



Offline and Overlooked

Everyone should have fair and equal access to services.

Age UK is campaigning to make sure everyone can access the services they need - so that being offline doesn't mean being overlooked.

Public services are rapidly 'going digital'. If like 2.3 million older people in the UK you aren't an internet user, it's becoming harder – and in some cases impossible – to access day-to-day necessities such as banking, making NHS appointments or even just paying for car parking.

But it's not just those who aren't online. Plenty of people would just prefer to handle their finances, their bills or their health matters in person or over the phone. No one should feel forced to perform important tasks online if they don't feel comfortable.

Older people who aren't or choose not to be online are being locked out of essential services. **It's discrimination - plain and simple.** And it poses real risks to people's health, wellbeing, finances and ability to participate fully in our society.

It's time to make access to public services fair, for everyone.

We are calling for: all public services, including the NHS, council services and other nationally-provided public services, must offer and promote an affordable, easy to access, offline way of reaching and using them. Banks must accelerate the roll-out of Shared Banking Hubs, to meet the high and continuing demand for face-to-face banking services.

[Sign the petition](#)

If you or someone you know would like to sign the petition offline you can [download a paper copy](#) or request that we send one out. Email campaigns@ageuk.org.uk or write to **Freepost Age UK campaigns** (no stamp required).



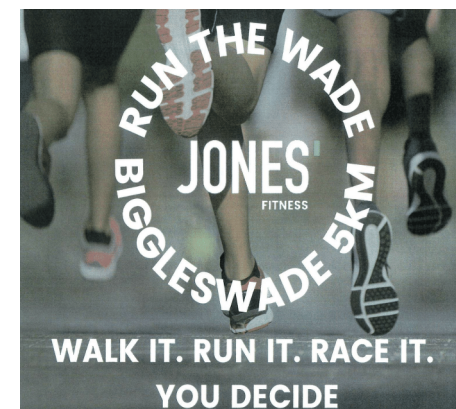
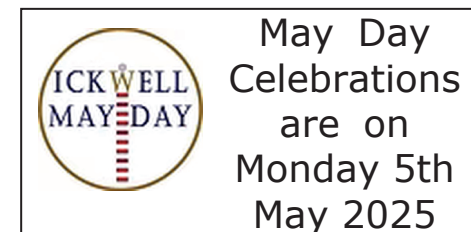
Biggleswade Community News

MAY 2025

Email: editor@biggleswadecommunitynews.uk Tel: 01767 310163

The name "Biggleswade" is believed to be derived from the Anglo-Saxon words "Biceil" and "Waed". "Biceil" is an Anglo-Saxon personal name, while "Waed" means "ford". Therefore, Biggleswade is believed to mean "Biceil's ford".

MAY HAPPENINGS - Full details inside



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Email: admin@biggleswadecommunitygroup.org.uk

Grab a paper copy or you can read it online at
www.biggleswadecommunitynews.uk

Biggleswade Community Group & Partners



Biggleswade Community Group exists for you, our readers, to provide support and keep you informed. www.biggleswadecommunitygroup.org.uk



Biggleswade Town Council provides funding to allow us to print paper copies of this newsletter and offer it free of charge to our readers. enquiries@biggleswadetowncouncil.gov.uk



Future Action Biggleswade organises and attends community events and encourages us to consider the impact of our buying decisions. www.fabweb.org.uk



Biggleswade Good Neighbours deliver this newsletter to their clients. Many are housebound and without Internet. Tel 07771 104255 or email biggleswadegoodneighbours@gmail.com



Biggleswade Community Garden works to improve Biggleswade's green spaces and grow fresh food to share. Get in touch to learn more.

Email biggleswadecommunitygardens@gmail.com



Ivel Valley College students distribute this newsletter to pickup points around Biggleswade.

Contact Dean Hawkins

dean.hawkins@ivelvalley.beds.sch.uk 01767 512080



The Bigg Theatre as well as events, hosts a variety of community groups, meeting needs in Biggleswade. www.thebiggtheatre.co.uk



Biggleswade Community Carnival Group organises the carnival parade plus a range of events. www.biggleswadecarnival.co.uk



Biggleswade Community Safety Group works with the Police and other services to help reduce:-Criminal Damage, Burglary, Anti Social Behaviour, Fear of Crime, Youth Issues and Vehicle Crime. They also share information about scams, local events and safety issues. Biggleswadecsg@gmail.com



MAYDAY Programme of Events

In Northill

May Day celebrations start in the car park of The Crown Public House, Northill.

11.30 am Morris Men dance.

12.45 pm Children assemble with their decorated hoops.

1 pm The judging of the decorated hoops takes place. The procession is assembled.

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

A selection of stalls, refreshments and entertainments are available opposite the Maypole arena from 10 am onwards.

Seats in the arena are available from 12 noon. Adults £2, Children under 16 £1.

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.



Vision Zone Biggleswade on Monday 16th June

Are you or a friend or family member struggling with your sight or experiencing sight loss? Come along to this free event between 11am - 2pm at The Weatherley Centre, Eagle Farm Road, Biggleswade SG18 8JH. Try out some of the latest technology and magnification equipment to support visually impaired people.

Meet the team from Sight Concern Bedfordshire, your local charity supporting blind and partially sighted people. At our Sight Concern stand we provide information and advice about sight loss services and demonstrate useful living aids and assistive technology on your smartphone.

There will also be information stands from other organisations. See Sight Concern Bedfordshire's Facebook page for more details <https://www.facebook.com/sightconcernbeds>. No appointment necessary. We look forward to seeing you there!



Third Annual Festival: 8-10th May

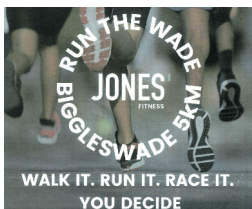
The Biggleswade Beer & Cider Festival is a joint venture between East Bedfordshire CAMRA and the Biggleswade Conservative Club. It will run for 3 days from 3pm on Thursday 8th May until last orders on Saturday 10th May 2025.

The official charity this year is the Biggleswade & District Scouts.

Experience the Best of British Brewing from traditional cask ales to innovative craft beers. We expect to have over 45 Real Ales, Craft Beers and Ciders all sourced from local breweries. Full details can be found on the Festival's new dedicated website: <https://biggbeerfest.org>

- Festival ales are all brewed within a 30 mile radius and food will be available throughout.
- Exclusive Biggleswade Beer Festival 2025 glasses
- Access to the stunning garden and grounds
- The Club bar serves a full range of drinks including non-alcoholic beer (we're thinking about the nominated driver).

Biggleswade & District Conservative Club
St. Andrew's Street SG18 8BA



The Second Biggleswade 5k is on 25th May.

The course will be the same as last year, starting and finishing at the Market Square. The route goes via Hitchin Street and Mill Lane, past Franklins Recreation Ground, and out to Jordans Mill on the Green Wheel trail, before returning to the town centre finish line.

It is being organised by Jones' Fitness, in the Town, with the support of BTC officers and councillors.

Race director, Jones Fitness, 07852798055

info@jonesfitness.co.uk www.jonesfitness.co.uk

Online Registration <https://my.raceresult.com/321250/>



Community Group Update

We are considering purchasing tickets again for an outing to the coast, probably in August.

Unfortunately ticket prices have increased since last year, but opportunities to go out for the day have also dwindled as one of the popular coach companies who picked up locally closed down last year. If you are interested in a trip please phone Shirley on 07988 822678 or 01767 448954 for more details.

Biggleswade Community Carnival Group



The duck race will be on Sunday 8th June

The Carnival Parade Day is Saturday 21st June

We also have the pool party on the Saturday 14th June

Darts will be running - the date will be confirmed asap

Email hazel@biggleswadecarnival.co.uk



Future Action Biggleswade Will have a stall at Ickwell May Day on Monday 5th May. See page 7 for details of the event.



Biggleswade Community Safety Group Need more volunteers to help with Street and Speed Watch and to help run stalls at public events.



36 High Street, Biggleswade. SG18 0JL

Monday Closed; Tue – Fri OPEN 10:00 am–2:00 pm

Saturday 10:00 am–04:00 pm; Sunday 10:00 am – 2:00 pm

On event evenings our bar is open from 6.30pm.

During bank holidays our opening hours may differ slightly.

Call in to check what is planned and stay for a single origin, speciality coffee and locally sourced quality home baked cakes.



Advance notice for BGN volunteers: our AGM and volunteer barbecue are planned to take place on Saturday 7th June at Northfields Community Centre. All BGN volunteers will be welcome.

UPDATES FROM LOCAL ORGANISATIONS



Biggleswade History Society

Methodist Church, Shortmead Street, Biggleswade. Doors open 7.30 for 8 pm start, Non-members £4. No pre-booking required.

biggleswadehistory.org.uk

Monday 12th May Gill Price - Highgate Cemetary - interesting and famous people buried in one of London's Victorian burial grounds.



Bedfordshire Group - Alpine Garden Society

Our talk in May 2025 is again from one of our members, **Andrew Mayo**. Andrew has travelled to many places looking at plants in the wild and in this talk he takes us on a tour into the Kurdish mountains, to look at the interesting flora and magnificent scenery of Azerbaijan and Eastern Turkey.

The meeting will be on **Saturday 31st May 2025**, at **2.00 for 2.30 pm**, in the **Elgar Room** in the **Weatherley Centre, Biggleswade**.

The cost per meeting for non-members is £5, which includes a cup of tea or coffee and biscuits. Or you're welcome to join; members pay only £2 per meeting. www.bedfordshirealpines.com



There was a good turnout for the annual Good Friday Walk Of Witness. Members of our town's Churches walked behind the cross, to a service in the Market Square; followed by Hot Cross Buns <https://www.biggct.org>



Light Lunch at Trinity Methodist Church Shortmead Street Biggleswade: Thursday June 5th 12-1.30pm

Choice of homemade soups with roll and butter, piece of cake/pie with tea/coffee/squash. All for £6



Biggleswade Hospital and Health Centre

Richard Fuller, our MP, met with the MD of NHS Property Services (NHSPS). They are part of the Department for Health and they own, and operate 2 sites in Biggleswade. He said "This is the first direct conversation I have had with NHS estates, so I am pleased they reached out. It was a full and frank discussion, and I ended up better informed about their roles"

WEATHERLEY CENTRE CIO

TRUSTEES Needed!

We're looking for voluntary Trustees!

Trustees ensure the community and financial aims of the Weatherley Centre are being met, and provide strategic guidance. We meet 4 times per year, with ongoing communication as needed via phone or email. No previous experience necessary.

Could YOU help shape the Weatherley Centre of the future?

To express your interest please email in the first instance to enquiries@theweatherleycentre.co.uk

THE HEART OF THE COMMUNITY

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 FREE taster sessions on the following dates.

Friday 9th, 16th & 23rd May 6pm – 8pm.



Our next production Is "Come From Away" at Biggleswade Academy.

from Thursday 12 June to Saturday 14 June

07584 251112

bats-theatre@hotmail.com



36 High Street, Biggleswade. SG18 0JL

Quentin Crisp - Naked Hope Friday 9 May

Castle Comedy presents Jonny Awsum Thursday 15 May

RT90s presents Insomnia Friday 16 May

The BIGG Spring Ceilidh - with Govannen Saturday 17 May

Honey & The Bear Friday 23 May

Shane Hampsheir & his Swinging Band

Saturday 24 May

Manuel Martinez - Madness with a Touch of Magic Friday 30 May

www.thebiggtheatre.co.uk