

A LITTLE HELP

Social prescribing



Traditional ideas about “going to the doctors” are changing as a result of a new initiative, known as social prescribing (sometimes called community referral). Around half of GP appointments aren’t related to medical conditions so, rather than prescribing medication, doctors are now suggesting other ways to help people to get - and stay - well.

Helping people to be active and happy have a positive impact on health, so advising someone to enrol in art class, learn a bit of ballroom dancing or join a “knit and natter” group can be more effective than directing them to the local chemist.

Social prescribing is being offered in a number of GP surgeries in Central Bedfordshire including both Biggleswade surgeries. It is being supported by us, our NHS partners and local voluntary organisation, the Bedfordshire Rural Communities Charity (BRCC). The service is free and available to adults who are experiencing issues affecting their mental health and wellbeing, where poor health is being caused by social isolation, lifestyle or other underlying issues, and are registered with participating GP surgeries in Central Bedfordshire. We work with the BRCC who have recruited Community Wellbeing Champions to develop personalised plans for people and to support them to turn these into action. The plans are designed to appeal to what each person is most likely to connect with and could include gardening, befriending or social groups. To find out more about the scheme enquire at your local surgery.

The project aims to improve the mental health, wellbeing and self-esteem of residents by tackling isolation and supporting residents to become more actively involved in their community.

For more information or to get involved, visit [Bedfordshire Rural Communities Charity \(BRCC\)](#), or [Your Wellbeing Bedfordshire](#). You can also call 07392 722296.

WARM SPACES. If you are feeling the cold check out the Biggleswade Warm Spaces! There was a list in the January edition and there are posters around the town.



Biggleswade Community News

MARCH 2023



Email: editor@biggleswadecommunitynews.uk Tel: 01767 310163

WELCOME TO OUR LATEST EDITION

We hope that it is interesting and informative and that you will learn something that you were not aware of.



We work closely with Biggleswade Good Neighbours and Future Action Biggleswade; there are updates from both inside.



For a while last year we tried organising a Biggleswade Community Group coffee morning. Whilst it was well received by a handful of people, it was not cost effective to continue. We have been asked if we can hold one again so we are seeking somewhere to hold it. Any suggestions?

We need to raise some more funding to cover printing costs and increase the number of pages if needed. One possible solution is to take paid advertising, if we can find someone to administer it, and can agree that it is what we want to do. Meanwhile we are happy to accept a donation for announcements from Biggleswade organisations or businesses.

Our aim is to make information available to all residents of Biggleswade and nearby villages including those who are housebound or have no Internet access. If you are having a problem getting the information that you need call Shirley on 07988 822678 and she will try to help.

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Email: editor@biggleswadecommunitynews.uk

Copies are available from Newsagents, Community Centres, Town Hall, Library, Churches and cafes. Also delivered by Biggleswade Good Neighbours to their clients and volunteers. Or you can read it online at www.biggleswadecommunitynews.uk

NEWS FROM LOCAL ORGANISATIONS



The Royal Artillery Association exists to look after the welfare of and foster comradeship between members of the Royal Artillery both serving and retired.

Ex Service personnel of other Arms or Regiments who wish to share the camaraderie are welcome.

The Branch meets on the first Wednesday of the month at the Sea Cadets Hall, Biggleswade starting at 1.30 p.m. (The next meeting is on Wednesday 1st March).

Please contact the Chairman Ted McKenzie on 07900806235 or email bighearted@gmail.com for more details.



Future Action Biggleswade

A group of volunteers meet regularly to plan initiatives to encourage thoughtful shoppers and care for the local environment.

There is a chance to meet them on the charity Market stall on Saturday 4th March. There will be information about the group plus a free activity for the children.

Then on Mayday they will be at the fair on Ickwell village green.



NWR Biggleswade Group

Do you want to meet other women for a chat and interesting discussions? The new Biggleswade NWR (National Women's Register) group is looking for new members!

We meet monthly in a bar in central Biggleswade, our next meeting is at 7.30pm on Tuesday 20th March when we will be discussing new words in the English language – How do we use them? What do they mean? Where do they originate?

Women of all ages are welcome. Want to find out more? Email me at cath.heslop@nwr.org.uk or look on our website www.nwr.org.uk



Not Strictly Jazz

Sunday
12th March
5 - 7pm

Tickets £20 (age 10 - 18 £10)
Refreshments included.

Fairfield House & Studio,
Fairfield Road, Biggleswade.
SG18 0AA.

Live music monthly with exceptional musicians. The regular frontmen are Gavin Skeggs with his beautiful vocals and the talented Dave Jenkins, saxophone and flute or double bass.



Thurs 30th March
Noon – 1.30 pm
Light Lunch

Homemade
Soups with Roll.
Slice of Cake with
Tea or Coffee
Only £5.00



~~~~~ at ~~~~~

Trinity Methodist Church  
Shortmead Street, Biggleswade  
Opening Doors for the Community

Rev Leslie hopes to give a brief  
Thought for the Day  
during the lunch.



### BIGGLESWADE TOWN BOWLS CLUB Entrance and car park opposite 20 Glebe Road Biggleswade SG18 0PE.

Biggleswade Town Bowls Club welcomes new members, both ladies and gents aged between 12 and 80 plus with or without previous experience.

We will be holding some introductory sessions on the following dates.

Sunday 30<sup>th</sup> April 10am – midday, Friday 12<sup>th</sup> April 6 – 8pm and Friday 19<sup>th</sup> May 6 – 8pm.

Flat soled shoes or trainers (no open toe sandals) needed.

All other equipment will be provided.

Under 18's must be accompanied by an adult.

Any questions please contact:

Terry 07858960888, Chris 01767 313289,

or Elaine 01767 315843

<https://sites.google.com/view/biggleswadetownbowlsclub>

## WHAT'S ON

**THE SCOUTS PRESENT A**  
**SPRING QUIZ NIGHT**

Scouts Biggleswade

**SATURDAY 18TH MARCH 2023**

**ORCHARD CENTRE, KINGS REACH**

**7PM | £12.50 PER HEAD | MAX TEAMS OF SIX**

**INCLUDES JACKET POTATO SUPPER AND A DRINK**  
CHICKEN OR CHEESE & BEANS TOPPING

**DRINKS (SOFT OR ALCOHOLIC) AVAILABLE**  
PURCHASE ON THE NIGHT USING CASH OR CARD

**FACEBOOK.COM/BIGGLESWADESCOUTGROUP/EVENTS**



### The BIG April Show

**SATURDAY, 1st  
APRIL 20:00-22:45**

**The Weatherley  
Centre.**  
**Www.theweatherley  
centre.co.uk**  
**Eagle Farm Road,  
Biggleswade SG18  
8JH 01767 315709**



### BIGGLESWADE HISTORY SOCIETY

contact Jennifer Topham, 01767 313407 or see [www.biggleswadehistory.org.uk](http://www.biggleswadehistory.org.uk)

**The next meeting** is at Trinity Methodist Church, Shortmead Street, Biggleswade on Monday 6 March at 7.30 pm "Biggleswade's Devilish Duel" - a talk by David Davies. What were two Scotsmen doing in town in the 17th century to necessitate a duel?



On Friday 3rd March the World Day of Prayer Service will be at St Peter's Church at 7pm.

On Good Friday 7th April there will be a walk of witness from Dan Albone Car Park, finishing in the Market Square for an Open Air Service led by Biggleswade Baptist Church.

For updates see <https://biggct.org>



On Saturday 11th February Biggleswade Good Neighbours held a successful coffee morning at Biggleswade Baptist Church. A big thank you to Pam, Jan and Simon who kept everyone well supplied with hot drinks and delicious home made cakes, for which we also thank our volunteers.

Around 30 clients and volunteers were present and appreciated a helpful question and answer session with two of Bedfordshire Rural Community Charity's local workers. Deb Taylor is a Community Wellbeing Champion, also known as Social Prescriber, who works in conjunction with Saffron Road Health Partnership.

Lisa King is Biggleswade's Community Agent and is funded by the Town Council. They explained that one of the key differences between their roles is that Deb's clients are mostly referred to her by the surgery or other health professionals whilst those seeking help from Lisa can contact her direct on 07534 484750. Lisa also revealed that she would be retiring shortly but that there would be a new Community Agent taking over the role, using the same phone number, and that there would be no break in service.

**Biggleswade Library** closed on Saturday 24th December 2022 for a major refurbishment. It is planned to re-open this Summer with a co-located Children's Centre and Registrar's service. There has been an investment in new books.

Of course this means that it is no longer one of the locations for the **Warm Spaces** project. The other places listed in our January newsletter and on posters around the town are still available.



## ABOUT THE TOWN

### RAILWAY STATION ACCESSIBILITY

Network Rail have announced a delay in the accessibility improvements at Biggleswade Station due to design reviews. Completion is now planned for January 2025.

### YOUR SUGGESTIONS PLEASE

At the meeting of the Community Engagement Group, held at the Biggleswade Town Council offices on Monday 13th February, Karim Hosseini, Head of Governance and Strategic Partnerships, advised that the council was looking for the views of the town's residents about the future use of the tennis and bowling facilities at Drove Road as well as the land around them. Some of this was formerly used by the council to store equipment, which is no longer kept there. Any views or suggestions should be addressed to Karim or Isaac Lord, the council's Place Shaping Manager.

### REDUCED BUS FARES

The government's £2 cap on bus fares has been extended until the 30th of June. Whilst Grant Palmer are not participating, it does mean that travellers on Herbert's services 85, 85a, 188, 189 and 190 will pay no more than £2 per single journey. This includes trips to Potton, Dunton, Wrestlingworth, Gamlingay and Everton.



**Hire bicycles** will soon be coming to Biggleswade thanks to investment from Central Bedfordshire Council and Beds Rural Communities Charity. The scheme has been rolled out previously in Houghton Regis and the next phase of the pilot will be in Biggleswade.

The scheme uses an app which users can download and pay a small fee to hire the bikes. Routes close to the Green Wheel have been picked to encourage usage around rural edges of the town and to get people out to the countryside.



**Bedfordshire Fire and Rescue Service...** can provide a Fuel and Utility Support service that is designed to support vulnerable people, many of whom are not online, who are struggling to pay their fuel or energy bills. They would love to offer this free service to Biggleswade residents but first need to

find volunteers in the area.

This free service is for households where there is a person of any age with a vulnerability or someone aged 65 or older, and where they are struggling to heat their home. The service includes an audit of what support the household is currently receiving, including a benefits review, and identification of any possible sources of additional help such as Warmer Homes schemes from local councils. It is particularly beneficial to people who are unable to access the internet.

As soon as they have a volunteer in the Biggleswade area we will publish more information. In the meantime, they are recruiting volunteers in several roles so if you or anyone that you know is interested in learning more phone them on 01234 845000.

## AROUND AND ABOUT

**DUNTON CAR BOOT SALES** are planned to restart on Saturday 25th March and then on the last Saturday of each month (if there are enough volunteers to run them).

**MAY DAY CELEBRATIONS ...** (on Monday 1st May Bank Holiday) start in the car park of **The Crown Public House, Northill** at 11.30 am: Morris Men dance. 1.30 pm: The procession leaves for Ickwell Green - a half mile walk down the village road. (This road is closed to vehicular traffic for the duration of the procession)

**At Ickwell Green** there will be a selection of stalls, refreshments and entertainments available opposite the Maypole arena from 10 am onwards. 2 pm Crowning of the May Queen, followed by dancing by children and adults from within the Parish.

Car parking and toilets are available and there is disabled car parking close to the arena in Ickwell.