

News Central

The magazine from Central Bedfordshire
Council for everyone living in our area

**Delivering
services that
are fit for
the future**



Issue 18 - July/August 2011

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**Central
Bedfordshire**

Brothers and Sisters need to be together



Do you have the time and space to enable sibling groups to have a secure, nurturing life until they reach adulthood?

We need foster carers who have the skills to look after children from the age of five and older.

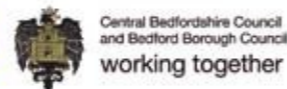
As part of the Fostering Service you will receive extensive training opportunities, a high level of support and an allowance to help you make a big difference to children's lives.

If you have room in your home and time to give please ring us for more information on 0800 218 2002.

www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk



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Welcome from the Leader - Cllr James Jamieson



James Jamieson was elected Leader of Central Bedfordshire Council following the May elections. James, 48, has lived in Bedfordshire for 25 Years. He is married to Philippa and has two children. Currently representing the Westoning, Flitton and Greenfield ward, James has been a councillor since 2009 and has had a successful career in business.

Being given the opportunity to lead this Council is a great privilege and also a huge responsibility.

The great thing about being new into a job is being able to spot possibilities.

I see my role as being about recognising and unlocking potential in our area, in our services and in our residents – particularly in our young people through good education and wider opportunities.

I want to show that Central Bedfordshire is forward thinking, vibrant and ideally located for economic growth. Our area has amazing potential and as a council we'll work hard to open up possibilities by providing communities with good services and as many opportunities as we can in a fragile economic climate.

These are tough economic times for us all. Reduced grants and increasing demands for our services mean that the Council needs to deliver savings of £19.2m by next March and to make further savings in future years.

However, let me assure you that I did not come into local government to make cuts. First and foremost I want to protect our front line services by working more efficiently but at the same time maintaining the quality of services that our residents should expect.

Finding new ways of providing the same level of service but with less money will mean some difficult

choices but also developing new thinking on how we deliver services. I have every confidence that we will achieve this.

I am supported by an excellent Executive team with a broad mix of talents and experience.

Maurice Jones is my Deputy Leader and he is also staying on as Executive Member for Corporate Resources.

Councillor Carole Hegley is expanding her previous role as Executive Member for Social Care, Health and Housing and Councillor Ken Matthews is also widening his responsibilities to include strategic planning as well as economic development.

Their knowledge and experience is supplemented by that of Councillors Tricia Turner and Richard Stay who will take on the cross cutting roles of Economic Partnerships and External Affairs respectively.

I have also welcomed some new lead Executive Members. Councillor Mark Versallion, who is leading on Children's Services, joins Central Bedfordshire having had experience in the military, in business and as a London councillor.

Councillor Brian Spurr also joins the Executive, taking lead responsibility for Sustainable Communities Services including highways, waste and libraries.

All executive members are supported by able and experienced deputies and collectively we will make sure that this Council does

the best it can for residents.

We will be tapping into the strong partnerships that exist with other organisations and Central Bedfordshire and strong communities. By tackling the challenges together I am confident that we will find practical and successful ways to best support Central Bedfordshire now and in the future.

The key to working well and building good relationships with our communities and residents is developing trust and understanding. My commitment as Leader is to make sure that we communicate, listen and respond.

It is important that we keep you up to date with the actions we're taking in your name and how we are investing your money on your services. News Central is one of the key ways that we do that.

I hope you enjoy reading this edition which reinforces many of the things that I have mentioned here.

Finally, I wish you a happy summer and hope you have the opportunity to enjoy many of the fantastic locations Central Bedfordshire has to offer.

Cllr James Jamieson

Leader of Central Bedfordshire Council

Joining forces with Jobcentre Plus

A ground-breaking venture allowing Biggleswade residents to access council services alongside benefits and employment support has been formally opened by Minister for Employment, Chris Grayling MP.

The Council's customer service team based in Biggleswade has moved in with Jobcentre Plus to share their High Street premises.

The move, one of the first of its kind nationally, followed customer research which showed that these services were being used by the same people.

Mr Grayling said, "With Jobcentre Plus working with Central Bedfordshire Council, we can offer a range services to residents at a single point and also provide real value for money.

"We can use our wealth of local knowledge and experience to make huge differences to communities."



Chris Grayling MP (foreground) is pictured with representatives from Jobcentre Plus and Central Bedfordshire Council. Photo courtesy of Biggleswade Chronicle.

Cllr James Jamieson, Leader of Central Bedfordshire Council said: "This service demonstrates our commitment to thinking creatively about how we deliver services in the future. Working together we can provide services that are

designed around our customers' needs and cut costs by reducing duplication."

The office is open from 9am until 5pm from Monday to Thursday and 9am until 4pm on Fridays.

Let's Talk some more

A new wave of Let's Talk Together meetings are giving residents the chance to talk to local service providers about the issues that matter most to them and help shape safety priorities.

They follow meetings earlier this year attended by hundreds of residents.

Cllr James Jamieson, Leader of Central Bedfordshire Council, said: "These meetings are one of a variety of ways the Council and local organisations are listening to residents so that we know what matters to them in their communities.

"Understanding residents' needs will help inform future

decisions. Faced with difficult spending choices we need to work alongside communities and local organisations to find ways of maintaining services and supporting residents."

The events also highlight volunteering opportunities within local communities.

Central Bedfordshire Council, Bedfordshire Police, NHS Bedfordshire, the Fire and Rescue Service, Town and Parish Councils and other organisations who play an active role in the community will be present at the meetings.

A number of meetings have already taken place during May and June but the remaining meetings are:

- **Leighton Rural, Thursday 30 June,** Church Hall, Barton-Le-Clay
- **Leighton Buzzard and Linslade, Tuesday 5 July** Leighton Buzzard Day Centre, Duncombe Drive

All meetings take place from 7 to 9 pm



If you can't come along to a meeting you can feed in your views about local services through our dedicated community engagement website www.letstalkcentral.com

Learning Transformation: The first step

Schools in the Dunstable and Houghton Regis area will be encouraged to work more closely together to raise standards and meet local needs as part of proposals agreed by Central Bedfordshire Councillors.

The council has been working alongside local schools to review education in the area since April 2010. The review, the first of four covering the whole of Central Bedfordshire, focused on how to raise outcomes for students by making moves between schools more of a continual journey from ages four to 16. It also looked at how schools could best meet demands for places now and in the future.



Executive Members were presented with a range of options, including a shift to two tier education. After careful consideration it chose to continue with the current three tier model while encouraging schools to develop more formal ties.

A second area review has

started in the Leighton Buzzard and Linslade area with some initial recommendations made to councillors in due course. Two further reviews will follow in Mid Bedfordshire (Flitwick, Ampthill, Shefford, Stotfold and Cranfield) and Biggleswade and Sandy.

Job opportunities for local disabled residents and carers



Disabled residents and carers are being offered a chance to shape Central Bedfordshire's first online access guide for disabled people.

Developed by DisabledGo alongside the Central Bedfordshire Together partnership, the guide will review facilities in over 1000 local venues across Central Bedfordshire.

The guide launches in October 2011, but as part of the development stage the team needs 'surveyors' with personal experience of disabilities to check out venues across Central Bedfordshire alongside DisabledGo members.

Information collected by phoning local businesses and visiting venues will form a core part of the access guide. It aims to create an honest picture of disabled access in

venues across Central Bedfordshire so that disabled people know whether venues are suitable before they visit.

Central Bedfordshire is one of ten authorities taking part in the initiative and has entered into a five year partnership with DisabledGo to develop access guides.

The temporary work will be for about four weeks. The closing date for applicants is Wednesday 27 July, with interviews on 8 August. All successful applicants will receive training before starting work.

To find out more contact Rachel Felton at DisabledGo for an application form. Email rachel.felton@disabledgo.com or phone 01438 842710.

Stay a little longer in Beds

Three new tourism guides are encouraging visitors to Bedfordshire to 'stay a little longer'.

The useful guides from Experience Bedfordshire promote the area's wonderful countryside and distinctive rural market towns that tourists can explore.

The mini-guides focus on Woburn, Ampthill and Sandy and also guide visitors along the famous Greensand Ridge walk. With details about public transport and places to stay there are plenty of reasons for visitors to leave their cars behind and explore the area.

For a copy of one or more of these leaflets, contact tourism@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk or call 0300 300 6984

On the move in Central Bedfordshire

Tackling wear and tear on our roads, improving street lighting and reducing reliance on cars are the top priorities for Central Bedfordshire's Transport Plan.

These priorities will drive decisions on where the £8million Highways budget will be invested over the next three years. These are:

- Street lighting;
- Integrated transport
- Repairs to roads, drains and bridges

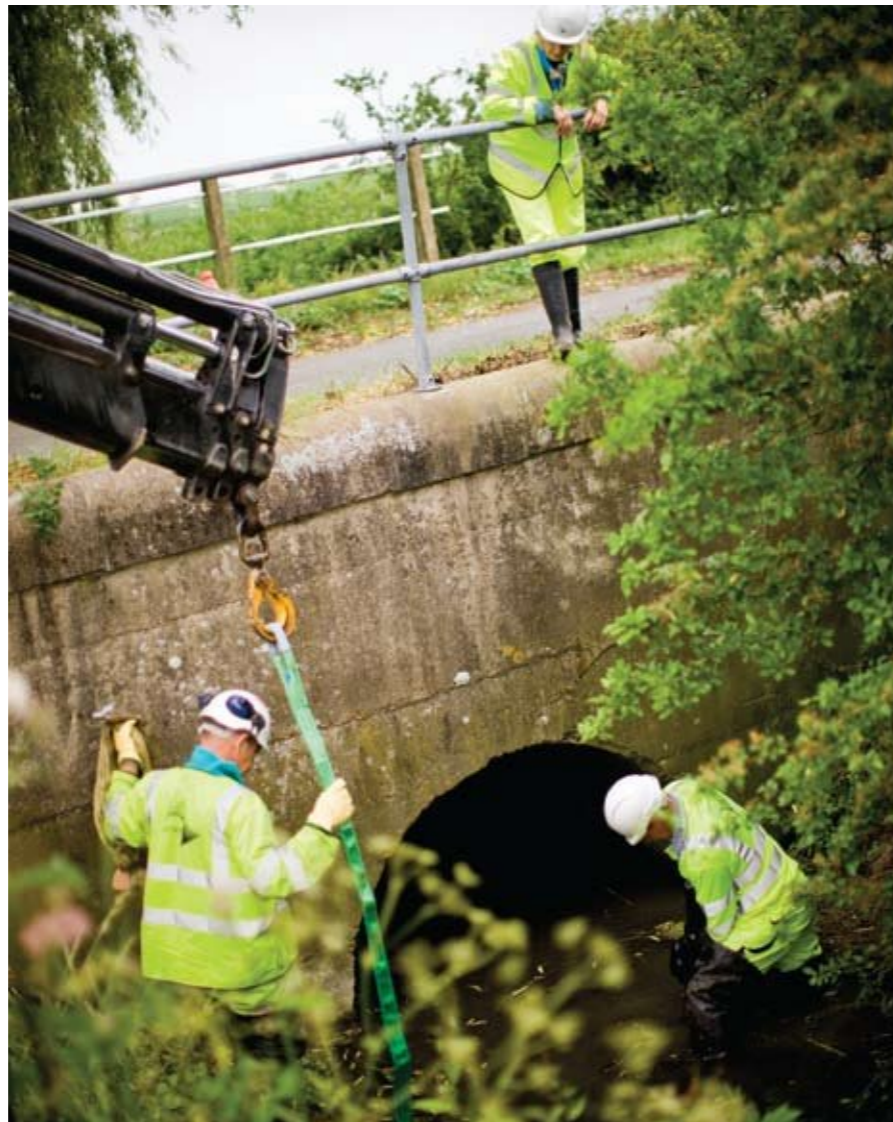
Illuminating Central Bedfordshire in the future

£1m is to be spent on upgrading the ageing stock of street lights, inherited by Central Bedfordshire when the council became a unitary authority in 2009.

The council is responsible for maintaining 21,000 street lights around the area. Around a third are changed or cleaned every year at a considerable cost to taxpayers.

As well as replacing 500 'failing' lighting columns the council is investing in installing new timing devices on each light. These will allow the lights to be dimmed and switched off at different times – producing huge savings in future years. Reducing the hours that street lights are left on was agreed as a budget saving and discussions will now take place with communities to find out how residents would like their lighting to be managed.

The new measures aim to reduce the amount of failing street lights, save money and protect the environment by cutting light pollution and using less energy.



Strengthening bridges for future use

Bridging the gaps

Towns and villages across Central Bedfordshire are graced by some beautiful bridges, but unfortunately, wear-and-tear means that they can become weak.

To deal with this issue, the council has allocated a fund to restore and strengthen a dozen bridges in the area which will also see extensive water-proofing of key components taking place.

With these works taking place, bridges in our area will be around for a long time to come and for generations to enjoy.

A smooth ride

Half of the highways budget has been dedicated to repairing and treating roads, pavements and cycleways in our towns and villages.

Almost 90 schemes have been earmarked for resurfacing, patching or joint-sealing for our roads and pathways.

This, along with £787,000 of government money to treat potholes, will mean that our Highways team will be in a street near you soon.

Getting to your destination

Over the next three years, the council will be working with residents to discuss their local transport needs and looking at how best to accommodate differing requirements.

More than £1.25million will be distributed to a range of schemes in four specific areas: Arlesey and Stotfold; Biggleswade and Sandy; Dunstable and Houghton Regis; and Leighton-Linslade.

The aim will be to reduce reliance on the car and increase the number of people walking, cycling or using public transport without providing expensive new infrastructure.

Work will focus on changing people's attitudes and increasing

awareness of alternative ways of getting around so that they make smarter, more informed travel choices.

Better drainage, safer roads

For many of us drains tend to be 'out of sight, out of mind' but the fact is that a number of drainage systems around Central Bedfordshire, particularly in rural areas, need to be improved.

The council's highways teams have pinpointed 14 roads in the area where drainage is a concern. Problems with drainage could have a knock-on effect causing bigger safety issues for road users – particularly during cold spells in the weather.

Public transport: good for the environment, good for your wallet



Roadworks and traffic information online

Help plan your trip to avoid possible traffic congestion by checking out the information online.

The Roadworks page on our website, www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/roadworks, has a weekly

bulletin listing major works as well as links to information from the Highways Agency and BBC.

Drivers can also get the latest traffic reports on www.letstalkcentral.com/transport.



Transport is such a big issue that it's got a whole section on our discussion website, Let's Talk Central. Here are some recent responses to the main topics.

What would make you use public transport more?

Comment: I live with my family in Sandy and don't have a car, so public transport is very important. I am also generally happy to use public transport. The rail service is, with limitations, generally very good (I use it to get to work). The bus service, particularly Sandy-Willington-Bedford route, is severely let down by several factors - namely price, frequency, coverage and information.

Response: These are all things we shall be looking at in developing our plans for public transport.

How can we improve road maintenance in your area?

Comment: To fix the potholes quicker, get the roadsweepers and dustmen to report all potholes. They are always travelling along all the local roads.

Response: This is a good suggestion and something that we could investigate further as part of the Road Maintenance Strategy.

You can air your views on these or other transport issues through letstalkcentral.com and on other social media www.facebook.com/letstalkcentral www.twitter.com/letstalkcentral



Your Central Bedfordshire Councillors

Your local councillors have been elected to represent you for the next four years. The Cabinet makes key decisions about your services. Each member is responsible for a particular set of services as highlighted below:

Leader of the Council -

Cllr James Jamieson

Deputy Leader -

Cllr Maurice Jones

Corporate Resources:

Executive Member - Cllr Jones

Deputies - Cllr David Hopkin & Cllr Richard Wenham

Children's Services:

Executive Member -

Cllr Mark Versallion

Deputy - Cllr Angela Barker

& Cllr Tony Brown

Social Care, Health & Housing:

Executive Member -

Cllr Carole Hegley

Deputy - Cllr Andrew Turner

Sustainable Communities

Strategic Planning & Economic Development:

Executive Member -

Cllr Ken Matthews

Deputies - Cllr Budge Wells,

Cllr Ian Dalgarno & Cllr Nigel Young

Sustainable Communities

Services:

Executive Member -

Cllr Brian Spurr

Deputies - Cllr Budge Wells

& Cllr Nigel Young

Economic Partnerships:

Executive Member -

Cllr Tricia Turner

External Affairs:

Executive Member -

Cllr Richard Stay

Colours below their photographs show which party they belong to.

Conservative



Liberal Democrat



Labour



Independent



Ampthill



Mike Blair



Paul Duckett



Mark Smith

Arlesey



Ian Dalgarno



Rita Drinkwater



Richard Wenham

Aspley & Woburn



Budge Wells

Barton-Le-Clay



Ian Shingler

Biggleswade North



Maurice Jones



Jane Lawrence

Biggleswade South



David Lawrence



Peter Vickers

Caddington



Ruth Gammons



Richard Stay

Cranfield & Marston Moretaine



Alan Bastable



Sue Clark



Ken Matthews

Dunstable Central



Carole Hegley

Dunstable Icknield



David McVicar



Nigel Young

Dunstable Manshead



Roger Pepworth

Dunstable Northfields



Denise Green



Julian Murray

Dunstable Watling



Peter Hollick



Ann Sparrow

Eaton Bray



Marion Mustoe

Flitwick



Fiona Chapman MBE



Charles Gomm



Andrew Turner

Heath & Reach



Mark Versallion

Houghton Conquest & Haynes



Angela Barker

Houghton Hall



Susan Goodchild



David Jones

Leighton Buzzard North



Roy Johnstone



Alan Shadbolt



Brian Spurr

Leighton Buzzard South



Ray Berry



David Bowater



Amanda Dodwell

Linslade



David Hopkin



Ken Janes



Nigel Warren

Northill



Tricia Turner MBE

Parkside



Rita Egan

Potton



Doreen Gurney



Adam Zerny

Sandy



Nigel Aldis



Caroline Maudlin



Naomi Sheppard

Shefford



Lewis Birt



Tony Brown

Silsoe & Shillington



Ian Mackilligan

Stotfold & Langford



Jon Clarke



Brian Saunders



John Saunders

Tithe Farm



Peter Williams

Toddington



Norman Costin



Tom Nicols

Westoning, Flitton and Greenfield



James Jamieson

Be Wise with Water!

Water suppliers are urging residents to be wise with water after the Environment Agency announced a drought for East Anglia. Water levels in rivers are lower than usual for this time of year after the driest spring since records began in 1910 .

Although this hasn't yet restricted domestic water supplies the announcement is a timely reminder of just how valuable water is, and how we must all do what we can to avoid wasting it.

Here are a few of the hints on tips from water suppliers on how to

conserve water in the home;

- use watering cans instead of hosepipes
- install a water butt or devices within your pipes to capture rain water – it's much better for plants than chlorinated tap water.
- shower instead of bathing,
- use a bowl of water to wash vegetables instead of running the tap.

Central Bedfordshire residents can buy discounted water butts by calling 0844 5714444 (quoting the reference CBC01L) or visit www.cbc.getcomposting.com



Photo provided by Straight Plc

For more information and advice on how you can save water or for more information about the drought contact the Environment Agency on 03708 506 506 or visit www.environment-agency.gov.uk

An update on the BEaR Project

A council project to find alternatives to landfill for waste that is not recycled by Central Bedfordshire households has taken an important step forward

The BEaR (Bedfordshire Energy and Recycling) Project has named four companies who will be invited to work up initial proposals into more detailed bids. All four will be expected to put forward high quality environmental and value for money solutions for treating Central Bedfordshire's residual waste.

The shortlisted bidders are (in alphabetical order):

- Covanta
- New Earth Solutions
- Veolia
- Viridor

Under Government and EU legislation by 2020 councils have to reduce waste sent to landfill by 35 per cent compared to 1995 levels.

The selected companies will start talks with the council to develop detailed proposals, building on

the solutions they proposed at the outline stage. In addition to providing a new waste treatment solution they will also be tasked with redeveloping Household Waste Recycling Centres, looking at the treatment of organic waste and providing storage for gritting salt

The detailed stage will be completed by December 2011, with selected solutions from bidders progressing to the Final Tender stage in January 2012. It is expected that a preferred bidder will be appointed in summer 2012.

Seeing Bikers, saving lives

Travelling around Central Bedfordshire in recent months, you will have noticed a number of new signs with a stark message attached: Rick (39) died on his bike – Take another look.

The hard hitting campaign was launched by Central Bedfordshire Council in partnership with Amey as part of a commitment to support the United Nations (UN) Decade of Action for Road Safety.

The aim of the UN Decade of Action for Road Safety is to stabilise and reduce the number of road casualties both locally, nationally and globally. The support of local councils, such as Central Bedfordshire, and their partners make this aim achievable and highlights the importance of road safety to road users across the county.

The 'Seeing Motorcyclists' campaign encourages drivers to look thoroughly for bikers when they are on the roads and thereby reduce the numbers of injured and killed riders. Statistics for 2010



Mary Amos-Cole lead the campaign in memory of her son, Rick

show that in four out of five cases where motorcyclists were killed on Central Bedfordshire roads, another vehicle was involved.

The campaign is being backed by Richard's mother Mary Amos-Cole who has spoken at numerous events about how such a tragic loss can affect a family. Since Richard's death in 2004, Mary has campaigned tirelessly to raise awareness of the "Think Bike"

message and regularly demonstrates her commitment to support the council's work to reduce road casualties in the county.

To coincide with the campaign, a new website - www.seeingbikers.com - has also been launched. The website provides information, research and the theory behind the reasons why motorists might not see motorcyclists on the roads.

PLAY YOUR PART

HOUSEHOLD WASTE RECYCLING CENTRES

OPENING TIMES

Sites are open seven days a week from 9am to 5pm.
Please pre-sort your waste and ensure that you arrive at least **10 minutes before closing** to allow you time to unload.
NO ENTRY WILL BE ALLOWED AFTER 4.50PM

✓ What sites take

- Glass bottles & jars
- Wood
- Scrap metal & aluminium cans
- Cardboard & paper
- Textiles & shoes
- Green garden waste
- Household & car batteries
- Used engine oil & cooking oil
- Fridges & freezers
- Large & small household appliances
- Light bulbs – (including fluorescent tubes)

✗ What sites don't take

- Commercial/trade waste
- Asbestos and cement bonded sheet material
- Contaminated/toxic material
- Clinical waste
- Animal faeces or bedding
- Whole/sectioned trees – (more than 100mm in diameter)
- Unsectioned conifers
- Engine oil – (more than 15 litres)

THE SITES ARE:

Ampthill, Abbey Lane
MK45 2SA (01525) 403611

Dunstable, Frenchs Avenue,
LU6 1BH (01582) 609212

Biggleswade, Bells Brook
SG18 0NA (01767) 313684

Leighton Buzzard, Shenley Hill
Road LU7 3BT(01525) 371619

Please Note: You may need a permit to enter the site depending on the type of waste you want to take and the vehicle you are using. For more details call the permit line now on **0300 300 8080** or visit www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk

For more information about recycling please contact Central Bedfordshire Council on 0300 300 8302

New thinking on services

Value for money and thinking creatively about providing services will characterise Central Bedfordshire's approach to delivering £19million of savings this year and cutting costs in future years.

New funding solution for youth services

Youth services will continue over the school summer holidays and beyond after contracts were awarded for running youth centres, outdoor educational activities and volunteering opportunities.

The services, providing community-based support and activities for young people, will be funded from the Early Intervention Grant paid to the council by the government. The council decided to allocate £512,000 of the grant this year and next to keep services going after having to cut its main budget for youth services.

The council has also commissioned other organisations to provide early intervention and support services including work to reduce unplanned pregnancies and support for young people with drug and alcohol issues.

Using this grant money means the new services have to show tangible benefits for young people in terms of improving health, social and career chances. It especially aims to help young people with lower prospects than others.

Cllr Mark Versallion, Executive Member for Children's Services, said:

"Being able to find new ways of funding these services is

great news and has focused our thinking on what we want youth services to achieve. The new services will work with the council and others helping young people to raise their aspirations, reach their potential and lead healthier lifestyles."

During their two year contract, the new providers have committed to working with the council and will apply for grants or work with others, including schools, colleges and other organisations to secure future provision.

Creative thinking on music provision

Central Bedfordshire Council is developing fresh thinking as it prepares to launch its new Music Service on 1 July.

We are entering a new phase in music provision and we now believe that we have a winning package for the years ahead. With your support, Central Bedfordshire Music will be a strong and flexible music service that provides young people access to inspiring music tuition so that they can be the best musicians they can be.

The new service is being remodelled with a new team, a new look and a new pricing structure, details of which will be announced soon. Tuition fees for the new service from September will be competitively lower than at present.

Summer 2011 Youth Music Courses are also taking place thanks to cooperation between Central Bedfordshire Council, other local councils, the Bedfordshire Music Trust, Friends of Bedfordshire Youth Music and Bedfordshire Orchestral Society.

Our young people and their parents will be involved on thinking of new ideas on how to grow and develop the Music Centres in Ampthill, Biggleswade, Dunstable and Leighton Buzzard. Thank you to those parents and young people who have already offered their time to support us with this.

For information contact 0300 300 88102 or go to www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/music which will link you to news as Central Bedfordshire Music develops.



Staff and users of Dunstable Library offer their views

Shh – It's the BIG Library Debate

Take part in the 'Big Library Debate' to help make sure that the service is fit for the 21st century by using modern technology and allowing easy access for everyone.

Our Libraries are at the heart of local communities, providing a gateway to information, learning and resources for all ages.

To help improve the service the council wants to hear residents' views on how libraries could be more efficient and flexible to meet people's needs. The council has been holding events at libraries

Customer Access Points in libraries

Libraries in Sandy and Houghton Regis will play host to Central Bedfordshire's first customer access points which go live in July.

Residents using the new service points will be able to sort out their council queries by speaking to customer service staff over a video link rather than having

across Central Bedfordshire which run up to 12 July.

You can take part in the Big Library Debate online at www.letstalkcentral.com, visit www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/council-and-democracy/ consultations or talk to your local Library staff.

Feedback will help inform options for the future model of the Library Service.

The next edition of News Central will update readers on the options and how you can get involved in the next stage of the consultation about the library service.

to travel to council offices.

Cllr Maurice Jones, Deputy council leader says: "Using new technology we can help our customers to access services in places that are convenient to them and cut running costs at the same time."

If the trial is successful the council hopes to roll out more systems across Central Bedfordshire.

Home Insulation Grants

Now available to all homeowners
Most Property Types

CAVITY WALL INSULATION

You pay only £149

LOFT INSULATION

You pay only £199

FREE Insulation available if you receive any of the following:

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- Working Tax Credit (*income must be less than £16,190*)
- Attendance Allowance
- Child Tax Credit (*income must be less than £16,190*)
- Pension Credit
- Housing Benefit
- Income Support
- Council Tax Benefit

* Free loft insulation only available if you have less than 3 inches
* All offers are subject to average property sizes, additional costs may apply to larger than average property sizes

FUNDS ARE LIMITED - TO AVOID DISAPPOINTMENT APPLY TODAY

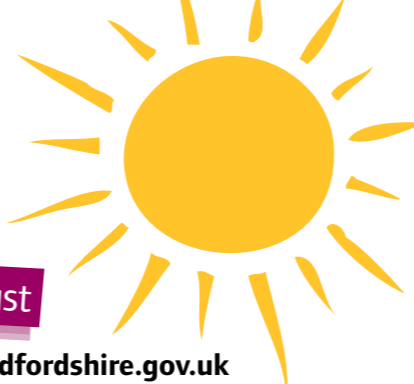
0870 042 1267

Lines open 8 a.m to 8 p.m

Or Apply Online at
www.energygrantsdirect.co.uk

what's on...

July August



For a more comprehensive listing – just click on 'What's On' at www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk

July

AMP Rocks

Friday 8, 6pm onwards

Ampthill Park, MK45 2HX

Headlined by the Lightning Seeds (Lucky You, Life of Riley, Three Lions). Tickets available in advance £22 (£18 concessions) from www.amprocks.co.uk or £30 on the day.

Biggleswade Sports Meeting

Saturday 9, 1pm

Fairfield, Biggleswade

61st Annual Athletic & Grass Track & Cycle Meeting. Track events for all ages male and female.

For more information, ring Des Ball, Event Secretary, on 01767 313790.

Sand and Motorcycles

Sunday 10 from 10am

Pages Park, Billington Road, Leighton Buzzard.

A gathering of motorcycles, old and new, recalling the former role of two-wheeled transport in the local sand industry. All bikes welcome. In support of local charities and the East Anglian Air Ambulance.

Aspley Guise Open Gardens

Sunday 10, 12.30pm to 5.30pm

Around a dozen gardens will be open in the village. Admission to all gardens: £3.50

for adults, free for children under 14 if accompanied by an adult, £3 for pensioners. Refreshments and plants are for sale in the Village Hall. All proceeds in aid of the upkeep of the Village Hall.

Aragon Day, Ampthill

Saturday 30, 10am to 4pm

White Hart Hotel, Ampthill

Event marking the town's links to Catherine of Aragon. Costume parade and Tudor Fair with games, jesters, storytelling and hog roast.

For details call 01525 751629 or visit www.aragonday.wikidot.com

August

Leighton Buzzard Narrow Gauge Railway Craft Day

Sunday 14, 10.40am onwards

Pages Park Station, Billington Road, Leighton Buzzard.

Catch the train from Pages Park Station to Stonehenge Works for craft demonstrations, hands-on crafts for kids, industrial train displays, entertainment and light refreshments. For details www.buzzrail.co.uk/index.html

Sue Ryder Summer Fete

Sunday 14, 11am to 4.30pm

St John's Hospice, Moggerhanger Swing boats, paintball, sheep dog display, WWII living history group,

military and civilian vehicles, fun dog show, refreshments and over 40 stalls. Entry: Adults £1.50, children under 14 free and free parking. Telephone 01767 641044 for more details

Harlington Flower and Vegetable Show

Saturday 27, 2pm onwards

Harlington Village Hall, Harlington Displays of vegetables, flowers, handicrafts, photography, cookery. Plant stall and sale of produce at 4.15pm. Adults 50p, accompanied under 16s free.

Special Feature

'Just Ask' a mobile advice and information project, is travelling around Central Bedfordshire offering residents help and guidance about social care, health and housing issues.

Friday 15 July - Tesco Car Park, Leighton Buzzard
Friday 19 August - Market Area, Sandy Town Centre
Saturday 10 September (Oyster Festival) - Car park, opposite the Church of St Mary's, Woburn.

General opening times will be 9am-2.30pm.

Business Bulletin

News for Central Bedfordshire's businesses

Apprenticeships – good for your business

Apprentices bring considerable value to organisations. They can provide your business with a highly skilled workforce, boost your productivity, profitability and staff retention as well as bringing new ideas and innovation to your business. An Apprenticeship combines on the job training with nationally recognised qualifications. Training and learning support is offered locally by a dedicated partnership of providers.

The National Apprenticeship Service, which is responsible for all elements of Apprenticeships in England, has a dedicated team who can help with the whole process to recruit an apprentice.

To find out more about how Apprenticeships can benefit your business:

Call the National Apprenticeship Service on 08000 150 600 or visit their website at www.apprenticeships.org.uk.

Start up businesses – Central Bedfordshire responds to calls from PM

Recent calls by the Prime Minister, David Cameron for people to use new business and enterprise as a way of helping the country out of recession have been taken on board by Central Bedfordshire Council

Grants of up to £500 are available to Central Bedfordshire's residents to buy tools, computers, stationery or any equipment they need to start their own business. This

comes as part of the launch of the StartUp Britain campaign following on from the Budget speech.

For further information contact garth.mckenzie@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk

Rural businesses

The Greensand Ridge Rural Development Programme still have grants available for rural businesses located (or seeking to locate) in the Greensand Ridge area of Bedfordshire. For more information please contact lisak@bedsrcc.or.uk

Business Ambassadors

We are looking for high profile companies to become Bedfordshire Business Ambassadors.

Do you think you would like to:

- talk up our county as a premier place to do business;
- have a Bedfordshire Businesses Ambassadors pack to show what a great place to do business Bedfordshire is;
- host high profile inward investment visits;
- attend relevant high-level;
- lobbying/promotional events;
- mentor local businesses to help them to grow.

..and the benefits to you will be:

- Close contact with Central Bedfordshire Council and direct access to the business development teams and the Chief Executive.
- Short cut route to preliminary planning consultation with planning officers prior to making a full planning application.

- Early notification of significant developments in the area affecting business.
- Rapid mobilization of business leaders on lobbying issues.
- Beneficial first year membership rates for new members of the Chamber of Commerce.

If you would like to explore this option talk to Caron Kendall on 0300 300 6984 or email caron.kendall@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk

What if.....?

Every year one in five businesses face major disruption to their services. Would your firm know how to handle a flood, a fire or a communications breakdown?

Every firm should have a business continuity plan - they're quick and easy to put together, just take the ten minute health check or complete the online tool at www.whatwouldyoudoif.co.uk

The Economic Growth, Skills & Regeneration Team at Central Bedfordshire Council can provide you with a wide range of support and advice for your business including: help with funding opportunities and grants, start-up business advice, commercial property search, skills and training. For more information call a member of our team on 0300 300 5525

Like to keep in touch?

Sign up to receive the latest business news and advice. Send your details to: caron.kendall@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk



FILMS - THEATRE - MUSIC - DANCE - COMEDY - CHILDREN'S ENTERTAINMENT - EXHIBITIONS - CONFERENCE VENUE



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BOX OFFICE: 0300 300 8125 EMAIL: LBTBOXOFFICE@CENTRALBEDFORDSHIRE.GOV.UK



Central Bedfordshire in contact

Why not cut out and keep ...



Email:

customer.services@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk



Website:

www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk



Write to:

Central Bedfordshire Council,
Priory House, Monks Walk,
Chicksands, Shefford,
Bedfordshire, SG17 5TQ.



Council and democracy

including elections, jobs, consultation

0300 300 8301

Home and environment

including Waste & recycling,
housing, births, deaths & marriages

0300 300 8302

Health and caring

including adoption & fostering,
social care for adults & children

0300 300 8303

Learning

including young people's services,
adult learning, education welfare

0300 300 8304

Leisure and culture

including libraries, parks, sports & arts

0300 300 8305

Money and benefits

including council tax, grants,
benefits (housing & council tax)

0300 300 8306

Planning and business

including planning & building control,
trading standards, business advice

0300 300 8307

Travelling

including highways,
Blue Badges, bus passes

0300 300 8308

Also available

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