

Borough Monthly

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BEDFORD
BOROUGH COUNCIL

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Council Training Centre awarded Matrix Standard



Mayor Dave Hodgson, with 'Learner of the Year' Jennifer Baron and Assessor Caroline Gill at the BTAC Achievement Awards earlier this year

Congratulations to the Council's training and assessment centre (BTAC), who have just been awarded the Matrix Standard - a nationally recognised quality assurance standard for information, advice and guidance.

The achievements of the latest round of BTAC students were celebrated earlier this month at an award ceremony in the Council Chamber. 60 out of the 200 who

had received a qualification were in attendance, including 'Learner of the Year' Jennifer Baron who, since 2013, has achieved levels 1- 3 in Early Years education and care and is now working at Kempston Rural Lower School.

For more information on obtaining a qualification with BTAC, contact Jill Wright, at Bedford Borough Council, on 01234 228847.

Rogue trader sentenced to 18 months

Local car dealer Mohammed Shamrez has been sent to prison for 18 months having being found guilty of two counts of fraud by false representation after a four day trial at Luton Crown Court.

Mr Shamrez operated 'Samsons Car Sales' from his family home in Bromham Road, Bedford and advertised and sold a car which he knew to have covered double the stated mileage. It was accompanied by an invoice and fake service history to corroborate this. He also falsely claimed during the sales transaction that the car would come with a free warranty, which was never delivered.

The vehicle in question broke down just a few weeks after it was purchased and when it was taken for repair the unfortunate customers discovered that the mileage was false.

In sentencing, the Judge commented that Mr Shamrez failed to engage with the investigation by Bedford Borough Council's trading standards team and disregarded their attempts to communicate with him.

Did you know?



Bedford Borough Council's Waste and Recycling Team operate a number of sites across the borough where you can recycle your real Christmas tree, from January 2017.

Locations and opening times will be published on www.bedford.gov.uk/xmasbins.

Social housing cheat ordered to pay up

Local resident Omid Hashemi, of Alamein Avenue, Bedford, has been ordered to pay back almost £35,000 after being prosecuted for lying to obtain low cost social housing. Mr Hashemi was also sentenced to a 12 month prison sentence, suspended for two years.

Joint working by Bedford Borough and Central Bedfordshire Councils enabled an application to be made to seize Mr Hashemi's assets under the Proceeds of Crime Act. The Court heard evidence that Mr Hashemi had benefited from his crime and ordered him to pay almost £35,000, which represented all of his available assets. This amount must be paid within 3 months or Mr Hashemi will face 9 months in prison.

If you suspect that someone may have lied on their application for housing, may have abandoned their property, or may be subletting their home, please contact the Investigations Team by emailing fraud@bedford.gov.uk and reporting your concerns. All calls/information provided will be handled in the strictest confidence.



Council is a National Champion for sustainability



Bedford Borough Council has been announced as a National Champion for sustainability at the Public Sector Energy and Sustainability Awards 2016.

The award recognises major investment in green energy production and selected Bedford Borough after hearing about a number of initiatives that include solar energy, hydro power and biomass.

Mayor of Bedford Borough Dave Hodgson said: *"Through targeted investment and a commitment to sustainability we have slashed our carbon emissions and have turned our organisation into a flagship for green energy and environmental good practice. I would like to congratulate everybody across the Council who has helped to contribute to this national success."*

Quit smoking for 2017

The specialist advisors at Bedfordshire's free Stop Smoking Service are encouraging smokers to quit not only for themselves in 2017, but also for those dearest to them.

New Year is a popular time for smokers to try to quit and residents who seek support from Bedfordshire's Stop Smoking Service are four times more likely to succeed.

Once registered, you'll be sent a free 'quit kit' containing a range of support materials. The team will

develop a plan just for you and you'll have one to one sessions with a specialist advisor as well as lots of additional support along the way.

You can contact Bedfordshire's Stop Smoking Service and register to request support via www.smokefreebedfordshire.co.uk or by calling 0800 013 0553.



Council provides additional free recycling for Christmas

At Christmas we all seem to accumulate extra items that can be recycled, such as gift wrap, boxes, cards and even disposable foil trays and Christmas crackers!

To encourage more residents to recycle over the festive period, Bedford Borough Council is offering ten free orange recycling sacks to all households over Christmas and New Year.

Any additional recycling in orange sacks left next to orange lidded bins on allocated collection days will be collected by our crews.

The free orange sacks can be picked up from the following locations from now until 6 January 2017:

- Bedford Central Library
- Putnoe Library
- Wootton Library
- Bromham Library
- Kempston Town Library
- Customer Service Centre (Horne Lane, Bedford)
- Borough Hall
- Household Waste Recycling Centre (Barkers Lane, Bedford).

Some Parish Councils will also have a supply of orange sacks to distribute to their villages. Please contact your local Parish Council for more information.

All collections during the week beginning December 26 will also be changing, and this year, collections will be made on a bank holiday (27 December).

Some collections will be changing for the first week of the New Year; so it is important to make sure you check when your collections are scheduled to take place. Changes to collections over the Christmas and New Year period can be found by searching using your postcode at www.bedford.gov.uk/xmasbins.



Bins at Christmas...

You can check your bin collection days over the festive period at:

 www.bedford.gov.uk/xmasbins

You'll also find information on:

- ❄ where to pick up extra orange recycling sacks
- ❄ recycling more over the festive period
- ❄ real Christmas tree recycling points

Campaign to tackle domestic violence



On Wednesday 30 November Mayor of Bedford Borough, Dave Hodgson and Chief Executive of Bedford Borough Council, Philip Simpkins were joined by Councillors and officers at Borough Hall to sign a pledge stating that the Council does not tolerate violence or abuse of any kind, as part of the '16 Days of Action' campaign.

16 Days of Action is an international campaign that runs between 25 November (International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women) to 10 December (Human Rights Day) and aims to raise awareness of Domestic Violence.

Bedford Borough Council and Central Bedfordshire Council also supported the White Ribbon campaign, which encourages men to sign the pledge to say they will not commit, condone or remain silent about male violence against women.

Mayor of Bedford Borough, Dave Hodgson, said: *"Domestic abuse is any type of controlling, bullying, threatening or violent behaviour between people in a relationship. It has no place in our society and we need to send a clear message across our community that we will not stay silent about domestic violence."*

Cllr Colleen Atkins, Portfolio Holder for Community Safety and Regulatory Services, said: *"Anyone can experience domestic abuse. If you are worried about your own relationship or frightened of someone close to you there is free, confidential help available."*

If you would like further information or advice on where to get help, visit the Bedfordshire Domestic and Sexual Abuse partnership's website at www.bedsdv.org.uk.

For more information on the White Ribbon campaign visit www.whiteribboncampaign.co.uk.



More free parking in Bedford town centre

Bedford Borough Council is extending the amount of free parking in Bedford town centre.

As well as continuing to offer free on street parking after 6pm, the Council is extending the popular offer of two hours free parking on Saturday and all day free parking on Sunday.

Two hours free parking is currently being offered in all town centre car parks on a Saturday; with Queen Street Multi-Storey Car Park now also

offering two hours free parking, six days a week! There is also free parking after 6pm in Allhallows, Queens Street and Lurke Street multi storey car parks, with Lurke Street open 24 hours.

Despite the increase in free parking, it has not been possible to completely protect all car parking fees from being increased. Visitors to Bedford are still able to park for free every day of the week, but as a direct

result of budget cuts it is proposed that some tariffs will be marginally raised in the new year. The increase will be as little as 10p to 20p an hour in almost all cases. The extended free parking will help boost footfall in the town centre, which is currently at its highest in six years.

Bedford town centre car parks are still offering late night parking in the run up to Christmas. To view the full schedule [click here](#).

Bedford Sports Awards Winners 2016



A glittering ceremony paid tribute to 106 local sporting nominees at the 21st annual Bedford Sports Awards.

Over 300 guests at the event watched as a parade of winners in 11 different categories were announced by sponsors and received their trophies. Iva Barr, a well-known local veteran athlete, prolific marathon runner and charity fundraiser, received the Lifetime Achievement Award.

Guests were also treated to an interview by Howard Darbon (the President of Sport Bedford) with local sporting hero Julie Rogers, Paralympic Athlete in 100m Sprint and Sitting Volleyball.

The event, organised by Bedford Borough Council's Sports

Development Team is now established in the local sporting calendar and this year attracted nominees from Table Tennis to BMX Biking, Gymnastics to Netball. Nominees ranged from local community clubs to performers of international standard.

Cllr Sarah-Jayne Holland, Portfolio Holder for Leisure and Culture at Bedford Borough Council, said: *"Bedford Borough hosts a rich tapestry of sporting ventures and we delight in any opportunity we get to celebrate the achievements of local sports people, not just for their ability, but for their dedication and for making sporting experiences possible for others."*

The winners are all listed below.

Sports Club of the Year:

Riverside Tennis Club

Community Sports Award:

Challengers for Memory

– Tibbs Dementia Foundation

Special Commendation Award:

Fsella Afzal Pagliari – Fitness and Exercise

Sporting School of the Year:

Goldington Academy

Junior Sports Personality of the Year:

Abbie Turner – Water polo

Young Sports Volunteer of the Year:

Lauren Jolly – Netball

Sports Team of the Year:

AFC Oakley U10s Team – Football

Sports Administrator/ Club Person of the Year

Dee Paterson – Canoeing and Kayaking

Sports Coach of the Year:

Dave Cheshire – Athletics

Disability Sports Award:

Daniel Bullen – Table Tennis

Adult Sports Personality of the Year:

Alex Edwards – Freestyle Kayaking

Outstanding Achiever Award:

Phelan Hill – Rowing

Lifetime Achievement Award:

Iva Barr – Athletics



Great OFSTED results for Bedford Borough childcare

Ofsted have reported that 95% of Bedford Borough's childcare is rated as either Good or Outstanding.

The Ofsted outcomes, which compare national (91%), regional (90%) and statistical neighbour data, were released last week. The data revealed that Bedford Borough is still well above the national average and the highest rated in the region, against its statistical neighbours, for the childcare provided.

24% of Bedford Borough's childcare settings are ranked as Outstanding compared to 15% nationally.

To view Ofsted's data in full visit www.ofsted.gov.uk.



Christmas comes to Bedford Town Centre

Bedford's Markets, in association with Gumble's Amusements, are promoting a wealth of Christmas entertainment and shopping in Bedford Town Centre this festive season.

Markets will be running in the town centre every day from Friday 16 December to Christmas Eve, so come along to get your festive essentials! Stalls will be stocking a range of seasonal supplies including turkeys, vegetables, cheese, chocolates and decorations.

The market is a fantastic place to pick up some Christmas gifts as well, with stalls selling everything from knitwear to handbags to locally made cakes and sweets.

The Handmade in Bedford Market will be visiting the town centre on Saturday 17 December; as well as Sunday 18 December, when they will be situated in the Harpur Suite.

Mayor of Bedford Borough, Dave Hodgson, said: "Bedford Town Centre is the place to be in the run-up to Christmas, with lots of

family-orientated fun on offer, as well as markets and shops to meet your festive shopping needs. This a crucial time of year for our local traders and I would encourage everyone to enjoy Bedford town centre and all it has to offer this festive season."

As well as the markets, there will also be a range of children's entertainment on offer during the school holidays in Harpur Square (outside Boots).

Friday 16 December to Christmas Eve

Gumble's Fun Fair will be in town, with a range of rides and stalls for children of all ages.

Friday 16 December

Children's entertainment company Mel's will be putting on a performance of 'Punch and Judy' suitable for all ages, at 11am, 1pm and 3pm.

Saturday 17 December

Local women's choir Phoenix Chorus will be performing a selection of Christmas songs at 1pm, 1.45pm, and 2.30pm.

Sunday 18 December

Touring children's theatre company Imajica Theatre will be performing a mini pantomime entitled 'The Toy Makers Workshop' - filled with songs, dance and drama - at 12pm, 1.30pm and 3pm.

Shops will be open until 8pm on the 19 and 23 December. To view the Christmas parking schedule see page 5.

Don't forget that the Council is offering two hours free parking at Queen Street multi-storey car park every day from Monday to Saturday, on top of free parking all day on Sunday across our town centre car parks.

BEDFORD'S MARKETS

Christmas comes to Bedford

Markets running every day from Saturday 17th December to Christmas Eve so come along & get your presents and essentials

Children's Funfair
Harpur Square from
Friday 16th December

Handmade Market
Saturday 10th
& 17th December

Christmas Entertainment
Across 16th, 17th
& 18th December

Facebook: bedford markets
Twitter: @bedfordmarkets

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Come down and see what's on offer

 **BEDFORD**
MARKETS