

Borough Monthly

Issue 8

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Calling all young bookworms!

**It's not too late to take on our
summer reading challenge!**

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BEDFORD
BOROUGH COUNCIL

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Newsflash

Hot Property!

Bedford Borough Council now has 99% of its commercial premises either let or under offer with only two premises vacant in the town centre.

The Council owns in the region of 350 commercial properties, which are let out to a range of commercial and voluntary organisations. The properties include industrial units, offices, shops in the town centre and on housing estates. Rental income from these properties totals approximately £3.5 million, which contributes toward the cost of running Council services.

Blue Badge crackdown in Bedford

Council officers took to the streets this month for Blue Badge Enforcement Day - to investigate false, expired and misused Blue Badges being displayed by motorists in Bedford town centre.

Enforcement officers checked 215 Blue Badges; seized 2 badges being misused; identified 4 cases for further investigation and issued 1 Penalty Charge Notice for misuse.

Fraudulent Blue Badge applications and/or use will be investigated by Bedford Borough Council and action taken against those who abuse the system. To report Blue Badge fraud or misuse confidentially please:

- Call free on 0800 917 8491
- Visit www.bedford.gov.uk/bluebadge
- Download the Bedford Fraud App



Just Turn Up sports programme extended!

Following the success of Just Turn Up, the Council's sporting sessions for people experiencing conditions such as generalised anxiety disorder, eating disorders, panic attacks and stress, further mindful sport sessions will take place until the end of the year.

So far, over 80 people have taken part at the Wellbeing Hub (based at Bedford Central Library), with a regular average of 10 participants attending each session. Data also indicates that every participant experienced an improved feeling of wellbeing following each session.

For more information on Just Turn Up's Wellbeing Hub contact Community Sports Activator, Robert Lindsay, on 01234 718825 or email robert.lindsay@bedford.gov.uk

Friends of Bedford Cemetery Guided Walk

The Friends of Bedford Cemetery have a second free guided walk planned for this summer.

- Saturday 20 August - Visiting memorials with an assortment of general interest.

The walk starts at 2:30pm from the chapel, and will last about one hour. All are welcome.

Meanwhile to celebrate Heritage Weekend which takes place in two month's time, further walks will be taking place on Saturday 10 September, from 11am until 4pm, and Sunday 11 September, from 1pm until 5pm.

To find out more, please contact 01234 718150.

First wedding for new Registry Office

Bedford Borough's new registry office at the Old Town Hall has celebrated its first wedding!

Local couple Christopher Keating and Caroline Connaughton tied the knot in a ceremony conducted by Superintendent Registrar Miriam Burgess, with twenty guests. The pair, who are the first to get married in the new registry office since it reopened in April, posed for photographs before heading off to celebrate their marriage with friends and family.

Bedford's Registry Office is now open for key services, including registration of births, deaths, marriages, civil partnerships, change of name deeds and the provision of birth, death and marriage certificates.

The new registry office also hosts civil partnerships, renewal of vows and citizenship ceremonies, in the Victorian splendour of the Old Council Chamber and Mayor's Parlour.

The new registry office is open from Monday to Friday from 9am to 4.30pm and at weekends for ceremonies only.

For more information call 01234 267422, email civil.registration@bedford.gov.uk or go online at www.bedford.gov.uk.



Bedford River Festival celebrates record numbers

Although official figures are still to be announced there is no doubt that the River Festival 2016 was the busiest and most popular yet. Early estimations put this year's visitor figures at least 300,000!



Mayor of Bedford Borough Dave Hodgson said: *'Thanks and congratulations are due to all of the sponsors, staff, volunteers and organisations involved in putting on a hugely successful Bedford River Festival.'*

'The fact that it attracted over 300,000 people is simply stunning, and is a testament to the efforts of everyone involved in ensuring it was a safe and enjoyable event. I want to thank them and everyone who attended, they contributed to a superb 2016 Bedford River Festival.'

Highlights over the weekend included the ever popular



illuminated boat parade; a Jet Boots display; paddle board racing; battle demonstrations at the Heritage village; Dragon boat and raft racing; and not to mention shows and performances from over 65 local bands and groups across three stages on the 105 acre site.

All parties involved in the planning and operation of the event worked tirelessly to make sure everything ran smoothly, and Bedford Borough Council would like to thank all those involved in making the River Festival a success, as well as all those that attended the event over the weekend.



Happy Birthday Bedford i-Lab!

Bedford i-Lab, a destination of choice for entrepreneurs and businesses in Bedford, celebrates its ten birthday this month.

Located in Priory Business Park, the i-lab serves as a base for those looking to grow their innovative businesses and ideas. Offering small spaces for 1-2 people, through to spaces large enough for a team of 20, the Bedford i-lab has a tremendous commercial presence.

Since 2006, the centre has been home to over 250 expanding businesses, from start-ups to more established companies.



Over the past ten years the i-Lab has welcomed businesses and entrepreneurs from a variety of sectors including ICT/media, bioscience, electronic design, business and financial services.

Tenants old and new were invited to a celebration at the i-Lab on Wednesday 20 July, where Dave Hodgson, Mayor of Bedford Borough, gave a welcome speech to mark the anniversary.



From Zero to Hero

No. 80A High Street has been transformed thanks to the Townscape Heritage Initiative (THI) grant.

The building, which currently houses Millennium Kebab, is a Grade II listed building, dating from the 17th century, with a timber frame and medieval proportions. It had suffered over time from successive alterations to the shop front and façade, which left it with a poor appearance.

The THI helped the owners to fund the reinstatement of a traditional shop front and sash windows of the original proportions at first and second floor levels. Further remedial works were also required to the roof, chimneys and gutters to secure the building for the future.

The THI project, which is funded by the Heritage Lottery



Fund, Bedford Borough Council and BedfordBID, will come to an end later this year.

In the remaining months, the former 'Porter Blacks' building at 100 High Street will be receiving its final touches, works on Cashino at 65-67 High Street will get underway and the final THI property, the vacant 77-79 High Street (which was Cash Converters) has secured grant funding and is starting work this month.

For more information on the Townscape Heritage Initiative visit www.bedford.gov.uk/bedfordhighstreet.

Stay Connected

Be the first to hear about the latest shows at Bedford Corn Exchange and find out what's coming up at The Higgins Bedford. Get updates on bin collections, libraries and recycling; when you sign up to email bulletins from Bedford Borough Council, you stay connected to what's going on locally.

Follow the link below and sign up to as many bulletins as you like - <https://public.govdelivery.com/accounts/UKBEDFORD/subscriber/new> - we'd love to keep you informed



Calling all young book worms!

It's not too late to take on our summer reading challenge!

This year's Summer Reading Challenge, which asks 4-11 year olds to borrow and read library books over the summer is now underway, but there is still time to sign up!

This year's challenge is delivered in collaboration with The Roald Dahl Literary Estate to celebrate what would have been his 100th birthday, and features some of Roald Dahl's best-loved characters and the amazing artwork of his principal illustrator, Sir Quentin Blake.

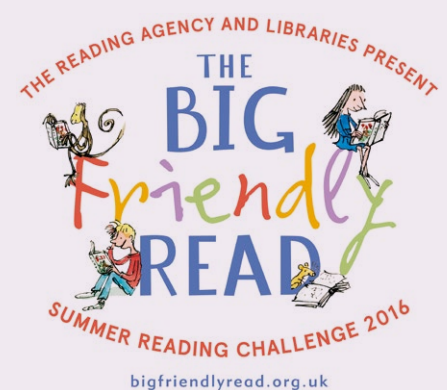
All children need to do is sign up at their nearest library where they will receive a special collector's folder. As they borrow and read at least six library books over the summer, they can collect six special cards to complete their folder. After reading six books children can

collect a Big Friendly Read Certificate; if they read twelve books they will be rewarded with a pair of amazing rainbow glasses; and by reading a mammoth eighteen library books children will receive a Big Friendly Read medal!

Young people aged between 11 – 18 years are invited to take part in a similar challenge. ImagiNation, which combines reading and arts activities, has been designed for young people by young people, to encourage both reading for pleasure and creating pieces of art inspired by books. Participants can collect their free imagiNation log and choose from a huge range of exciting books at their local library. The log offers a choice of activities to get the imagination flowing,

including the opportunity to contribute to a giant artwork and earn a collectable lanyard. Participants can also share their art and ideas online at www.imaginationeast.org.uk.

Both Summer Reading Challenges are available in all Bedford Borough Libraries now and will continue until Saturday 10th September! To find out more, visit www.bedford.gov.uk/libraries.



Plan an active summer with our Summer Sports Courses!

Are you wondering what to do with the kids during the holidays? Looking for opportunities to get them out and being active? Then our Summer Sports Courses could be just for you!

This year our range of courses is bigger and better than ever, with activities for every age, starting at 4 and going up to 18! There are courses for complete beginners or those with previous experience and with options such as 'Bikeability' training, Cricket, Rowing, Football, Tennis, Street Dance and much more, there is something for everyone! Download the full programme [here](#).

Once you have decided which course(s) you would like your child/

children to attend it is easy to book;

1. Call 01234 718834 and pay over the phone with a debit/credit card. All details will be taken so no need to fill out a booking form.
2. Complete the booking form at the back of the programme or download a form from www.bedford.gov.uk/sport and return it, by post to: Summer Sports Courses, Sports Development Unit, Bedford Borough Council, Borough Hall, Cauldwell Street, Bedford, MK42 9AP. Please enclose full payment for all courses, cash or cheque (cheques made payable to Bedford Borough Council).
3. Go to www.bedford.gov.uk/sport and complete the online form

which will be emailed directly to the sports development team. Once you have completed the online form then please call ASAP to make your payment, as your place is not confirmed until the payment has been received.

4. Visit Bedford Central Library (Monday to Friday, the library closes at 1pm on Thursdays) and hand in your booking form and payment (ask if a member of Sports Development staff is available to take the booking in person). Confirmation of your booking will be sent by email, but can be posted out if preferred.

Could you be a fantastic foster carer?



We offer...

Regular support, an extensive training programme and a competitive financial support 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. Children and young people need nurturing environments where they can grow and develop. They will live with you in your home, so a spare bedroom will be needed.

Who can foster?

Almost anyone can become a Foster Carer. Whatever your religion, race, gender, sexuality and marital status. Whether you work or not, or are retired - and owning your own home isn't essential either. You will need to have a DBS check and some experience in childcare would be useful, but not essential.

We have lots of fantastic foster carers in Bedford, but we also have lots of children who need to be cared for.

We are especially looking for those who could offer a placement for a child until they reach maturity.



...make life better for a child

You need compassion, commitment and a spare bedroom

Why not give us a call today?

We would love to hear from you.

☎ 01234 718 718

Or send us an email

@ adoptionandfostering@bedford.gov.uk

🌐 www.bedford.gov.uk/fostering



Fostering in Bedford Borough