practice and the success the Council has achieved in reducing the number of very long term empty properties in the Borough since the Empty Homes Strategy 2013-2019 was published.

The consultation is open until Monday 3 December. To give your views on this consultation and to find out more about Bedford Borough consultations visit www.bedford.gov.uk/yourvoice.

If you have any queries about the consultation or wish to discuss the Draft Empty Homes Strategy 2018-2023 further, please contact Barry Garner on 01234 718581 or email barry.garner@bedford.gov.uk.

Do you own an Empty Property?



You could be:

- Receiving rents;
- Selling it for a handy lump sum;
- Cutting your council tax bill;
- Reducing the risk of squatting & damage.

Bedford Borough Council is using Compulsory Purchase Powers to tackle long-term empty properties.



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To discuss your options please contact us on:

☎ 01234 718581 or 718585

@ housing.strategy@bedford.gov.uk

Scrapping Single-use Plastic



Bedford Borough Council has announced it aims to become a ‘single-use’ plastic-free Council by the end of 2020.

Single-use plastics are only used once before they are thrown away and because they are plastic, they take a long time to break down. This includes things such as plastic cups, cutlery, straws and bottles.

As a nation we are becoming more aware of the need to tackle the problem of plastic waste pollution. Locally Bedford Borough Council is taking the lead by working to eliminate single-use plastics.

This will include working with our service suppliers, raising awareness among Council staff, replacing plastic cups and bottles at events and ensuring there is greater access to standpipes, and working with local schools.

Bedford Borough Council has already signed the National Plastic Free Pledge. The Council will be working with them and other plastic-free initiatives towards the common goal of eliminating single-use plastics, firstly within Council buildings and then across the Borough.

Mayor Dave Hodgson said “Across our society there is an obscene amount of unnecessary plastic waste, yet we know about the harm plastic waste does to wildlife and to our environment. That’s why we’re committing to becoming a single-use plastic free Council. More and more of us are using alternatives to throw-away plastics in our day-to-day lives, and that’s what the council will be doing right across its range of activities.”

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