



RELOCATION OF MOUNT VERNON CANCER SERVICES

For some years the future of Mount Vernon Cancer Services (MVCC) at Northwood, Middlesex, HA62RN has been debated, as its estate is ageing and is no longer suitable. Community Engagement and online meetings are taking place to hear patients views about the proposed relocation of its services, to better serve patients from Hertfordshire and Bedfordshire. Best practice now is to link specialist cancer services with an acute hospital - either on the site itself or nearby. This improves the outcomes for patients with cancer. Log into <https://mvccreview.nhs.uk/> to find out more and to give your views.

If your GP refers you to Lister hospital, (who run MVCC) it is likely you will be sent to Mount Vernon for specialist radiotherapy services, PET scans, etc required to establish your diagnosis and provide treatment. But it is now considered too long a journey, particularly for those needing perhaps 15+ sessions of radiotherapy.

If you are referred to Bedford Hospital, you are likely to be sent to Addenbrookes Hospital in Cambridge, where there is a standalone Cancer Centre and a car service supported by a local charity is usually available. Patients may not realise they have a choice as to where they attend their diagnostic services and then any treatment required. It is recommended you discuss any alternatives with your GP.

To better serve patients in Hertfordshire and Bedfordshire, including Biggleswade, it is proposed to transfer the specialist services at Mount Vernon to Watford Hospital where the service will be provided by a different Health Trust. In itself not always an easy journey, it is much closer to where many of those patients live. To help reduce patient numbers it is proposed to introduce a satellite service at either Lister Hospital or Luton and Dunstable Hospital, and this consultation is ongoing.



Biggleswade Good Neighbours are a group of people who volunteer their time to assist any resident of Biggleswade. To find out more
Tel: 07771 104255 or email:
biggleswadegoodneighbours@gmail.com



Biggleswade Community News

AUGUST 2021



Email: editor@biggleswadecommunitynews.uk Tel: 01767 448954



The Biggleswade Business Community are organising their first event, 'Sunday on the Square', to help generate more awareness of the shops and services available in the

town and are doing so by holding a huge 'village fete' in the centre of the town on Sunday August 15th from 10am until 4pm.

Think face painting, hair braiding and glitter tattoos, strong man, smack the rat and numerous other games, plus live music, DJ, spin class, multiple food and drink stalls, straw bales and bunting. The unique element is that every stand and activity is being run by a town centre business. To name just a few we have: Seasons, Jones' Fitness, Your Office Biggleswade, Red Kite Art & Framing, Vintage Avenue, Dee Dees, Stratton House and George Hay Accountants

The Town Council are partnering with us and fully supporting the event. Keep an eye on social media for more news on the music, activities and participants or email us

SundayOnTheSquare@gmail.com

Published by Biggleswade Community Group tel: 01767 310163

Get a copy from Newsagents, Community Centres, Town Hall, Library, Churches and Cafes. It is also delivered by Biggleswade Good Neighbours to clients and volunteers. Can you help with that?

To read it online or make a donation towards costs visit:
www.biggleswadecommunitynews.uk

ABOUT THE TOWN

BIGGLESWADE COMMUNITY ACTION DAY

Tuesday 10th August 10am-4pm



Central Bedfordshire Council's Community Safety Team are holding an Action Day in Biggleswade on August 10th with the aim of helping to build resilient communities. Their Community Safety, Highways, Environmental Services, and Housing Services teams will be working together with Bedfordshire Police and Bedfordshire Fire Service, to carry out high visibility patrols, business visits, tidying of areas, fire prevention advice, as well as making noticeable improvements to the local area, in response to residents' feedback.

The team will be available on the Market Square from 10am to 3pm and can give out details of available support and advice services. It also gives their team an opportunity of meeting and hearing from the local community. You will be able to talk with representatives from various departments and with other organisations. There will be a litter pick around the town organised by Biggleswade Good Neighbours.

The teams held engagement meetings at the end of July to hear people's concerns and suggestions. Biggleswade Community Group, who produce this newsletter, posted those details online.

GREEN WASTE COLLECTION SUSPENDED Just as some green waste bins were out for collection we heard that all green waste collections are suspended. This is due to staff needing to self isolate, and the lack of HGV drivers able to step in, including agency drivers. No idea when they will recommence. You still have to book a slot to take your household rubbish to Biggleswade Tidy Tip site at www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/xfp/form/200 or phone 0300 300 8302 for assistance.



The Great Big Green Week in September will be the largest event for climate and nature ever seen in the UK. FAB (Future Action Biggleswade) are planning an event that will take place in the Market Square on Sunday September 26.

Details will be published in the next edition.

NEWS FROM THE CHURCHES

Trinity Methodist recently had some devastating news. Their Minister Dalwyn Attwell passed away on July 10th after a short illness. He will be greatly missed. Our churches all sent commiserations and prayed for his family and friends. Sunday Services continue as usual thanks to the stewards and some visiting Ministers.



The **Baptist Church** is celebrating its 250th anniversary this year. Last month there was a stall in Biggleswade Market and in September there will be a special service. Throughout the restrictions Sunday services were streamed online and since they were relaxed there has been live worship in the car park.

Saint Andrews Whilst cautiously moving forward and deciding how to reintroduce the new freedoms, preparations are being made for Holiday club in the week commencing August 9th and the Country Fayre on Saturday September 18th. The collation of the new vicar the Rev Liz Oglesby-Elong takes place at the end of September Please pray for Liz and her family as they prepare to move. Details are on the web site.

For more information and news see www.biggt.org



UPDATE

We raised over £100 on the raffle and games at our recent market stall, and also signed up a few new supporters, so thank you and welcome to you all.

Our fundraising is currently standing at an amazing £7856 - so close to our £9000 starting target - so if you fancy having a go at a little fundraiser for BIGG Welcome please do just let us know and we'd be very happy to support you with ideas and materials



JOHN BUNYAN COMMUNITY BOAT BEDFORD

September cruises are now on sale at 50% capacity to protect passengers and its volunteer crew. Phone 01946 848847 for information on its Public Cruises and 0330 123 9511 for Private Charters. Or email contact@johnbunyanboat.org

NEWS and EVENTS



Children's Summer Reading Challenge

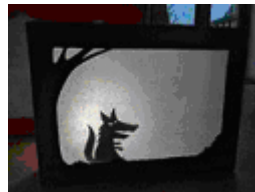
The theme is Wild World Heroes, with a nature-themed challenge, supported by the World Wildlife Fund.

To take part they need to sign up at their nearest library at any time from July 23 until September 11.

Children of all ages just need to read any six library books of their choice over the summer. They will receive prizes along the way and the ultimate reward will be a certificate and medal plus a lucky dip to win a Kindle Fire for those who complete their six books by Saturday 11 September

Little Red Riding Hood Shadow Puppetry - Free Online Workshop

Parents grandparents join with your children – sign up for this Central Bedfordshire Council on line event and create your own shadow-stories by joining storyteller, Robin Simpson. Robin will perform his own telling of Little Red Riding Hood and provide simple instructions and templates so you can join in, wherever you are. Further details and booking below. Age 6+. Book your free place at <https://centralbedfordshire.ticketsolve.com/shows/873625341>



OUTSIDE CINEMA AT WARDEN ABBEY VINEYARD SATURDAY 21ST AUGUST

STAR WARS – ROGUE ONE

Gates open 1.30pm and film starts at 2.30pm

BOHEMIAN RHAPSODY

Gates open 6.30pm film starts at 7.30pm

Book on the vineyards' website at



<https://wardenvineyard.org.uk/tours-and-events/tours-and-events-bookings/outside-cinema/>

You can Contact the Manager, Jane Markham on 07981 113714

LOCAL CLUBS START TO RETURN



Mayflower Club has reopened at the Biggleswade Social Club in Church Street every Friday 2-4pm. Contact its Chairman, Iris Bull on 01767 318434 for further details.

Biggleswade Womens Institute daytime group has changed the time it meets at the Weatherley Centre. It is now the third afternoon of the month at 2pm. The WI  singers will recommence in the Elgar Room on the 26th July. 

Camera Club are returning to Weatherley Centre in September and The Poetry Table are considering moving there in the autumn. More details next time.

Biggleswade library is now open but the Covid secure arrangements are still continuing and you may find the layout changed. Visitors will be expected to scan their QR code or complete a Track and Trace form on entry and to wear face coverings while inside the library (unless you are exempt) You will also be expected to sanitise your hands and please do not enter if you are feeling unwell or are self isolating. The number of visitors will be limited, so if possible please visit alone or in your household or support bubble. Essential computer usage is limited to 45 minutes per day and must be booked by phone on 0300 300 8055. You will need your library card to use our Self Service equipment. Study and reading areas and use of laptops or tablets are unavailable and magazines and newspapers are not available to read. Public toilets remain closed. Library activities and events will not be restarting at this time and staff will not be able to provide technical support to customers using library computers.



The Low Vision Roadshow is coming to the Weatherley Centre, SG18 0JH on 5th August to demonstrate equipment to help those with impaired vision to still enjoy their hobbies such as reading, watching TV. For more information telephone Sarah on 0800 145 6115.

IMPORTANT INFORMATION

COVID UPDATE

Cases are rising quickly in the under 30 age group some of whom are not yet vaccinated or do not wish to take the jab. The local NHS and Central Beds Council are asking us all to encourage any young person you know to be vaccinated. Nearly 12% of those tested are proving positive up from 6.5% just two weeks ago. Biggleswade case numbers have risen from 48 a week to 102 over the same period; Pottton 17 up to 44 and Sandy 10 up to 72, many in secondary schools. Deaths are still very low but hospital admissions fluctuate. Masks and social distancing will still be required in health settings, including dentists, etc.

Lateral flo testing is available at Chestnut Avenue car park Tuesdays to Fridays and now on Tuesdays in the Market Square. You can certify a negative lateral flo test by recording the code number on the NHS app, and you will get a negative text confirmation. If you test positive, you can order a PCR testing kit delivered to your door by phoning 119. PCR testing is also available at the old Days Inn Hotel site (previously Holiday Inn) on the Sandy roundabout on Tuesdays and Saturdays.

The vaccination site at Weatherley Centre is now closed but there is a drop in for Pfizer vaccinations at Biggleswade Hospital Site, Pottton Road, between 9am and 3am each day. Astra Zeneca and Moderna jabs are available at the Rufus Centre, Flitwick 8.30am-5.30pm Wednesday and Thursday; 10am-5.30pm Sunday.

A reader has asked us to publicise the effects of Long Covid. One of our team is attending an online webinar and will report back in our next newsletter. But those who think they are suffering from Long Covid would like to see more recognition that this can be serious and can continue for some months.

First doses of the vaccine have slowed down considerably, so you are asked to stay vigilant by wearing masks indoors in crowded places, social distancing and sanitising or washing your hands regularly.

HOW COULD THE MOVE TO TWO TIER EDUCATION AFFECT YOUR CHILD'S SCHOOLING?

The Council's consultation ends on 28th September. Visit www.schoolsforthefuture.co.uk/plans/biggleswade/overview

Below is how your child's school could be affected if the Council's preferred option is agreed. To take place between 2022 and 2024.

The number attending each school is in brackets.

- Pottton Middle School (184) and Pottton Lower School (268) to amalgamate and become a primary
- All existing lower schools and Biggleswade Academy (922), currently a lower and middle school, to become primaries.
- A new primary school to be built on the land east of Biggleswade
- Possible options for Wrestlingworth CofE VC Lower School (54) and Dunton CofE VC Lower School (62) , including amalgamation
- Edward Peake CofE VC Middle School (546) and Stratton Upper School (624) to become secondary schools
- A new secondary school to be built on land east of Biggleswade (on a different site to the new primary school)
- Lawnside Academy (213) would move to the vacated Edward Peake CofE VC Middle School
- There would be one Sixth Form open to pupils of both secondary schools (currently Stratton Upper School (624) and Edward Peake CofE VC Middle School (546)).

Both St Andrews (CofE) lower schools have a total of 761 pupils with capacity for 900. The Biggleswade area is close to Cambridgeshire, which is a two-tier area, and Sandy has a secondary school. Increasingly pupils are leaving middle school early to attend secondary schools nearby. The schools in this area are a mixture of council maintained schools and 5 academies (which are independent of the Council). Stratton Upper School is the existing post-16 education provider.