

NEED A LITTLE HELP?



Financial support for your family, during this winter

The Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) has launched a new Housing Support Grant (HSG) which replaces the COVID-19 Local Support Grant. We will be providing funding for eligible households in a number of ways including supermarket vouchers for households, direct provision of food and grants to third parties (with the exception of debt advice provision). All eligible households will have received a letter via email or post before 15 December 2021. If you have any questions, you should email systemsandcontrols@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk or call **Advice Central** on 0300 303 6666 – the one stop advice centre for Bedfordshire – or contact your local Citizens Advice Bureau.



Bedfordshire The Office of the Police and Crime Victim Care Commissioner's victim service has a new Services name

From 15th December it's current name, Signpost, has changed to Bedfordshire Victim Care Services. They support anyone who has been affected by crime, whether it has been reported to the police or not. The Hub, at Bedfordshire Police Headquarters, hosts a team of 11 Specialist Victim Care Co-ordinators, who provide emotional and practical support for victims. They also receive referrals from Officers who are directly dealing with victims. Simon Powell, Head of Victim Services said "We've made this change to essentially represent what the service does. We provide a care service for victims, so I think that this name fits the bill perfectly."

The service will still provide the same excellent support and care for victims of crime. It's the one-stop-shop for everything a victim of crime needs to know, offering practical and emotional support, restorative justice and referrals to specialist support. Gill Richardson, Victim Care Co-ordinator said "Bedfordshire Victim Care Services is a name that will immediately inform people affected by crime that we provide a dedicated and caring support service for people who live in Bedfordshire until they are back on track with their lives. Our new name will hopefully become renowned for providing a first class service to the people of Bedfordshire." For more information please email info@bedfordshirevcs.com or visit their website at www.bedfordshirevcs.com



Biggleswade Community News

JANUARY 2022



Email: editor@biggleswadecommunitynews.uk Tel: 01767 448954

HAPPY NEW YEAR!

Well, we are still here after a year of bringing you all of the news that matters about our town. Our volunteers are as keen as ever and we are seeking funding to enable us to continue.

A big thank you to all of our readers and contributors. Whatever 2022 has in store for us let's work together to make Biggleswade a great place to live in and visit for everyone.



How to recycle your real Christmas tree

Simply leave your real tree **next** to your recycling bin, on your normal collection day between Monday, 10 January and Friday, 21 January 2022. Please ensure it is placed separately and not in any bin or bag.

Published by Biggleswade Community Group tel: 01767 310163

Copies are available from Newsagents, Community Centres, Town Hall, Library, Churches and Eateries. Also online at

www.biggleswadecommunitynews.uk

Free of charge but donations towards costs are welcomed.

REMEMBER – if you can't access the internet, ring us on 01767 448954 and we will try to assist.

NEWS FROM BIGGLESWADE ORGANISATIONS



Thanks to the generosity of our supporters the team has reached the £9,000 required to trigger the process of bringing and supporting a Syrian family to our town. We are now at the beginning of our administration journey but still require donations to support the family once they arrive. We will keep you updated in 2022 but you can make donations at www.justgiving.com/crowdfunding/biggwelcome



Mantles Court opens in Biggleswade

At the end of November, Mantles Court Care Home in Biggleswade welcomed its first residents. Iris and Ernest (pictured) were the first to take residence in the new care home and were met with claps and cheers from the Mantles Court team. After cutting a ceremonial ribbon, they and their respective families toasted the occasion with a glass of bubbly and a slice of delicious cake made for them by the Home's Chef.



The home, situated in London Road, offers first class accommodation and amenities including a cinema, café, beauty salon, spa room and extensive landscaped gardens.

Home Manager Pearl Hope said "Today has been an exciting day for the whole team and we were all absolutely delighted to be able to welcome Iris and Ernest to their new home. We are so proud of Mantles Court and all it has to offer and it is wonderful to see our first new residents moving in."

Iris's daughter Lyndsay said "I am so pleased to be able to settle Mum into such a beautiful place. It's a really happy day for all our family, knowing Mum is going to be well looked after."

For more information about the Home or the services on offer, please call 01767 704301

or visit www.quantumcare.co.uk/care-homes/mantles-court

The NHS logo, consisting of the letters 'NHS' in white on a blue background.

MOUNT VERNON RADIOTHERAPY RELOCATION UPDATE

You may recall from earlier articles that there is a current review in place on relocating cancer services from Mount Vernon Hospital in Rickmansworth Road, Northwood HA6 2RN to other hospitals. If you are referred to Lister Hospital for your cancer diagnostics it is likely you will be sent to Mount Vernon for some cancer treatment, radiotherapy or PET scans, etc. This is a complicated journey from our part of Bedfordshire. Mount Vernon Cancer Services are run by the same NHS Trust as runs Lister and Welwyn Garden Hospitals. The review focuses on relocating cancer services nearer to the patients requiring them.

The preferred option for patients in North London, Hertfordshire, and Bedfordshire is to move cancer services to Watford Hospital, with a satellite radiotherapy service to be located at either Lister Hospital in Stevenage or Luton & Dunstable Hospital in Luton. The review is seeking patients views on which hospital should be used for radiotherapy services. It is not possible for it to be carried out at both hospitals.

One of our team is attending on line events when they resume in 2022, but if any of our readers has their own opinion on these changes, or is not connected to the internet and wants to give their views, or be personally informed of future meetings/events please telephone Shirley on 01767 448954 or 07988 822678 or email our Editor. Shirley can then include your views at future meetings. If you have access to the internet please visit <https://mvccreview.nhs.uk> for more information.

SHUTTLEWORTH EVENTS

Faulty Towers Dining Experience Sat 15th Jan 2022 "This wonderfully funny comedy dinner show is the perfect night out!" £65 for the show and a 3 course meal.

Richard Shuttleworth Murder Mystery Sat 29th Jan 2022 It is 112 years since Richard Ormonde Shuttleworth was born. Guests (and suspects) have been invited to Shuttleworth for a meal to celebrate what would have been his birthday. However, some of the guests are interested in more than just the party... £80 including a meal and a glass of wine.

www.shuttleworth.org

NEWS and EVENTS

BIGGLESWADE COMMUNITY GROUP DROP IN TRIAL

We have been holding a drop in tea / coffee morning at the Weatherley Centre for a trial period. Attendance was low and with the current Covid situation we have cancelled the room booking and will no longer offer it.

SIGHT CONCERN ROAD SHOW RETURNS



Sight Concern Bedfordshire, together with Professional Vision Services Limited, will be holding a Low Vision drop in day at the Weatherley Centre, Biggleswade on Wednesday 16th February from 10am - 2pm. No appointment is necessary. Come along to see some of the latest technology and equipment for the visually impaired.

Untreatable sight loss affects up to 16,000 people in Bedfordshire and Luton. Sight Concern Bedfordshire is an independent, local, sight loss charity providing support, information and advice to people living with sight loss. If someone you know and care about is affected by untreatable sight loss then maybe they could help. They support people of all ages, backgrounds, cultures and communities through a wide range of services including:

- Support to apply for benefits and concessions
- Advice on independent living
- Low vision clinics and services
- Home visits and 'listening post' befriending
- Specialised equipment and resources
- Social groups and activities

Phone 01234 31155 (weekdays 10-3) email office@sightconcern.org.uk or visit their Facebook page.

IS IT CLIMATE CHANGE?

An article in the Daily Mail on 16th December cited new research carried out by the Met Office comparing 2 thirty year periods – 1961-1990 and 1991-2020. This study has revealed that the average temperature of the UK has increased by 1.4°F (0.8°C) rainfall by 7.3% and sunshine by 5.6%. But in some areas the figures are even higher. For Bedfordshire and Leicestershire, the temperature increase was 1.8°F (1°C) while in Scotland and Northern Ireland it has risen by around 1.26°F (0.7°C). The highest rainfall increases were in Scotland with Glasgow getting an extra 12 days of rain a year! This might account for the spring flowers and shrubs in Biggleswade flowering again in autumn!



The Government has passed legislation to commit to achieving Net Zero greenhouse gas emission by 2050. The Climate Change Committee anticipates that electricity demand will at least double by that time.

Currently electricity in the Biggleswade area is provided from three primary substations, Biggleswade, Sandy and Shefford, but supply is limited. Capacity needs to be increased to maintain a reliable electricity supply and support future investment in the Biggleswade area and help local communities transition towards a low carbon economy. New network infrastructure is only sought where existing infrastructure cannot be upgraded, or where forecasted increases in demand will not be feasibly achieved by other means.

A new substation means our area will be assured of a reliable electricity supply as it continues to grow and the demand for electricity increases as we shift to clean energy to charge electric vehicles, heat our homes and power our industry.

Whilst the official consultation period has now ended, Marengo Consultations, a specialist in community consultation, has been appointed to keep our community updated on the plans. They would still like to hear from you.

In September and October 2021 a series of in-person and online consultation events were held on the Biggleswade Substation proposals, where members of the project team answered questions. You can view a recording of each on line event by visiting <https://biggleswadesubstation.co.uk/public-consultation> and clicking on the links. If you have a query, please get in touch by Freephone 0800 689 5209 or email info@biggleswadesubstation.co.uk



IVEL FLIX is showing the musical comedy HAIRSPRAY on Saturday January 8th 2.45 pm in Trinity Footprints room www.ivelflix.org.uk

BIGGLESWADE HISTORY SOCIETY has a talk by the BHS Archive Team on Monday January 10th www.biggleswadehistory.org.uk

IMPORTANT INFORMATION

Timescale of latest Covid-19 Government Guidance

15th December 2021 People over 18 can pre-book a booster appointment 2 months after their second vaccine dose. You can get your booster dose 3 months after your second vaccination or visit a walk in centre at the Council Offices in Chicksands, Robertson House Stevenage, or the old Argos Store, Garden Square Shopping Centre, Letchworth. Phone 119 or visit www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/coronavirus-vaccination/book-coronavirus-vaccination although the Hertfordshire walk in services may revert to appointment only as large queues have impacted on traffic etc., so please check before travelling. All 11 countries were removed from the TRAVEL RED LIST.

You need to show your NHS COVID PASS at nightclubs, some venues and large events to show you're fully vaccinated, have had a negative test result in the last 48 hours, or you have an exemption. (If you do not have a mobile phone you can order a paper covid pass from the 119 telephone service.)

Our team received the following information from the local BLMK Clinical Commissioning Group for those who are housebound: "Housebound patients are being visited by local pharmacies if they are truly housebound to be given their booster vaccinations at home. Patients need to ensure that they are registered as housebound on their GP medical records. GP practices have been asked to send in a list of all their housebound patients, who will then be contacted by the pharmacy team and advised when they will visit to deliver the vaccination."

14th December Fully vaccinated contacts (2 doses) of someone with COVID-19 should take rapid lateral flow tests every day for 7 days. If you test positive or develop symptoms, you need to self-isolate for 10 days.

10th December You must wear a face covering in most indoor public places, at large venues and events and on public transport. Anyone aged 5 years and over, who has been identified as a contact of someone with COVID-19 and who is not legally required to self-isolate, is now strongly advised to take a rapid lateral flow device (LFD) test every day for 7 days or until 10 days since their last contact with the person who tested positive for COVID-19 if this is earlier.

If any of these LFD tests are positive they should self-isolate in order to protect other people. You can order lateral flow test kits by phoning 119 or online at www.gov.uk/order-coronavirus-rapid-lateral-flow-tests Residents that need transport to vaccination sites can book free travel via

www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/info/135/coronavirus/918/vaccinations_for_covid-19/4

To check opening hours of Chicksands walk in service visit www.blmkccg.nhs.uk/covid-19/drop-in-covid-19-vaccination-sessions-available or visit Cheeseman Pharmacy, who are providing this service, on Facebook.

Cases have risen significantly in Central Bedfordshire, mainly in the 5-10 and 40-49 age groups. Biggleswade is one of the areas most affected, with rates above 1000 per 100,000 people. 2 doses of vaccine is not considered sufficient to protect you from serious illness with the new Omicron strain. The onus now is on everyone taking responsibility for their own safety and wellbeing. Get a booster jab, wear a mask indoors where appropriate, social distance where possible, improve ventilation at home if you are entertaining and keep washing and sanitising your hands.

A Defibrillator is a device that gives a high energy electric shock to the heart of someone who is in cardiac arrest. It is an essential part of trying to save the life.

Where to find defibrillators in Biggleswade

- Century House, Market Place, Biggleswade SG18 8UU
- Pictures of Lilly, 6 Hitchin St, Biggleswade SG18 8AX
- Trinity Methodist Church (rear wall) SG18 0AP
- Biggleswade Fire Station, Chestnut Ave, SG18 0LL
- Saxon Pool & Leisure Centre SG18 8SU

Cardiac arrests can happen to anyone, at any time. The following steps give someone the best chance of survival. If you come across someone in cardiac arrest:

1. Call 999
2. Start CPR
3. Ask someone to bring a defibrillator if there's one nearby
4. Turn on the defibrillator and follow its instructions