



Biggleswade Community News

JANUARY 2023



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We try to provide as complete a picture as possible of what is on offer in Biggleswade and nearby. If you want to be a correspondant for a community organisation and have an input email us editor@biggleswadecommunitynews.uk

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Copies are available from Newsagents, Community Centres, Town Hall, Library, Churches and cafes.

Also delivered by Biggleswade Good Neighbours to their clients and volunteers.

You can read it online at www.biggleswadecommunitynews.uk

Adverts from £15 per edition. Enquiries to 07988 822678



Local charity recognised for providing 'Excellence for Carers'

Carers in Bedfordshire is a not-for-profit registered charity, providing support for unpaid carers of family members and friends throughout

Bedfordshire. It has been awarded the National Excellence for Carers Award by the Carers Trust, for the support given to family unpaid carers in the county. The award follows a rigorous assessment of the support services the charity provides, including the quality of its leadership, staff, internal processes and engagement with key local partners



BIGGLESWADE HISTORY SOCIETY

Meets monthly at the Trinity Methodist Church, Shortmead Street, Biggleswade, usually at 7:30pm for 8:00pm, on the first Monday of each month (except for Public Holidays when we move to the second Monday). Speakers provide a variety of talks and presentations. During the summer months there are visits to places of interest. Meetings are free of charge for members, with visitors welcome to attend for a charge of £4.00 per meeting. If you are interested in becoming a member please contact Jennifer Topham, 01767 313407 for details or see www.biggleswadehistory.org.uk

Upcoming Events

9 January "92nd Squadron: Life and Times" - a talk by Steve Lacey. This is not a military talk, so come and find out what it's about.

6 February "Can you identify these relics?" - an evening with the Archive Team.



BIGGLESWADE COMMUNITY GROUP **The Way Forward**

Until now we have been a very small team and this needs to change in order to deliver our vision for the community.

One priority at the moment is to build a working group to continue to produce this newsletter. We are looking for reporters who can send us items about local community organisations or initiatives. Is that something for you or someone you know?

We also need to meet our considerable printing cost, so need help with fund raising (including advertising?).

We work in partnership with Biggleswade Good Neighbours and are interested in partnering with other community organisations. Together we could achieve more; for example in publicising what we have to offer, organising events and offering services such as courses, information and help. Please get in touch to share your ideas.

If you are interested in learning more about how you could get involved please email enquire@biggleswadecommunitygroup.org.uk or phone Alan on 01767 310163



Biggleswade Good Neighbours provide help and support for anyone who needs it. They are planning a coffee morning, to which all volunteers and clients are invited, on Saturday 11th February between 1030am and midday in the hall at

Biggleswade Baptist Church.



January 18-25 is the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity. Our Churches will be inviting everyone to join them at their regular prayer meetings. A joint service is planned at St Andrew's Church at 6pm on Sunday January 22.

ABOUT THE TOWN

Biggleswade Library closed on Saturday 24th December for a major refurbishment. It is planned to re-open in Summer 2023, with a co-located Children's Centre and Registrar's service. In addition, there has been an investment of new book stock for the library.

During the closure for refurbishment the following alternative services will be available:

- Library members can borrow and use the full range of library services, including computers and online reference services, from any Central Bedfordshire or Bedford Borough Library.
- From Monday 9 January, there will be a drop off and pick up point for library stock at the Saxon Centre, Biggleswade, during the centre's opening hours.
- Customers who have difficulty accessing an alternative library or the Saxon Centre may be eligible to use the Home Library Service on a temporary basis.

Customers may reserve items from any Central Bedfordshire or Bedford Borough library (no charge) for collection at Biggleswade Saxon library service point, or any library of their choice, either using the library app or through the Virtual Library Catalogue: <https://beds-arena.culturalservices.net/web/arena/> Customers without computer access may telephone: 0300 300 8055 to speak to staff at Sandy Library from week beginning 9th January, during the normal opening hours.

The staff look forward to welcoming customers back to the refurbished Biggleswade Library in the summer.

DROVE ROAD CEMETERY

Work has started on the restoration of the historic chapel in Drove Road Cemetery. Scaffolding was erected at the end of November for the first phase that is to be completed by the end of February. It is a listed building requiring expert workers and the project is expected to take three years.

CBC are installing a series of new bike repair stations for residents to use in different locations across Central Bedfordshire, as part of a suite of wider improvements to cycling infrastructure.

Working in partnership with bicycle storage solution company Turvec, the first round of installations has been completed.

Each repair station contains a stand to mount a bike on, an integrated multi-valve pump and a series of tools, such as screwdrivers, spanners, hex keys, and tyre levers. These allow cyclists to make minor repairs on the go, such as inflating flat tyres, replacing inner tubes, raising seat heights and other adjustments, and are also available for users of wheelchairs and prams to use, if needed.



A NEW ARTIFICIAL FOOTBALL PITCH

At last Biggleswade may get a new artificial football pitch this year. A planning application has been submitted to locate it at Stratton School with 5 a side and 7 a side options. It will be for school use until 5pm and for community use in the evening.



The saga continues! Biggleswade Town Council has written to Asda challenging the reduction from 2 hours parking. The response is very vague. They say that if you are shopping in Asda and need more time you can arrange it at customer services. But what if you are not? There are also reports of people parking there twice in the same day and getting a ticket with both periods added together.



Future Action Biggleswade encourages us to think as we shop. That includes supporting our local shops and Market. If we don't use it we will lose it!

<https://fabweb.org.uk>

IMPORTANT INFORMATION

REDUCED BUS FARES

Our two local bus operators (Grant Palmer and Herbert's) are not, at the time of going to press, on the list of operators participating in the government's £2 maximum fare scheme.



YOUR COUNCIL TAX

Did you know nearly 1/2 of your Council Tax pays for services to support adults and children who need help (people who are frail, vulnerable or who have a disability)? Go to www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk for details.

WARM SPACES

Here are some Biggleswade Locations that are supporting this initiative

Labour Hall, Crab Lane, Biggleswade. Monday 10am - 2pm; Thursday 5pm - 9pm; Saturday 10am - 2pm. Contact: labourhall@gmail.com

Kings Corner, 6 Britten Place, Sullivan Court, Biggleswade. Tuesday 10am - 1pm; Thursday 10am - 1pm. Use Facebook messenger to contact King's Corner or email mike@bbchurch.org.uk

Krafty Shed, Unit 4, Purcell Pl, Sullivan Court, Biggleswade. Wednesday 9am - 5pm email: hello@kraftyshed.co.uk

St Andrews Church, Shortmead St, Biggleswade. Thursday 10.30am - 3pm; Saturday 10.30am - 3pm. Call 01767 317207 or email: office@standrewschurchbw.org.uk

Baptist Church, Rooms 3 & 4, 24 London Rd, Biggleswade. Friday 2pm - 6pm. Use Facebook messenger to contact Biggleswade Baptist Church.

Saxon Leisure Centre, Saxon Drive, Biggleswade. Monday to Friday 6am - 10pm; Saturday 7.30am - 9pm; Sunday 7am - 9pm Call: 01767433133 or email enquiries.saxon@sll.co.uk

Sandy and Biggleswade Children's Centre and Flitwick Children's Centre supported the Need Project

Staff from Sandy and Biggleswade Children's Centre, along with members of Flitwick Children's Centre, teamed up with the Need Project in the weeks running up to Christmas to pack Christmas parcels, which were made up of donations of food collected from local supermarkets, businesses, schools and community members and groups. Approximately 800 Christmas food parcels and 400 everyday essential food parcels were packed and delivered in the two weeks running up to Christmas.

Centre Manager Cathy Brighton and her team from Sandy and Biggleswade Children's Centre joined the Need project to deliver the parcels to families who are already known to and use the children's centre.

The Need Project is based in Stotfold with hubs in Sandy, Cranfield, Flitwick and Gamlingay and aims to support people in and around Central Bedfordshire who are facing financial hardship by providing food parcels. Find out more on their website.

CBC Support for families this winter



This month, we launched a £45,000 Crisis Fund to be administered through our children's centres, with vouchers available to primarily cover household bills and payments and support available to help families in emergency situations. Funding will be used to support families already known to

the service, with health, housing, education and other partners able to refer families in need.

We have also set up a dedicated information hub on our website for anyone concerned about the cost of living. This includes information about funding for vulnerable residents to help with food, energy and water bills and other wider essentials and a network of warm spaces across Central Bedfordshire for people to use when the temperatures drop.

For more information, visit

www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/cost-of-living

A LITTLE HELP



An unpaid carer is anyone who cares for a relative or friend, who due to illness, a disability, additional needs, a mental health condition, or an addiction, cannot cope without their support, or needs extra help as they grow older. Even if you receive benefits you are still classed as an unpaid carer. If you think you are a carer sign up to support with Carers in Bedfordshire at www.carersinbeds.org.uk



Manage your energy bills and your carbon footprint.

Sustainable Warmth is a new Government grant scheme designed to fund energy-efficiency upgrades and **YOU** could be eligible.

- Designed to support households most likely to be impacted by rising fuel bills.
- Energy-saving tech and upgrades installed by TrustMark-approved installers.
- Creating warmer, healthier homes.
- Helping to cut carbon emissions.
- Funding available for homes on and off the gas grid.

Want to find out if you're eligible for a **Sustainable Warmth Grant**? Use the details below to find out more.

Visit: www.bedfordshire-applications.co.uk
or Call: 02921 680951