



Biggleswade Community News

JANUARY 2021

Happy New
2021
Year

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LETS MAKE 2021 A GOOD YEAR!

GOOD NEWS FOR 2021. As we go into our third Covid Lockdown at Tier 4, it is difficult to find uplifting news. As we were going to press we were pleased to hear that the Astra Zeneca vaccine has now been approved, and together with the Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine, there should be enough doses on order to vaccinate everyone that wants it. Hopefully take up will be high.

The NHS is endeavouring to set up local vaccination points, including one in Biggleswade, and we hope to give you more details as we get it. You can find up to date local information on our [Biggleswade Community News website](#) At the moment our nearest vaccination point is Lister Hospital.

Due to the rise in covid numbers in our area, we are printing and distributing less paper copies as many of our normal pick up points, such as cafes, are closed. In the meantime, you can still obtain copies from Howells Newsagents in Hitchin Street, and the Shortmead Street Convenience Stores.

Our article on vertical farming also gives hope that the UK will become more self sufficient at growing their own out of season produce, to reduce our reliance on winter imports.

**Printed and published by
Biggleswade Community Group tel: 01767 310163**

ABOUT TOWN

The Christmas lights looked good and brightened up dull evenings along with laser light shows. We are still being encouraged to support our local traders. Parking in Town Centre Car Parks is still FREE until January 31.



In the current situation many local shops have been forced to close again, However many are still offering a service for takeway, click and collect etc, For example Sheldons are taking orders for appliances for delivery and installation. The phone shop offers click and collect. Nonno Joes is busier than ever! The UK Chicken shop is undergoing refurbishment.

The Saturday Market is gradually gaining new stalls, For instance a van selling wet fish.

Don't forget our well stocked convenience stores! They offer a personal service and a chance to avoid the crowds

Percy's Fish and Chip Shop On 10th December Percy's Fish and Chip Shop, opened at Sullivan Court, in the Market Square at Kings Reach. It is proving so popular with the locals that when it first opened its doors there were long queues and sometimes they had to close their door prematurely!



Living nearby and knowing the local community, its owner, Kevin Barton, named his business after his grandfather. With Kevin's father Chris, Percy ran fish and chip shops in Suffolk from 1938 until their retirement. Growing up living above a chip shop Kevin wanted to link traditional methods with modern tastes

and healthier lifestyles. He therefore uses traditional beef dripping instead of the usual palm oil. Using separate friers he can also offer gluten free products. Opening times: 11am - 9pm Tuesdays - Saturdays.



We understand that Greene King are still hopeful that they will be able to reopen The White Hart.

DON'T FORGET ABBOTSBURY CONSULTATION

There is still an opportunity to take part in the consultation on the future of the Abbotsbury Older Persons Home, and the possible relocation of existing residents to Mantles Court, the new care home opening in London Road in MID 2021. End date is 29th January 2021.

email manop.programme@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk, for a questionnaire or telephone 0300 300 6609/0300 300 4850, or write to Freepost RSJS GBBZSRZT, Abbotsbury Consultation – MANOP Team, Central Bedfordshire Council, Priory House, Monks Walk, Chicksands, Shefford, SG175TQ. More details on the Central Bedfordshire website at

https://www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/info/74/housing/861/consultation_on_abbotsbury_older_persons_home

MADISON EVENTS
ANTIQUES & VINTAGE FAIRS
Weatherley Centre, Eagle Farm Road
Cancelled until further notice

Can the UK grow more of its own food?



Is Vertical Farming an answer?

TV pictures of lorries parked on the M20 raised a question of how much the UK relies on imports to feed its population. Could more be done to feed ourselves, particularly out of season? Post Brexit and climate change focuses peoples' minds on sustainability. It is no surprise that the BBC picked up this point and you

can find their report at

www.bbc.co.uk/news/business-55408788.

Researching this fascinating subject, more information can be found on the Farmers Weekly site

www.fwi.co.uk/arable/crop-management/why-vertical-farming-is-growing-in-the-uk

or look at Commercial Waste in the US at

www.commercialwaste.trade/future-concrete-jungles-rise-vertical-farming/

The table below shows why there is a shortage of lettuces on the shelves at the moment.

Grown in UK	in June	in January
Lettuces	95%	10%
Tomatoes	85%	5%
Soft Fruits	70%	5%
Cabbages/Cauliflowers	70%	30%

20 years ago ecologist Dickson Despommier of Columbia University set his students the task of finding a solution to feed Manhattan. They considered roof top farming but needed more space, so they went inside. In the UK, during 2019/20, a quiet revolution was taking place. The vertical farming industry requires high initial investment but is now taking off.

Edinburgh-based Shockingly Fresh plans for 40 sites and already has 1 in Scotland and 4 in England. In 2019 Ocado invested £17m in a US/Netherlands joint venture called Infinite Acres. It has also invested in Lincolnshire-based Jones Food Company to produce 420 tons of leafy greens each year on a facility the size of 26 tennis courts!

London's 'Growing Underground' produces micro greens and salads under the streets of Clapham with technology support provided by Bristol's LettUsGrow which uses aeroponics, a new mist based system developed in Bristol by South West Agritech. It uses 75% less water than in traditional farming methods. Because LED lighting produces no heat, lights be placed adjacent to plants, to help them grow.

When you visit Biggleswade's retail park, your M & S salad might have been grown on the roof tops of M&S stores in the middle of London!

We might be short of lettuces at the moment, but finally reaching a trade deal with the EU, and with vaccines coming on stream that could bring our countries back to some kind of post covid normality, we could be seeing this quiet 'vertical farming' revolution taking off in the next few years, and once more UK scientists are involved.

DESTINATIONS

Biggleswade: There are plenty of open spaces available for fresh air and exercise. These include the parks plus the Common and Green Wheel.

Jordans Mill Latest Announcements: Open Wednesday - Sunday 9am to 3pm; Gardens & Shop. Riverside Cafe closed until further notice info@jordansmill.com 01767 603940

RSPB Sandy: Reserve: open daily, 7am-7pm. In line with Tier 4 Government guidance on essential, daily exercise outdoors, the reserve is open however the shop and hides are currently closed. When visiting us please observe current guidance around social distancing, group sizes, hygiene and follow all signage on-site. The Heath, Potton Rd, Sandy SG19 2DL

Shuttleworth: open daily with a 'site-entry' fee: Adults £15 Children under 16 free (4 per person). Winter Opening Hours (Monday 2 November – February Half Term): 10.00 – 16.00 (last entry is at 15.30). Currently the Swiss Garden, Parkland, Playground and Paddocks are open. The Runway Café is also open for takeaway service. 01767 627927
www.shuttleworth.org

IMPORTANT INFORMATION



Health and care organisations across the Bedford, Central Bedfordshire, Luton and Milton Keynes (BLMK) council areas are working together to implement My Care Record.

My Care Record enables health and care professionals involved in your care to access information about you, even if they work for a different organisation or in a different location. A hospital specialist or community nurse could therefore view information from your GP record. Dr. Paul Singer, Luton GP and Chief Clinical Information Officer for BLMK Integrated Care System explains:

MY CARE RECORD could result in better, co-ordinated and seamless care; quicker diagnosis and treatment; more time to spend on clinical care; less paperwork and less repetition; fewer unnecessary clinical tests, more accurate prescriptions and better health care and planning.

Several different secure computer systems are used across the region with more investment being made. The approach provides an agreement between all the health and care organisations involved. In line with GDPR, this means they commit to sharing information in a secure way to help improve care. More information is available at www.mycarerecord.org.uk Or ask your GP for more details.

IMPROVED ROAD LINK TO THE M1 AND MILTON KEYNES

There is now an improved link to Junction 13 of the M1 motorway, with a 3km of the cross-council border roadway now fully dualled. Central Bedfordshire Council and Milton Keynes Council both contributed £3m to this project, mainly funded through a £23.5m grant from the South East Midlands Local Enterprise Partnership's Local Growth Fund.

NEW - Central Bedfordshire Council Tree Planting Grant scheme - aimed at delivering tree and hedge planting schemes across Central Bedfordshire. Planting more trees and hedgerows is one of the key ways in which the climate challenge can be met, helping to increase biodiversity and mitigate other environmental issues such as flooding and air pollution. It also helps to create a better environment for the benefit of communities. Town and parish councils, local voluntary and community organisations, schools and other groups can apply for funding (or match funding). Projects can vary in size, from a minimum of five trees upwards, to larger areas of new woodland. Deadline 28th February 2020. To complete an application form visit

www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/xfp/form/232

Shuttleworth in Lights

7-10, 14-17, 22-24, 29-31 January, 5-7 February 2021

The Government have announced that Illumination Trails are permitted in Tier 4 areas. Care will be taken with regards to social distancing. Guests can only attend with their household, support bubble or one member from another household. Only ticket holders with an address from a Tier 4 area will be permitted entry, checks will be performed by the box team on arrival.

www.shuttleworth.org/events/shuttleworth-in-lights/

Would you like to join our mailing list?

Our online subscriber list keeps growing. They receive copies in their email box each month, and are increasingly forwarding them to friends and families, or printing off some to pass to neighbours. For those who may be isolated, or are shielding, we can deliver one through your door, and these door deliveries will continue under lockdown. If you want to guarantee your monthly copy, by email or through your door, telephone us or email us at

editors@biggleswadecommunitynews.uk

NEED A LITTLE HELP?



Are you an unpaid carer, caring for a family member or someone else? Central Bedfordshire Council are working in partnership with Carers in Bedfordshire to provide a range of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) for free. This includes protective gloves, disposable face masks, aprons and a face shield. Information on when to use PPE and using it correctly can

be found in the [Public Health England guide](#).

To apply send an email to carersPPE@centralbedfordshire.gov. heading the email 'Carers PPE'. Include your name, address and the glove size you require, or phone 0300 300 8900 for assistance. The PPE will be sent to you by post.

You can find out more at www.carersinbeds.org.uk or by calling 0300 111 1919.

UPDATE ON SCAM TEXTS. Scam Texts are continuing to be a problem in our area. You can now report any suspicious text messages by forwarding the original message to 7726 – which spells "SPAM" on your keypad. Do not respond to the message yourself.

Never click on a link in a suspicious text message you were not expecting to receive. If you are worried about anything relating to your own bank accounts, contact your bank directly to confirm whether the message is genuine or not.

WHO CAN YOU HELP? If you know someone who is housebound and does not have a computer maybe you could pop a copy of this newsletter through their door. Also some people have a phone or a computer but struggle to use it to access information such as our Web site and Facebook. Maybe you could talk them through how to do it and answer their questions?