



Biggleswade Community News

MAY 2021



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THE FUTURE OF ABBOTSBURY OLDER PERSONS HOME



Following an extensive consultation period on the future of Abbotsbury Older Persons Home in Mead End, Biggleswade, a report was considered by the Central Bedfordshire Council's Executive Committee on the 13th April 2021. At that meeting the Executive approved a recommendation that the home would close and its residents would transfer to alternative accommodation.

One of the significant factors that Members took into account in coming to this decision was the development of Mantles Court, a new care home nearby run by Quantum Care, and the offer to the Council of sufficient places for all the residents living in Abbotsbury to move there if they wish. Over the coming weeks the Council will be working with the residents of Abbotsbury, and their relatives, to understand their needs and preferences and to help them to choose a new home.

The actual closure date will be determined by the Director of Social Care, Health and Housing to allow the moves to be sensitively managed in line with the needs of the residents living in the home. For queries email Rebecca Carr at manop.programme@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk

More information on Mantles Court and its not-for-profit operator, Quantum Care is on page 3.

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

ABOUT THE TOWN



BIGGLESWADE NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

“Our vision for Biggleswade is that it should be a thriving large market town with individual shops, services and leisure offer in the town centre; retail and business parks to the south of the town and plenty of green spaces to enjoy the open air.”

Over the past six weeks Biggleswade Rural Community Charities (BRCC), Biggleswade Good Neighbours’ volunteers and the Biggleswade Community Group’s newsletter team have between them produced, circulated and delivered flyers and posters around the town inviting people to complete a questionnaire based on the above vision, which itself is based on comments made at various public engagement sessions in 2019. Paper versions of the questionnaire were available on request and the feedback from the community is good.

The responses will now be collated by BRCC, and will help to inform a draft Neighbourhood Plan to be circulated in the autumn.

PLEASE CAN WE HAVE YOUR SPARE BULBS

If you lift your daffodil bulbs and have some spare, or bought too many, please could you donate them to the small team of planters who usually replenish the bulbs on the railway bank leading from Crab Lane down the steps to Lawrence Road. Usually the team applies for a grant, but because of covid they missed out last winter. This was also the reason why the Biggleswade Sports Club cannot sponsor first aid classes for 2021 as they normally do. Please contact Desmond Ball, Daleside, Lawrence Road, ☎313790 or this newsletter and we can arrange pick up if necessary.



*Sweet Alley thanks you for your custom
Bring this voucher with you on your next visit
to get 10% off*

1-3 Abbott’s Walk, Biggleswade SG18 0LF
Ady.threlfall@gmail.com 01767 315310

Mantles Court is a 76 bed care home located in London Road, Biggleswade, and will provide long-term residential care and specialist dementia care, as well as respite breaks and convalescence. It will also create new employment including apprenticeships and development programmes for those looking to pursue a career in the care sector.

Quantum Care was formed in 1992 to operate care homes for the elderly in Hertfordshire. Originally Quantum Care took over homes that were previously operated by Hertfordshire County Council. In 2005 it opened a new home in Essex and another, Trefoil House in Luton in 2010. All homes have dementia units providing specialist care. Each home has at least one short stay room, which can be occupied by elderly guests from one night to a few weeks, allowing potential residents to see what the home is like.

The company were delighted last year when John Mantle, Chairman of the Mantles Group, gave consent to keeping the family name in the Town by calling the new home Mantles Court. The Mantles' family auto business had occupied that site since 1933..

Quantum Care is a not-for-profit organisation which means it does not have shareholders and therefore does not have to pay dividends. Its work is overseen by a voluntary board of directors.



are pleased to announce that they have reopened **King's Corner community hub** at 6 Britten Place, Sullivan Court, Biggleswade SG188RE in

the Market Square at Kings Reach.

Got the lockdown blues? Why not drop in for a cuppa on Tuesdays and Thursday mornings 9am to 12.30pm and Saturdays 9.30am to 12.30pm. You can pick up a community newsletter, get support, find out what's on in the town, learn more about the church's services and groups or just come and mingle at this community hub in the heart of your neighbourhood.



IMPORTANT INFORMATION



TOWN COUNCIL WEBSITE/ELECTRONIC NEWSLETTER

Biggleswade Town Council has recently launched a more user-friendly, modern and accessible website where you can now sign up to receive a copy of their electronic newsletter in your in-box.

Visit <https://biggleswadetowncouncil.gov.uk>

The Town Council has also recently set up a Community Engagement Group. They sought the Group's views on the new website and are engaging with them over the forthcoming Neighbourhood Plan. There is a representative on that group from the community newsletter team who would be glad to hear your views.

Free rapid COVID-19 tests now available

If you are over 18 and don't have symptoms of coronavirus you can now get free rapid COVID-19 tests from your local community testing sites, local pharmacies or order test kits online at www.gov.uk/order-coronavirus-rapid-lateral-flow-tests. Soon they will be available from the Library. You are advised to first visit a rapid testing site to be shown how to do the test correctly. Our local site has been at Saxon Pool & Leisure Centre, but that closed on Friday April 30th.

A new centre is due to open in Biggleswade very shortly, and we will publish those details on our website at www.biggleswadecommunitynews.uk as soon as we can. Or phone us on 01767 448954. We hope to update our on-line subscribers when we email them this edition May edition. If you want to sign up for emailed editions of this newsletter you can do so via our website or by telephoning us.

If you have coronavirus symptoms you should not use this service but must get a PCR test as soon as possible if you have any of these symptoms: a high temperature; a new, continuous cough or a loss or change to sense of smell or taste. PCR tests can be booked via 119 or on line at www.gov.uk/get-coronavirus-test

Step 3 Covid restrictions may lift not before 17th May

No earlier than 17th May, the government will look to continue easing limits on seeing friends and family wherever possible, allowing people to decide on the appropriate level of risk for their circumstances.

- Most legal restrictions on meeting others outdoors will be lifted but gatherings of over 30 people will remain illegal.
- Indoors, the Rule of 6 or 2 households will still apply.
- Not before 17th May the government will update the advice on social distancing between friends and family, including hugging. Until then social distancing remains.
- Most businesses in all but the highest risk sectors will be able to reopen under COVID 19 guidance.
- Indoor hospitality will reopen - venues will not have to serve a substantial meal with alcoholic drinks; nor will there be a curfew. Customers will have to order, eat and drink while seated.
- Indoor entertainment venues e.g. cinemas, children's play areas as well as hotels, hostels and B&Bs will open, as will indoor adult group sports and exercise classes.
- The government will also allow some larger performances and sporting events in indoor venues with a capacity of 1,000 people or half-full (whichever is a lower number) and in outdoor venues with a capacity of 4,000 people or half-full (whichever is a lower number).
- In the largest outdoor seated venues, where crowds can be spread out, up to 10,000 people will be able to attend (or a quarter-full, whichever is lower).
- Up to 30 people will be able to attend weddings, receptions and wakes, as well as funerals. This limit will also apply to other types of significant life events including bar mitzvahs and christenings.

Before Step 4 (not before 21st June) begins, the government will complete a review of social distancing and other long-term measures that have been put in place to cut transmission.

NEWS and EVENTS



ATTENDING CHURCH SERVICES

BAPTIST CHURCH: If you wish to attend a Sunday service you will need to pre-book by phoning 01767 312667 or emailing office@bbchurch.org.uk Bookings open every Monday. Attendees will need to wear a face covering throughout and need to sign in and be shown to their seats. Singing by the congregation is still not yet permitted as per Government restrictions. The church livestreams their Sunday service on their Facebook page.

ST ANDREWS CHURCH: The church is open for public worship and communion each Thursday at 09.30 and Sunday at 10.00 preceded by a ZOOM service at 09.00. Masks should be worn if possible and social distancing with the avoidance of social interactions indoors is recommended. Booking is not generally required. Congregational singing inside church is not allowed but there are plans plan to re-start singing by the choir in accordance with national guidance.

ST PETER'S CATHOLIC CHURCH: For Sunday Masses (Saturday 6:30pm and Sunday 11am), please book by emailing ordering@st-peters.uk with your request. There are also weekday Masses on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays at 9:30am for which booking is not needed and Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament at 7pm-8pm on Fridays (again, booking not needed).

TRINITY METHODIST CHURCH: will be reopening for public worship on Sunday May 30th at 10.30am (Trinity Sunday). They are not planning to run a booking system but space is limited so they are advising worshippers to arrive early to ensure that they get a seat.



Biggleswade Sandy Lions Club

The Lions are a group of men and women of all ages and backgrounds who want to make this world a happier and safer place to live in. Anybody who joins can expect to be involved in some way with the two main jobs of fund raising and service projects. Tasks vary, some require energy and others suit the less active with skills and experience to offer. If you can spare a little time to join them in helping people get back to normal after the Covid restrictions please do contact them on 01462 814693 or 03458 339749.

TOWN COUNCIL OPENS NEW PUBLIC REALM DEPOT

On Friday 23rd April a handover ceremony was held for their new Public Realm Depot. Located at 11 Eldon Way, the industrial unit will become the new home for the Public Realm Team. It includes a large secure storage area for equipment and an office, workshop area and vastly improved mess facilities for the team. The office will handle all requests from the public, stakeholders and councillors.

The opening of the new depot is in addition to the investment the Town Council is continuing to make in local parks and open spaces to improve the quality of life for residents. The pandemic has highlighted the health benefits of fresh air to people's wellbeing.

CASTLE COMEDY RETURNS TO HENLOW



On Thursday May 20th, Castle Comedy teams up with Henlow Bridge Lakes, Bridge End Row, Henlow, SG166DD to put on a special outdoor comedy show in a Covid safe environment with lots of space between tables. Doors open 6.30pm Show Starts 8pm Finishes 10.45pm

PAUL TONKINSON & LAURA LEXX plus support from a top UK comedian. Paul Revill will host the show. For tickets visit

www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/castle-comedy-outdoors-henlow-bridge-lakes-tickets-149672886633

VIP PACKAGES - Gazebo Marquee, Picnic Table and Bottle of Prosecco!
Table of 6 £20 per person Table of 4 £22.50 per person

STANDARD TICKET – Includes Chairs £15

DRIVE IN CINEMA AT SHUTTLEWORTH

The Star and Mouse Picture Show is a trinket-cinema stowed away in rural Cambridge. Portable enough to be at a vineyard one day a swimming pool another. They are coming to Shuttleworth in May. Prepare yourself for a little car bingo, quizzes, live music and food and drinks, as they bring a little pre-film entertainment your way before the movie starts at nightfall. May showings are:



Thursday 20th May – Knives Out

Friday 21st May – Bohemian Rhapsody

Saturday 22nd May – Dirty Dancing

Sunday 23rd May – Memphis Bell

Car plus 2 people is £25 additional people £4 each

To book tickets visit or contact us visit <https://starandmouse.com>

NEED A LITTLE HELP?



Autism Bedfordshire are offering a Zoom workshop for parents and carers of children who are undiagnosed, newly diagnosed or going through the diagnostic process. Run as a webinar, there will be a 60 minute talk on Autism Spectrum Conditions (ASC) followed by a sharing session with other parents/carers where you will learn more about local support and services. 25th May 6.30 start until 9pm. Cost £5. To book ring 01234 214871 or email enquiries@autismbeds.org.



LATEST TELEPHONE SCAM - The callers may claim your property is in the wrong Council Tax Band and that you have been paying too much or that your Council Tax Band has been downgraded and you are now entitled to a refund. These callers may claim to be from, or representing, the Council. They may then ask you for your bank account details so that they can process the refund, but in reality you may find money leaving your account instead!



You can report stalking, using the words **"I am being stalked"** by ringing Bedfordshire Police on 101 or via their website www.bedfordshire.police.uk/report/Report

If you are in immediate danger, call the police on 999. For more information about Stalking and what exists to keep you safe, please visit the Bedfordshire Domestic Abuse Partnership <https://bedsdv.org.uk>

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