



Biggleswade Community News

AUGUST 2022



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St Andrew's Country Fayre 2022

The annual Country Fayre at St Andrew's Church Biggleswade is taking place on Saturday 17th September from 10am-3.30pm, within the church grounds. As usual the day promises to be full of fun, food and family favourites. Entrance is **FREE**, and there will be raffles, tombolas and hampers to win, archery and lots of other fun games to play, an arena packed with different performances and lots of food opportunities as well.

This year it is in support of the Stevenage and Hitchin Samaritans branch. They are self-funded and the need for them has greatly increased in recent years. Also the *YMCA that provides accommodation, educational support and life-skills to many young people across the UK.*

Make sure that you check the Church website (<https://standrewschurchbiggleswade.org.uk>) as well as their Facebook and Instagram (*@standrewsbiggleswade*) for more information and updates.



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On Monday 11th July, Her Majesty's Lord Lieutenant of Bedfordshire, Helen Nellis, presented Biggleswade Good Neighbours (BGN) with the Queen's Award for Voluntary Service. This honour – the equivalent to an MBE – is the highest award given to local voluntary groups in the UK, and was accepted on behalf of all BGN volunteers by the chair, John Robertson, and the co-chair,



Erica Borgstrom.



The presentation ceremony was very well attended by BGN volunteers and clients, who also heard speeches by Cliff Andrews from the Bedfordshire Rural Communities Charity (BRCC), the High Sheriff of Bedfordshire, and Biggleswade's Mayor.

Lord Lieutenant of Bedfordshire Helen Nellis, with John Robertson, Chair of Biggleswade Good Neighbours, and Erica Borgstrom, co-chair

Among the many reasons given for BGN receiving the award, the most

prominent was the extraordinary effort and dedication demonstrated by volunteers in coping with the Covid-19 lockdowns, when client numbers increased almost sixfold. Fortunately, volunteer numbers surged as well.



Recently, BGN has started turning its attention to the impact the climate emergency is having on the day-to-day lives of the most vulnerable in our community. With heatwaves becoming more common and increasingly severe, the befriending network set up during the pandemic is coming into its own as a means to check on the welfare of people who might otherwise slip through the cracks of a crumbling welfare state.

Please help spread the word. Call 07771 104255 if you need



BIGGLESWADE SANDY LIONS CLUB (CIO)

Our Lions year runs from 1st July to 30th June when new officers are usually elected, but due to the pandemic current officers are staying in post for 2022/3.

Our activities for 2021/2 include furnishing a house in Potton for refugees from Ukraine, and we have continued to distribute more books to schools and hope this can continue for the foreseeable future. On the 30th June we took a group for a trip and cream tea on the Great Ouse. We have been busy attending local fetes at Langford and will be at the Gamlingay Show on 17th September with more events planned in the run up to Christmas.

CAN YOU HELP? We need unchipped clean mugs. If you can help please phone 01462 814693 or 03458 339749.

A NEW ARTS CENTRE GETS A STEP CLOSER

After a year and a second planning application by Biggleswade Arts Collective, the planned new arts and theatre complex in the Grade II listed Old Town Hall, off the Market Square in Biggleswade, was granted permission in June.



This is the first step towards our town centre getting its own arts venue, with flexible space which will include a 100 seat theatre. At its entrance it will include a foyer café / bar that will provide gallery

space for local artists.

The Bigg Theatre plans to offer live music, plays, comedy, musicals, and event cinema, but will also be available for birthday parties, rehearsals, youth groups etc.

On Facebook people have been asking for more information about Dunton Boot Sales. They are located at the rear of Horseshoe Close, SG188RY (left opposite the pub into Boot Lane, then first left. Arrive 1.30 pm for sellers cars which cost £5. Vans £10. The Sale opens at 2pm. There is a cash only bar on site.

ABOUT THE TOWN

Grand Union Housing Group's Sorrel Gardens Development

Sorrel Gardens is a thoughtfully designed independent living development of 93 one and two bedroom apartments, all with private balconies or terrace. Available through shared ownership and social rent, exclusively for the over 55s, the properties offer independent

living with tailored care and support. There are lifts to all floors and the building is accessible to wheelchair users and those with reduced mobility.



Kitchens come with integrated appliances including oven, washing machine, dishwasher, fridge freezer. The spa bathrooms, designed as wet rooms, all have level access showers. With electric heating throughout. Kitchen & bathroom flooring included; you can put your own stamp on the rest of your home.

With support staff on duty in the building 24/7, you can also access tailored care packages in partnership with a local community care provider approved by Central Bedfordshire Council. You can also enjoy the beautifully appointed social spaces and landscaped gardens, perfect for socialising. With an on-site café, hairdresser, cinema room and beauty therapy room, you can also take advantage of the many organised activities on offer.

To arrange a viewing of the show apartment ring Rachel Mannings: 07788 345784 / 0333 015 2282 or Faye Baker on 07483 321318 or email

sorrelgardens@guhg.co.uk



SOME DATES

Sunday 14th August; 5 - 7 pm Not Strictly Jazz, Fairfield House & Studio, Fairfield Road, Biggleswade, SG18 0AA. Contact 01767 312186 or email sarahwiggs@hotmail.co.uk

Saturday 20th August ; Dunton Recreation Ground Car Boot Sale, Sellers 1.30 pm, buyers 2 pm

POTTON MIDDLE SCHOOL TO CLOSE

The 'Have Your Say' consultation carried out in 2021 did not reach any consensus for the schools elsewhere in the Biggleswade area, and the only change that will be made starting in September will be in Potton. Potton Lower and Potton Middle Schools will merge and the Potton Middle School site will close and the changes will take place for the September 2023 term.

The reason for the earlier change of the two Potton schools, ahead of the other schools within this area, is in direct response to nearby schools in other areas that have already altered their age rate, resulting in reduced numbers being experienced in Potton in Years 7 and 8.

With the significant housing development taking place locally it is anticipated that 2,613 additional school places will be needed by 2035. Two new schools, a senior and a primary school, are planned to be built on land off Baden Powell Way, Biggleswade and will be key to providing sufficient school places.

If a suitable model can be agreed, it is anticipated that 2 tier schooling across all the Biggleswade area will be in place by 2024, apart from the proposed move of Lawnside to the Edward Peake site, which is not expected to take place before 2025.



Did you hear or manage to see the South Korean Black Eagles flying over Biggleswade?

A great photo posted on Facebook.



NATIONAL TRUST'S WIMPOLE HALL

Following an enjoyable long walk at Wimpole Hall, a local resident posted on Facebook that at Wimpole Hall their park and gardens are now accessible by all. The walks vary from 1.5 mile to a multi transport 5 mile long tract for bikes, walkers or those on mobility scooters. Mobility scooters and wheelchairs are available to hire between 9.30 am and 4.30 pm, by phoning their Welcome Team on 01223 206000, or emailing wimpolehall@nationaltrust.org

Standard charges are £18 for an Adult, £9 for a child. For the gardens and park alone it is £9 and £4.50. Family discounts are available. Entry is free for National Trust members. Toilet facilities are available at Hardwicke Gate and Home Farm from 9.30am to 4pm and at the Hall from 9.30am to 3.30pm.

It is heartening to know that even those of us who can no longer walk very well can still enjoy one of our local gems and access the countryside.



DANISH CAMP, WILLINGTON RIVER TRIPS

One of our favourite local visitor attractions is the Danish Camp Riverside Visitor Centre, at Chapel Lane, Willington MK44 30G. They are pleased to announce that after the long Covid shutdown they are recommencing their Sunday river trips on the Artful Dodger on Wednesdays at 9.30am or Sundays at 3.30pm. The boat is licensed for 12 people and is available for private hire. Breakfast, lunch or cream teas are available to pre-order. For more information telephone 01234 838709 or email info@danishcamp.co.uk

USEFUL INFORMATION

FACEBOOK IN BIGGLESWADE COMMUNITY NEWS

It may seem odd that we are writing about Facebook in a newsletter which was originally published only in paper form.

In 2022 a number of local groups have started on Facebook, including, "Adopt a Street", "Wellbeing in Biggleswade" "Biggleswade Walking and Cycling" and "Biggleswade Community Garden". They have brought people together face to face and are booming.

We know that many of you don't use Facebook for a variety of reasons. Unfortunately at the moment there is no other way to join these groups and meet up with others. Our two Councils now know that a fair proportion of people still do not use the internet, and therefore cannot use Facebook or visit websites, where most information is available.

We care very much that everyone has the chance to take part in what is going on in Biggleswade, so if you don't have family or friends to ask for help using the Internet; ask us!

There are local organisations that can teach you to use the Internet safely. But you do need to ask for help. If enough of our readers are interested in learning how to access information using their phones, tablets or computers we may be able to arrange small training sessions. Speak to Shirley on 07988 822678 to find out more. She will be gathering this information to see if there is enough interest.

COULD GETTING YOUR STATE PENSION WEEKLY OR FORTNIGHTLY HELP YOU TO MANAGE YOUR FINANCES?

In these difficult financial times, it is a little known fact that, unlike most other benefits, you can still have your State Pension paid to you weekly or fortnightly.

A request to change can only be made by phone on 0800 731 0469 (you may have to hold for a time) or by letter to The Pensions Service 12, Posthandling SiteB, Wolverhampton WV991AP. On the phone you will be asked a few simple security questions. By letter you will need to quote your National Insurance Number. The request cannot be refused and you can change back at any time.

A LITTLE HELP

Low income benefits and tax credits You may get a payment of £650 paid in 2 lump sums of £326 and £324 if you get payments of any of the following:

Universal Credit income-based Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA)
Income-related Employment and Support Allowance (ESA)
Income Support, Pension Credit, Child Tax Credit or Working Tax credit.

One payment will be made now and the other in the autumn.

Disability Cost of Living Payment You may get a lump sum payment of £150 if you're getting Attendance Allowance, Constant Attendance Allowance, Disability Living Allowance, Personal Independence Payment, Armed Forces Independence Payment or War Pension Mobility Supplement. This payment will be made from September 2022.

Pensioner Cost of Living Payment If you're entitled to a Winter Fuel Payment for winter 2022 to 2023, you will get an extra £300 for your household paid with your normal payment from November 2022. This is in addition to any Cost of Living Payment you get with your benefit or tax credits.

COVID BOOSTERS will be offered to all people over 50 from September onwards. To volunteer at the Biggleswade Hospital vaccination centre this autumn please email rufusvolunteerteamleader@gmail.com

Central Bedfordshire Council is currently emailing residents asking them to apply to join their electoral register, to allow them to vote in the 2023 elections or referendum.

Go to www.biggleswadecommunitynews.uk for updates.

if you can't access the Internet ring us on 01767 448954 and we will try to assist.

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Copies are available from Newsagents, Community Centres, Town Hall, Library, Churches and cafes. Also online at www.biggleswadecommunitynews.uk