

Borough Monthly

Issue 40

August 2019

Bedford Borough parks keep their green flags for another year

find out more on page 2...



In this issue...

Works begin on
Britannia Road

▶ see page 3

Local schools in RSC
Performance Festival

▶ see page 4

#FreeToFeed campaign
supports breastfeeding

▶ see page 5

Summer Holiday
Activities 2019

▶ see page 6

Bedford Borough parks keep their green flags for another year

During this year's Love Parks Week, four of Bedford Borough's parks have once again won a Green Flag Award, recognising them as being among the UK's very best green spaces.

Addison Howard Park, Bedford Park, Harrold-Odell Country Park and Priory Country Park have all once again been awarded the prestigious Green Flag, the mark of quality parks and open space. It has been an exceptionally successful year for our wonderful country parks with Priory Country Park winning the award for its 18th year in a row, and Harrold-Odell Country Park achieving scores in the highest categories – its best year yet!

This international award, now into its third decade, is a sign to the public that the space boasts excellent environmental standards, is beautifully maintained and has excellent visitor facilities.

Two of the Council's volunteer-managed sites have also been recognised, winning the Green Flag Community Award again following their success last year: Mowsbury Hillfort and the Hill Rise Nature Reserve.

Mayor Dave Hodgson said "Our beautiful parks and open spaces are popular with local residents and visitors alike, and we are proud to have them recognised once again by the Green Flag Award.

"My thanks go to all the staff and volunteers who work so hard throughout the year to bring out the best in our amazing parks."

If you would be interested in volunteering in one of the Council's parks and green spaces, please visit www.bedford.gov.uk/volunteering or sign up to the Community Volunteering email bulletin at www.bedford.gov.uk/stayconnected

HMOs in Bedford and Kempston- What Do You Think?

Bedford Borough Council has commissioned experts to look at the impact of converting residential properties to shared houses, also known as 'Houses in Multiple Occupation' or 'HMOs'. Currently, houses can be converted into what are called 'small HMOs' for up to six people, without the need for planning permission.

HMOs can be an important source of low-cost, private-sector housing for students, those looking for less long-term accommodation, and people on lower incomes. They can also have a significant impact on a local area, particularly when a significant number of houses are converted in one area.

This study will investigate whether the Council should strengthen planning controls for HMOs in the Borough, so that any proposals for a new HMO for up to six persons would need planning permission before the house is converted.

Cllr Henry Vann, Portfolio Holder for Town Centres and Planning said "This is a very important study to look in depth at what is a really important aspect of people's day-to-day lives; where they live. Check the website and take this opportunity to have your say."

The study is expected to be completed by the end of the summer and a recommendation made to the Council's Executive.

STI rise emphasises the importance of sexual health



The number of sexually transmitted infections diagnosed in Bedford Borough has increased, reflecting a trend seen across the country.

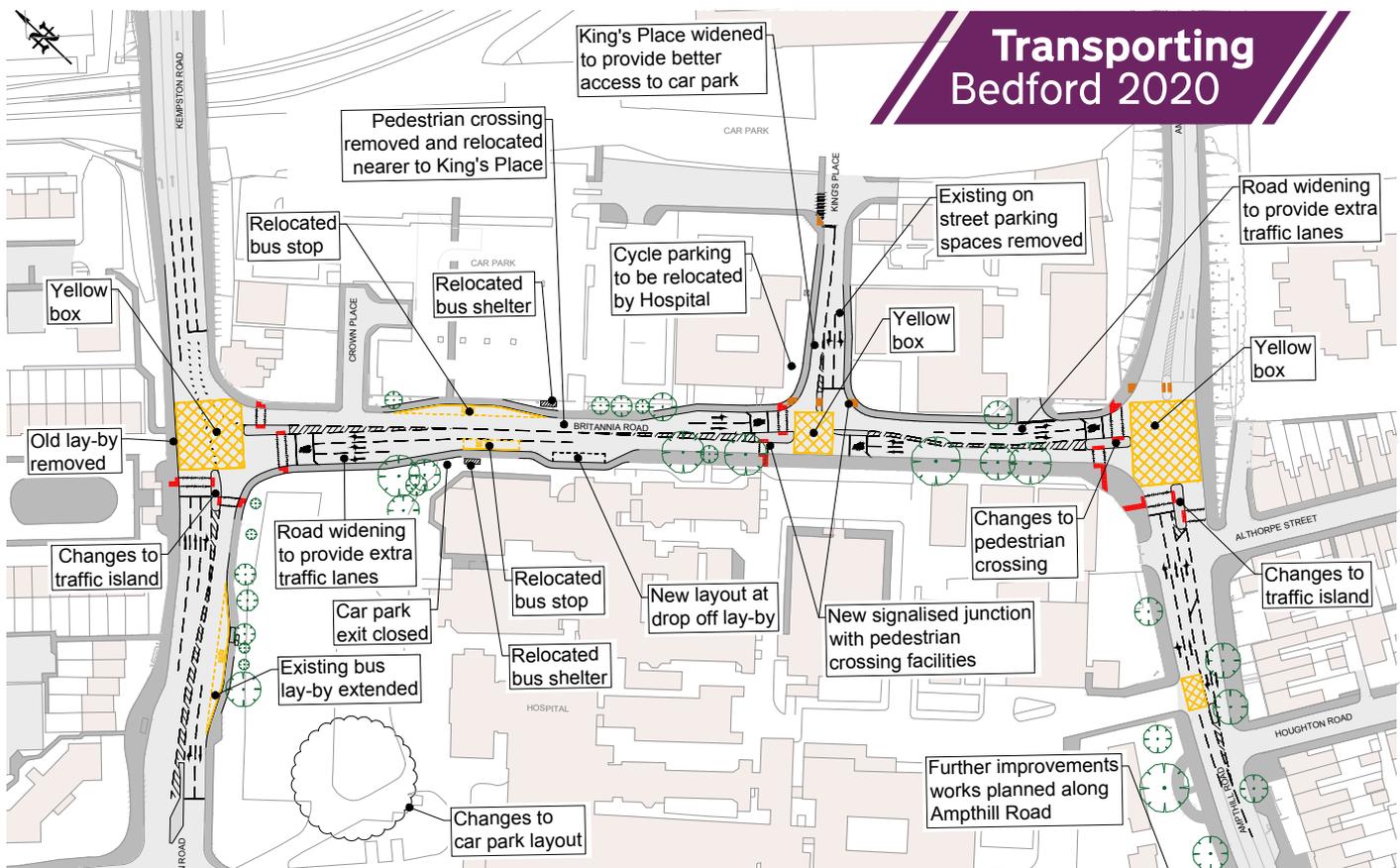
Figures from Public Health England show that 752 people in Bedford Borough were diagnosed with an STI

(Sexually Transmitted Infection) in 2018, compared to 631 the previous year.

People can have an STI without knowing it, as they often show no obvious symptoms, so it is important to look after your sexual health and get tested regularly. The iCaSH Bedfordshire provides rapid HIV tests, STI screening, sexual health advice and support.

For more information visit www.icash.nhs.uk/where-to-go/icash-bedfordshire.

Works begin on Britannia Road



The work to widen and change the road layout of Britannia Road, which link two major roads in Bedford; Amphill Road and Kempston Road has started.

Britannia Road is still open one way to traffic going from Amphill Road to Kempston Road and there is a diversion route in place around Kingsway and St Mary's Street. Despite some pavement restrictions the route remains open to pedestrians.

Works to upgrade the road include;

- Traffic lights added to the junction with King's Place
- moving the existing crossing to the junction at King's Place.
- upgrade to all traffic lights
- the layout of the main Hospital car park will be

changed to improve traffic flow around the car park, and the exit onto Britannia Road is closed.

- the layout of the drop-off layby near the Hospital entrance on Britannia Road is set to be altered, and some existing on-street parking removed from King's Place.

The works have meant some temporary changes to bus stops. Revised timetables are available to view on the Bedford Borough Council timetable page or on the operator's website.

The works will be completed in early 2020 and are part of the Transporting Bedford 2020 project. You can find out more about the project at www.bedford.gov.uk/transportingbedford2020.

Milton Keynes Council highway improvement works along A422

Milton Keynes Council (MKC) have started significant Highway improvement works along the A422 between Chicheley roundabout and its junction with the A428 at Bromham.

The works will include significant structural and waterproofing to Swans River Bridge, which requires closure across the whole carriageway

In addition, there will be highway resurfacing. Some of this work is being completed on behalf of Bedford Borough Council as the resurfacing will be in our Borough.

The road should reopen on 19 August. For more information visit: www.miltonkeynes.gov.uk

Local schools come together in RSC Performance Festival



Image is copyright of RSC Festival

This year, Wilstead Primary School has been leading the way in Bedfordshire and Cambridgeshire by inviting schools to join them in transforming the experiences of Shakespeare and theatre for children, young people and their teachers.

On Thursday 11 July, Wilstead Primary School, along with Wixams Academy, Pendragon Community Primary School, Kimbolton Primary Academy and Great Staughton Primary Academy came together to share the learning that they had taken from their exploration of Shakespeare's 'Romeo and Juliet'.

Over the course of the afternoon, there were performances from children of all ages, as well as a presentation of written work which shows the power of using rehearsal room techniques in the classroom.

For more information on the RSC Associate Schools Programme visit:

www.rsc.org.uk/associateschools

Take a giant leap into Space Chase with Bedford Borough Libraries

The Reading Agency and Libraries Present



Summer Reading Challenge 2019

Bedford Borough Libraries are calling for children to sign up to read library books this summer as part of Space Chase Summer Reading Challenge 2019.

The 2019 Summer Reading Challenge asks children to borrow and read library books over

the summer holidays as part of this year's theme, 'Space Chase', inspired by the 50th anniversary of the first moon landing.

Space Chase launched in libraries across Bedford Borough on Saturday 13 July and runs until Saturday 7 September.

Children will team up with futuristic family The Rockets for an exciting space mission as they track down books nabbed by a mischievous band of aliens. As children read library books they will receive special stickers, some with mysterious smells. By adding these stickers to their collectable mission folders, young readers will help the Rockets solve the clues, dodge asteroids and discover the missing books, having

lots of fun and adventures along the way.

The Summer Reading Challenge is for children aged 4-11. To take part in Space Chase, all children need to do is sign up at their nearest library, where they will be given a Space Chase collector folder to keep a record of their Summer Reading Challenge journey.

Read six library books to achieve a Space Chase certificate or read 12 library books to receive a Space Chase wristband and 18 library books to achieve a Space Chase medal.

There is a whole programme of events and activities planned at Bedford Borough Libraries for families over the summer to celebrate the Summer Reading Challenge. Just contact your local library or go to www.bedford.gov.uk/libraries to find out how to take part.

Last year 2,663 children in Bedford Borough joined the 2018 'Mischievous Makers' Summer Reading Challenge, which celebrated the anniversary of the Beano.



#FreeToFeed campaign supports breastfeeding mums in Bedfordshire

The new #FreeToFeed campaign, which aims to celebrate and support breastfeeding mothers is calling on businesses, venues and members of the public to raise awareness of the importance of breastfeeding and to help new mums feel comfortable feeding their children when out and about.

Luton and Bedfordshire Free To Feed campaign is being launched by NHS community services and local authorities and the campaign is building on a strong base. After surveying more than 350 local mothers, they found that 55% said they felt extremely or very confident breastfeeding out and about, while 32% were somewhat confident and 13% were not confident or not at all confident.

But rates of breastfeeding, which protects children from illness and reduces mothers' risk of certain cancers, are declining across England. According to Public Health England, 59% of mothers in Luton, 55% in Bedford Borough, and 49% in Central Bedfordshire are breastfeeding 6-8 weeks after their child's birth. At the same time, UNICEF estimates that 80% of UK mums stop breastfeeding before they want to, often due to lack of support.

Spread the word, access campaign materials (including a guide and window stickers for businesses) and find out more by visiting: www.cambscommunityservices.nhs.uk/FreeToFeed.

Tell us what you think about Bedford Borough's Pools, Gyms, and Leisure facilities



Bedford Borough Council is asking residents to get in touch and let them know what they think about the Council's leisure facilities, run by Fusion Lifestyle.

Just over five years ago, Bedford Borough Council engaged Fusion Lifestyle to run its leisure centres. This saw Fusion Lifestyle take over management of the six local leisure facilities; Bedford International Athletic Stadium, the Bunyan Centre, Mowsbury Golf and Squash Complex, Robinson Pool, Kempston Pool and

Oasis Pool, and two outdoor activity centres at Kempston and Blue Peris in Snowdonia.

In that time there has been major works and investment at a number of these facilities. These have included major works at both Robinson Pool and Fitness (pictured above) with a new gym and studios, alongside much improved changing rooms and cafeteria, and at John Bunyan Sports and Fitness with a new gym and soft play area built.

Cllr Doug McMurdo, Portfolio

Holder for Leisure and Culture said "It has been great to see the improvements and new facilities at our leisure centres over the last five years, in partnership with Fusion Lifestyle. We are always looking forward though, and want to know what you think. What do you like about our leisure facilities, and what do you think could improve? We want to make sure that we continue to meet the needs of local residents, helping people get fit and active in our Borough."

The consultation survey is at <https://forms.bedford.gov.uk/leisuresurvey>.

Individuals and groups can also tell us their views on the leisure facilities by post and email, or go along to a local library or leisure centre to find out more.

Responses must be received by 5pm on Friday 9 August.

Summer Holiday Activities 2019

Visit The Higgins Bedford throughout the summer holidays and enjoy activities and workshops for both children aged 5 and above and teenagers aged 12 to 16 years old. Places are limited and should be booked in advance by purchasing a ticket at The Higgins Bedford reception desk. We are currently unable to take bookings online or over the phone. Unfilled places will be offered on a first-come, first served basis on the day.

Stories from the Wynding Wixam Tree

Wednesdays until 28 August
11am & 2pm, £5 per child (free for adults)



Step into the world of spectacular stories performed by the Theatre of Widdershins. Gather at the Wynding Wixam Tree in the Round and Round

the Garden exhibition, and join in fantastical adventures and traditional fairy tales that are guaranteed to captivate families. Different stories are performed each week including, The Princess & The Pea, Granny Dumpling and The King with Stinky Feet.

Teen Creativity Workshops

Wednesdays until 28 August
12:30pm, £3 per person (no adults required)



Enjoy creative writing, and arts & crafts workshops for teenagers sponsored by Oxford Brookes University.

These workshops give teens the opportunity to explore different art and media styles. They will also be able to meet local artists Lisa Tilley and Kemi Onabuleand, professional author Derek Niemann and Christiana Payne, Professor of History of Art at Oxford Brookes University, and gain insights into the professional arts world.

Horrible Higgins Histories

Fridays until 30 August
11am, 12:30pm & 2pm,
£3 per child
(free for adults)



Travel through time and space with Kevin the Platypus, explore the museum's collections and get creative in horribly historical workshops. From Stone Age to Space Age, there is sure to be an activity to delight visitors. Design and make Stone Age necklaces, Viking brooches, Victorian hats, moon rockets with Little Science Labs and more.

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

BEDFORD
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Stay Connected!

Don't forget for regular, timely information on the Council, you can follow us on Twitter **@bedfordtweets**, Facebook **@bedfordboroughcouncil** and via our website, www.bedford.gov.uk.

Stay connected

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

BEDFORD
BOROUGH COUNCIL

BEDFORD RUNNING FESTIVAL

30th Aug - 1st Sept 2019

MORE THAN JUST A RUNNING RACE

OPEN AIR CINEMA

FRIDAY @ 1PM & 3.30PM SATURDAY @ 12.30PM SUNDAY @ 2.30PM
MARY POPPINS RETURNS • CAPTAIN MARVEL • DUMBO • THE GREATEST SHOWMAN

COMEDY CLUB

BROUGHT TO YOU BY THE COMEDY COW
FRIDAY - 6PM - 8.30PM SATURDAY - 2.30PM - 4PM

YOGA & WELLNESS

BROUGHT TO YOU BY STUDIO 281
FRIDAY @ 6PM SATURDAY @ 3PM & 7.30PM SUNDAY @ 10AM & 1.30PM

LIVE MUSIC

SATURDAY @ 6PM - TBA SUNDAY @ 12PM - LITTLE CHINO
SATURDAY @ 7.15PM - TBA SUNDAY @ 13.15PM - TBA

FESTIVAL

STREET FOOD MARKET BROUGHT TO YOU BY BEDFORD STREET FEAST **RUNNING SEMINARS** ANDY HOBDELL, OLYMPIC MARATHON COACH • KATIE BOCIEK, INJURY ADVICE • ANDY BADDELEY, PARKRUN WORLD RECORD HOLDER • GEORGIA TESTA, NUTRITIONAL EXPERT **KIDS CLUB** FACE PAINTING • BOOK READINGS • ARTS & CRAFTS • KIDS ZUMBA • CHA CHA CHIMPS **BAR** BROUGHT TO YOU BY EAGLE BREWERY

RACES

BEDFORD
MINI
MILES

BEDFORD
5K

BEDFORD
TWILIGHT
10K

BEDFORD
HALF
MARATHON

CHARITY PARTNERS: MAGPAS AIR AMBULANCE • THE OLLIE FOUNDATION • MACINTYRE • MIND BLMK • ACCESS BEDFORD
SUE RYDER • BEDFORD DAYCARE HOSPICE • SCHOOLREADERS

f BEDFORDRUNFEST

W BEDFORDRUNFEST.CO.UK

@ BEDFORDRUNFEST

