

News Central

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

**Preparing for
a right royal
PARTY!**

Issue 17 - March/April 2011

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**Central
Bedfordshire**

Welcome

When Central Bedfordshire Council was formed two years ago we set out our vision and priorities.

This issue of News Central demonstrates our continued commitment to those early ambitions. Our work with dementia sufferers, profiled on page 8 shows just one of the ways we are caring for our ageing population. The item on Dunstable (page 13) highlights our commitment to the local economy and to managing growth.

Other articles highlight how we are changing the way we

deliver services including moving to personal budgets for adult social care (page 9) and using new technology to connect with communities through customer access terminals in libraries (page 7).

As we emerge from an enormously challenging budget setting process we are at a defining moment for local services and their future delivery. The shrinking of the public purse has meant we have to stop funding some services that up until now we have provided by choice rather than necessity. You can find

out more about council spending and how some community organisations are already helping to bridge the gap to protect services on page 7.

As part of the savings, News Central will be reducing to four issues a year from now on. The next issue will be out later in the spring.

In the meantime I want to thank you if you are helping to support your community in 2011.

Cllr Tricia Turner MBE
Leader, Central Bedfordshire Council

Census will show vital statistics

The Census takes place on 27 March this year and every household in England and Wales needs to complete the questionnaire which will reveal vital statistics about the local population here in Central Bedfordshire.

Government and local authorities depend on our information to help make sure you get the services you need in your community. And that means asking questions of a lot of people. We want everyone to take part in helping tomorrow take shape. This is your chance to make a difference.

Government money for health, police, councils and other public service providers is allocated

according to the population of an area, so it is vital that everyone is counted and each area gets its fair share of money.

You can choose whether to complete the questionnaire on-line or by hand. Every questionnaire has a unique code to enable completion at www.census.gov.uk. The questionnaire pack contains a prepaid return envelope if you prefer to post it back.

Further help: You can telephone 0300 0201 101 to request guidance in over 50 languages and in accessible formats such as large print, Braille and British Sign language. You can also request a personal visit from a Census Collector who will come to your



home and the number for text relay for the hard of hearing is 18001 0300 0201 160.

If you need further help, want to ask questions, or want to complete your census questionnaire on-line, you can attend a special event which is being held on Monday 4 April between 10am and 3pm at Sandy Library.

Your magazine

News Central is produced by Central Bedfordshire Council.

It is delivered to every household in the area through an independent company and may be accompanied by leaflets or flyers.

Tell us what you think

We hope you enjoy reading the magazine and we welcome your comments or suggestions for future editions.

To get in touch email newscentral@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk or call us on 0300 300 8301.

Council meetings

For details about Central Bedfordshire Council meetings, call 0300 300 8301 or visit our website at www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk

Just Ask



Above: The bus offers fully interactive services for residents

A new project is aiming to reach out to isolated residents across Central Bedfordshire and help them to access information on social care, health and housing.

The council is teaming up with Aragon Housing Association and the Older People's Reference Group to tour towns and villages across Central Bedfordshire as part of the project called 'Just Ask'.

The 'Just Ask' team will take to the roads in the brightly coloured RAVE bus (Rural Area Vehicle for Education), a mobile resource centre that will park up in various locations in Central Bedfordshire. On board, residents will be able to pick up a range of leaflets about public and voluntary services as well as receive advice from staff.

All enquiries will be noted and any questions that staff can't answer immediately will be sent to the relevant organisation for them to reply directly.

It is hoped that the advice given will help residents take the first steps towards improving their daily lives.

The RAVE bus will be open between 9am and 2.30pm at the following locations in the next few months:

- Friday 18 March - Market Square, Biggleswade Town Centre.
- Wednesday 20 April - ASDA car park, Dunstable
- Saturday 14 May (Aragon Open Day) - Flitwick Leisure Centre, Flitwick
- Wednesday 15 June - Bedford Square / Library, Houghton Regis

Between July and December the RAVE bus is also scheduled to visit Leighton Buzzard, Sandy, Woburn, Shefford, Caddington and Arlesey. There will be more details in the local press and future editions of News Central.

Let's talk central

Keep up to date with what Central Bedfordshire Council is doing and discuss local issues with the council and other residents through our interactive website www.letstalkcentral.com and other social media sites.



www.facebook.com/letstalkcentral
www.twitter.com/letstalkcentral
centralbedfordshire

Here is a taster of what we have been discussing recently:

"Why is Central Bedfordshire replacing the street lighting in Flitwick?"

Streetlight columns are replaced when they are assessed to have reached the end of their safe and efficient working life. Some failures are in the column itself and will not be immediately apparent. Making sure streetlights work effectively is important for the safety of road users and adjacent homeowners, so replacing those that don't work properly is a high priority. Lanterns are also being replaced with more energy efficient ones.

"In terms of the Big Society concept, will the council look to allow local Town and Parish Council to deliver some of their services?"

We are working with a number of Town and Parish Councils on devolving services and considering the future of some services that may be impacted upon by the budget cuts. A series of planning workshops have been arranged during March to consider the impact of the Localism Bill - which is all about the creation of the 'Big Society'

The BIG vote

Local elections for Central Bedfordshire and a referendum on the voting system for future UK Parliamentary elections will take place on Thursday 5 May.

The local elections are your chance to say who you want to run your local services and represent you on Central Bedfordshire Council for the next four years.

Local elections have a huge bearing on the way essential local services are delivered. As a unitary authority Central Bedfordshire Council is responsible for most local public services including education, roads and transport, waste, libraries, social care, and housing.

There will also be elections for the 70 parish and town councils in the area. Traditionally, these councils have been responsible for very local services like parks and allotments but the 'localism' agenda means their role is set to increase.

Put yourself in poll position

You can only vote in the election if your name is on the Electoral Register for your area. Individuals already registered will receive a poll card at the end of March.

If you are not registered we can



give you a form to do so or you can download and complete a registration form at www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/council-and-democracy

To be able to vote on 5 May you will have to be registered by 5pm on 14 April.

Stand up and be counted

If you think you'd make a good local councillor, it is not too late to stand for election yourself.

The deadline for candidates to register is noon on 4 April. Most residents aged over 18 will be eligible but there are conditions you need to meet.

To find out if you qualify and

what you need to do to stand for election contact the Central Bedfordshire Electoral Services Team on 0300 300 8008.

How to vote

You can vote at your local polling station or by post.

If you have already registered to vote by post you'll automatically be sent a postal vote. The latest date you can apply for a postal vote is 5pm on 14 April. If you want to appoint a proxy to vote on your behalf you'll need to do so by 5pm on 21 April. Postal votes will be sent out about two weeks before the election.

If you want to vote in person we will send out poll cards at the end of March telling you which polling station you should vote at. You do not need your poll card to be able to vote.



Don't miss out on your opportunity to vote and have a say on local issues

Have your say on AV

Thursday 5 May will also see a nationwide referendum on changes to how we vote for Members of Parliament. This will determine if voters want to replace the existing first-past-the-post system with a method known as the Alternative Vote or AV.

At present, the 'first-past-the-post system' sees the candidate who receives the most votes in a constituency win that seat.

Under the Alternative Vote system, voters rank the candidates on their ballot paper in order of preference. Anyone getting over half the top votes in the first round would be elected as MP. If that doesn't happen, the candidate with least votes is eliminated and their second choices go to the remaining

candidates. This continues until one candidate has 50 per cent or more of the vote.

The referendum was agreed as part of the Coalition Agreement drawn up after the 2010 general election, and put before Parliament in July 2010 as part of the Parliamentary Voting System and Constituencies Bill.

The only previous UK wide referendum was in 1975 when the UK decided to remain in the European Economic Community.

The Result

Votes for the elections and referendum will be counted on Friday 6 May. The results for each ward will be posted straight onto Central Bedfordshire's website, www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk,

giving election followers up-to-the-minute information on how the new council is shaping up.

Details of the referendum count will be fed straight through to the Chair of the Electoral Commission, Jenny Watson, Chief Counting Officer for this referendum who will announce the result for the whole of the UK.

Further help:

You can find out more about any aspect of the local elections, and local democracy in general, by calling the Central Bedfordshire Electoral Services Team on 0300 300 8008 or by visiting www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/council-and-democracy

Changing boundaries

The May elections will see a reduction in the number of Central Bedfordshire councillors elected to serve local people and a change in the wards that they serve.

The independent Local Government

Boundary Commission for England has said that the number of councillors must be reduced from 66 to 59. Ward boundaries have also been redrawn and there will be 31 instead of 30 electoral wards.

Each will be served by one, two or three councillors depending on the size of the ward. You can vote for any combination of candidates up to the set number for your ward.

A right royal street party

When Prince William and Kate Middleton tie the knot on 29 April communities across the country will revert to the great British tradition of hanging out the bunting and holding a street party to celebrate.

As well as marking this historic event, holding a street party is a great excuse to meet up with your neighbours, family and friends in a traffic-free road.

If you are planning a party here is a brief guide to make your event run smoothly.

Plan ahead

Start by gauging interest amongst your neighbours. Invite the whole street to the first planning meeting.

Keep it local, keep it simple

Be careful about how you publicise your event so as not to draw a wider crowd. Street parties are small private events organised by the residents for residents and at no cost to the public. If what you are organising turns into a larger event different rules will apply.

Delivering invites by hand is a great chance to meet neighbours and tell people face-to-face about the event.

Road closures

So that organisers and residents can enjoy the festivities the council has made a traffic order to cover the whole district, which means charges that would usually be paid by organisers will instead be covered by the council.

This is great news for residents as it means that all agreed road closures will be free of charge,



Revellers in Biggleswade enjoyed the 1977 Silver Jubilee, why not do the same?

with the exception of any signage for diversions.

Organisers should complete an application form which is available from www.communities.gov.uk/publications/communities/streetpartyguide, and send it back to us (see address details on back cover) by 12 April.

Be safe

Planning a safe event is the best way of reducing risks and so it is important to consider and minimise all risks. Contact the Central Bedfordshire Safety Advisory Group (SAG) who can review and offer advise on safety arrangements. They can also offer information about insurance, licensing, noise control and temporary structures such as bouncy castles.

Consider others

Try to encourage all ages to come and join in. Also remember to allow for all tastes. On the day put out some chairs for the elderly and maybe somewhere soft for young ones to sit. Remember that parties create waste, so make sure that there are plenty of helpers to clean up after your event.

Finally. Enjoy yourself!

For more information about road closures for street parties please contact Central Bedfordshire Council Travelling team on 0300 300 8308. To contact SAG email SAG@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk or call 0300 300 8307.

Protecting you from a rise in council tax

Residents opening their Council Tax bills this March will see no increase in what they need to pay for Central Bedfordshire Council services this year.

The council's commitment to value for money has been carried through to the information leaflet that accompanies the bills. This year the council has joined forces with the Bedfordshire Fire and Rescue and Police authorities to put spending details and payments advice into one booklet. As well as streamlining information, the new approach has saved money.

This is an example of how the council is driving out every penny of unnecessary costs to deliver

savings of more than £19million this year. This follows a reduction in government funding as part of measures to tackle the national debt.

Despite saving £13million by cutting running costs the council has had to stop or reduce some services to deliver the remaining savings.

"While the council will concentrate on providing essential services that protect truly vulnerable people we need to think about new ways of delivering services that we can no longer afford." says Cllr Tricia Turner MBE, Leader of Central Bedfordshire Council.

The council has started discussions with parish and town councils as well as local organisations about the future delivery of services where funding is being cut.

Early signs are positive. In Sandy local groups are joining forces to protect the future of the community sports facility based in the Upper School. In Leighton Linlade the Town Council is looking to take on the homework club facility when Central Bedfordshire Council funding ends this summer.



Pay by



If you have a bank or building society account, Direct Debit is the easiest way to pay your council tax bill.

In the region of 63% of households in Central Bedfordshire already pay their council tax by Direct Debit. As well as giving you piece of mind that bills are paid promptly, Direct Debit saves time and money all round.

If you want to pay your council tax by Direct Debit, all you have to do is phone us to arrange it and we will take care of the rest.

The Direct Debit will be collected each month, in keeping with the payments schedule we have agreed with you.

Call us now on 0300 300 8012 – please have your bank details to hand. You can also download a form from our website, www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk.

A new way to speak to the council

Residents will soon be able to sort out their council queries by video link through new Customer Access Points that are being trialled in two libraries. In the coming months.

The two access points will be located in Sandy and Houghton Regis libraries. If the trial is successful it is hoped that more systems could be rolled out across

Central Bedfordshire in the future.

The council was assisted with the development of the project through Improvement East, the Regional and Efficiency Partnership for the East of England.

They support local authorities and other services in their drive to improve services while cutting running costs. Cllr Steve Male, Portfolio Holder

for Customers, Systems and Assets said:

"This new method of communication will provide customers with an interactive way of dealing with the council in a quick and easy manner. The Customer Access Points should benefit customers by cutting the amount of time that they have to spend dealing with their queries.

Transforming People's Lives in Central Bedfordshire



Reminiscence rooms are becoming an important part in helping sufferers of dementia like Lionel (pictured above) remember past memories

Unlocking memories for dementia sufferers

Dementia can be distressing for both the sufferer and their family – as an adults' short term memory worsens, they may lose their independence and identity.

However, a new type of reminiscence therapy may hold the key to reassuring sufferers, without the use of anti-psychotic drugs.

Reminiscence therapy is now recognised as one of a number of approaches that can stimulate communication. As the memory of dementia sufferers fades, it becomes more and more difficult for them to hold conversations. It

is thought that sufferers can access memories through pictures or audio which can trigger discussions about past experiences.

Central Bedfordshire Council's day centres in Leighton Buzzard and Houghton Regis are in the process of setting up a 1950s reminiscence room that will contain objects from the era that should help to stimulate memories.

The day centres are currently seeking items from the 1950s and would like to encourage residents of Central Bedfordshire to help. Perhaps you have some unwanted 1950s furniture or bric-a-brac,

photographs of Marilyn Monroe or Elvis Presley records that you could donate?

If you have anything to give that you feel evokes the spirit of the age, please contact:

For Leighton Buzzard Day Centre - Georgina Watson, deputy manager on 01525 371676 or email georgina.watson@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk

For Houghton Regis Day Centre - Lorraine Bugler, deputy manager, on 01582 865700 or email lorraine.bugler@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk

Reaping the rewards of a personal budget

One of the key aims of the Adult Social Care team is to support vulnerable adults towards leading as independent a life as possible. For Edward Percival, a nineteen-year-old from Leighton Buzzard with cerebral palsy, a personal budget has provided the springboard for him to attend a specialist performing arts college and move away from home for the first time.

This time last year, Ed was studying hard for his A-levels. Despite his condition confining him to a wheelchair, Ed's intelligence and drive meant he was ready to take greater control of his life and plan his own future.

New thinking on social care methods acknowledges that the institutional type of care provided by day centres is not necessarily the best way to support all disabled adults.

An alternative to this is provided by personal budgets, where an adult can choose to receive a series of payments instead of a structured

programme of social care. It is then up to the adult to decide what services they spend their money on. The intention is to give individuals more personal control in their daily lives.

After speaking with his social worker, Ed decided that having a personal budget would enable him to fulfil his potential. His creative interest and his feeling that he needed to experience an environment that bridged the gap between being cared for and leading a more independent life, saw him apply to the Orpheus Centre. The Orpheus Centre is a performing arts college in Surrey for young disabled adults which encourages personal development.

After being accepted, Ed started at college in November. Along with learning about music production and performing in shows such as 'Jack and the Beanstalk', Ed has been supported to take more responsibility for doing his shopping, cleaning, washing and planning social activities. While Ed needs some early morning help, to



"Fe fi fo fum..." A personal budget has helped Ed (pictured right) into stage school

get him out of bed, washed and dressed, he is now being asked how he wants things done, so he can make his own choices.

Ed said:

"I am using my personal budget to broaden my horizons, get out a bit more and lead a better quality of and more fun life.

"It's ok to find it intimidating, but I would recommend it to anyone who wants to have control of their finances."

"I would say to any young person who wishes to feel more in control of themselves, that they should look into it."

Adults need protecting too

Headline-grabbing cases of child abuse have raised public interest in how children are being cared for and protected against harm.

However, we must all remember that adults can be just as vulnerable to mistreatment too.

A National Dignity Action day on 25 February highlighted the need to protect the human rights of older adults and adults

with disabilities or mental health problems.

Central Bedfordshire Council urges you to ring a council helpline if you suspect that a vulnerable adult is being abused, in order to get help and advice on the situation.

The abuse could vary from treating someone with disrespect in a way which significantly affects the person's quality of life, to causing actual physical suffering.

Abuse could be financial, physical or emotional and caused by anyone - someone in the family, a professional or a neighbour.

If you suspect a case of abuse and don't feel you need immediate help from the police, please contact the Safeguarding Adults Helpline as soon as possible on 0300 300 8122. You are not required to give your name.

Flood response put to test

Stranded motorists, flooded homes and isolated communities. These were among the possible scenarios facing emergency response services as they took part in a major national drill – looking at how they'd deal with severe flooding.

Local councils joined with police, fire and rescue services, the Environment Agency and local health and ambulance services to test their flood response skills during Exercise Watermark in early March. Business representatives, town and parish councils, schools and volunteers also took part.

Exercises like these are just one of the ways that Bedfordshire and Luton Local Resilience Forum (BLLRF) makes sure that key organisations are ready to respond together in an emergency.

“Exercise Watermark tested our ability to deal with the devastating effects of burst riverbanks and surface water flooding. These are real risks so it's essential that we are all prepared to deal with them – including residents.”

Be flood aware

With one in six properties in England and Wales being at risk of flooding, being prepared is vital.

To find out if you are at risk and to get early warnings, go to www.environment-agency.gov.uk or call Floodline on 0845 988 1188

Protect your property

There are many flood defence products available but make sure

you chose one that is kite-marked. Sandbags used to be thought of as an effective defence, but experience and evidence from recent flood events has shown otherwise. Central Bedfordshire Council doesn't issue sandbags for this reason.

The Emergencies section of our website, www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/advice-and-benefits/emergencies/floods offers links to help and advice.



What would you do if...?

In the November/December edition of News Central, we offered residents the chance of winning fantastic prizes courtesy of the Bedfordshire and Luton Local Resilience Forum if they told us what one thing they would take with them in an emergency.

Sandy resident Andy Clark scooped a training day with Bedfordshire Police's dog unit when he answered: "My wife would take her handbag as it contains her everyday essentials. We already have a fire proof and waterproof case with all the documents we would need to contact people, identification including our passports, birth certificates; treasured photos even the house



A day training with Bedfordshire Police's dog handling unit was one of the prizes

insurance policy. The family know where it is so one of us would grasp it. I would ensure that my family and our dog were out of the house and stayed together. Once out we would follow instructions from

emergency personnel."

Kelly Macklin from Shefford won a three month Lifestyle membership for her answer:

“My BlackBerry. I always have it to hand, so I could get in touch with loved ones, browse for updates on the internet and tell everyone about it on Facebook!”

And Gordon McCulloch from Dunstable won an emergency kit with his response: "My laptop so that I can still keep in touch with people by email."

For more information about coping in an emergency visit www.whatwouldyoudoif.co.uk

Let's face the **MUSIC!**

Sunday 27th March 2011 6.30pm
An evening of musical entertainment featuring

- Dunstable Town Band
- The Shambles
- Dunstable Amateur Operatic Society
- Dunstable Ladies Choir

and
Young performers from our schools and youth groups with Dunstable Concert Ensemble playing in the foyer

Bookings can be made at the Grove Theatre, Grove Park, Court Drive, Dunstable or by phone to the Theatre Box Office - **01582 602080**

Supported by Central Bedfordshire Council and the Grove Theatre in aid of local charities across Central Bedfordshire

Central Bedfordshire Council
www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/fyis

Central Bedfordshire

Family & Youth Information Service

We can provide information and advice on:

- Choices and support for young people aged 13 to 19 years
- Childcare and early education
- Out of school clubs and holiday care
- Leisure activities
- Family support services
- Positive activities from 5 - 19 years



Contact us:

☎ 0300 300 8119

✉ fyis@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk

🌐 www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/fyis

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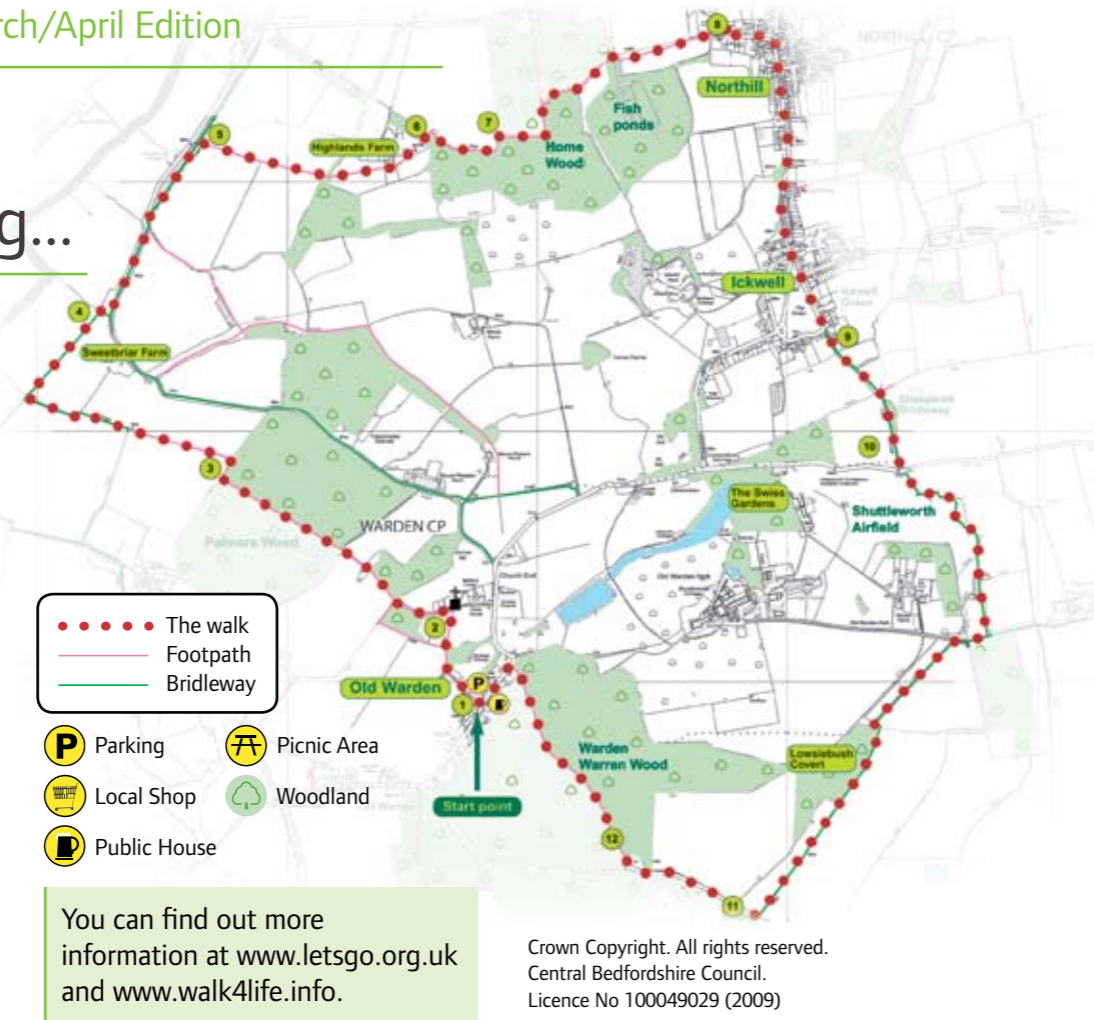


Let's get walking...

With spring well under way, now is an ideal time to enjoy the miles and miles of rolling countryside that Central Bedfordshire has to offer.

The council's Countryside Access Team promotes a number of walks ranging from a mild stroll around Flitton Moor to an eye-boggling 40 mile hike along the length of the Greensands Ridge.

Whether it is dog walking, fitness, family bonding or wildlife that takes your fancy there is something for everyone in Central Bedfordshire and best of all it is free. To get you started we've outlined a nice little ramble around the stunning villages of Old Warden, Northill and Ickwell. Enjoy!



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The Quadrant Shopping Centre and the market at Ashton Square in Dunstable



Shop local, shop Dunstable

Doing more of our shopping in the towns and villages where we live is a great way of supporting our local communities and businesses and reducing our environmental impact by travelling less. For residents of Dunstable and neighbouring areas, a great scheme promises to make 'keeping it local' an even more attractive proposition.

Shop Dunstable is an internet discount voucher scheme for Dunstable Town Centre packed with great money saving offers to redeem in local shops, pubs and eateries.

Operated by Dunstable Town Council, www.shopdunstable.co.uk helps support local business and provides better value for shoppers. It is supported by the Dunstable Town Centre Management Committee which includes representatives from the town council, Central Bedfordshire

Council and other local organisations.

Local businesses can sign up to the scheme free of charge and residents won't pay a penny to register for the special offers which can be used as many times as you like and are updated every month.

Shop Dunstable is just one of several projects supporting the town centre.

Central Bedfordshire Council has recently agreed to invest £1.5 million of funding to support the purchase of the Quadrant shopping centre as part of regeneration plans. A draft town centre masterplan proposes relocating the town's main retail area to the Quadrant shopping centre which is to be redeveloped to increase retail space and car parking.

By working in partnership with Development Securities PLC, a major player in the retail development market, Central Bedfordshire Council will have a

stake in the Quadrant centre, but it will stay mainly in private sector ownership.

The draft masterplan also proposes a new NHS medical centre with ambulance station provision, a replacement library and the possibility of a multi-screen cinema.

Improvements to public areas are also planned. These include making it easier for pedestrians to get around through works to the A5 which runs through the town centre.

Other transport projects will assist in the rejuvenation of the town. The Luton-Dunstable Busway is scheduled to open in 2012 and funding for the A5-M1 Link has recently been confirmed with work planned to start before 2015.

While Dunstable has struggled to compete with some of its larger neighbours in recent years, the future looks bright and promises a more attractive, more complete town centre experience.

family link scheme

The Fostering Service offers excellent training, support and an allowance to help you make BIG difference to a child and their family.

We need people from all backgrounds to offer a range of care from a few hours a week to a weekend a month to support a child and their family.

If you have room in your home and time to give come along to our Open Evening to find out more.

Open Evening

Tuesday 29th March, 7 - 9 p.m.

Unit 5, Franklin Court, Stannard Way, Priory Business Park, Bedford MK44 3JZ

Call us now to book a place
0800 218 2002

Do something incredible today...



what's on...



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

March

Biggleswade District Choral Society

Saturday 26, Rehearsal 4pm-6.30pm, Performance 7.30pm

St Andrew's Church, Langford Spring, bring and sing. All singers welcome. £5 to sing (includes music), £5 to listen. info@biggleschoral.org.uk 01462 700462

Motorbike Show

Sunday 27, 10am – 4pm

Shuttleworth Collection, Old Warden
A one day motorbike event is being held to raise funds for the East Anglian Air Ambulance. Highlights include a stunt riding performance – the Wall of Death.

Entry to the event is completely free. For more details ring the Shuttleworth Collection on 01767 627927.

Talk - 'Making sense of pictures'

Tuesday 29, 8pm

Parish Hall [West Room], Church Road, Harlington
Harlington Society of Art and Crafts present this talk by visiting speaker Naomi Phelan MA
Tickets are £4 for members, £5 for non-members.
Includes refreshments
For more details contact M. Parker on 01525 873875

April

Nearly new sale

Saturday 2, 2pm-3.15pm (entry to NCT members with card from 13:45)

Flitwick Village Hall
National Childbirth Trust in Mid Bedfordshire are holding a sale

of nearly new clothes, toys and equipment. Ring 0844 243 6206 for more details.

Easter Egg Hunt

Saturday 23, 10am-1pm

Bedford Square, Houghton Regis
Free event - sponsored by Houghton Regis Town Council. For more details, ring 01582 708 542.

May

Dunstable Beer Festival

Friday 6 to Sunday 8

Priory House and Gardens, Dunstable.
Enjoy a wide selection of beers in the Spring sunshine.
Further information available from Dunstable Town Council on 01582 513000.

Flitwick Gardeners' Association Open Weekend

Saturday 14, Sunday 15, 10am-3pm

At the association's shop 'The Seed Box', Rear of Flitwick Leisure Centre, Steppingley Road, Flitwick.

Plant Sale

Saturday 14, Sunday 15, 9am-12noon

Outside Barclays Bank, Flitwick.
For more details email enquiries@flitwickgardeners.co.uk or 01525 717289.

The Ridge Walk

Saturday 14, Sunday 15

The Ridge Walk is going to be tougher, longer and bigger with even more teams taking on the challenge. Taking place on the oldest road in Britain - 'The Ridgeway National Trail'. All money raised from the walk in aid of the Sense charity.

For more information call The Ridge Walk team on 0800 0461 301 or visit the website www.theRIDGEWALK.co.uk.

Studham May Fair

Saturday 21, 2pm-5pm

Studham Common
Run by The Friends of Studham Church the fair includes the crowning of the May Queen, Maypole dancing, sideshows, dog show and exhibitions.
For further information contact D Salmon, Friends of Studham Church, on 01582 872389.

History event

Saturday 21

Priory House and Gardens
This year's event will focus on the Tudors and Stuarts.

For more information see the Dunstable Town Council website or ring 01582 513000.

Special Feature Northhill Arts Festival 29 April – 8 May,

Including:
The traditional Mayday festival on Ickwell Green
Two performances of a pageant within the Church depicting scenes of significant Parish history- Saturday 30 April, 2.30pm and 7.30pm.
Art exhibitions in the village hall, flower shows, talks on figures from the past and much more.
Many events are free of charge and booking is not required.

Visit www.northhillartsfestival.com.

Get ready for VentureDay 2011

Cranfield University is opening its doors to entrepreneurs, investors and advisors, giving them the opportunity to discuss all things business and establish crucial networks in Central Bedfordshire.

The VentureDay event on Thursday 12 May consists of workshops, seminars, guest speakers, and business pitches. It is a great opportunity to meet other venture founders, investors, and advisors as well as to fund out about current cutting-edge research. Previous events have had speakers from Moonpig.com, Hotel Chocolat and the Homeless World Cup.

The event, now in its fourth year, is being hosted by the Bettany

Centre for Entrepreneurial Performance and Economics. Topics include:

- The future of British enterprise;
- Venture capital and private equity - does your business fit?;
- Managing risk and uncertainty;
- Intellectual property - Strategies to maximise value;
- Green energy – commercial reality;
- Turning your passion into business;

Confirmed speakers at the event include Jonathan Moules (Financial Times), Guy Rigby (Smith & Williamson), Harry Clarke (Cobalt Telephone Technologies), Mary



Organisers hope that VentureDay 2011 will prove as popular as last year's event.

Craegh MP, Paul Fitzsimons (former Apax Partner) and Ben Ramsden (Pants-to-Poverty).

To find out more please visit: www.ventureday.co.uk

Central Bedfordshire Council
www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk

Interact with the council a little closer to home

Residents in Central Bedfordshire will soon be able to speak to the council in a brand new way when they use the council's new Customer Access Points that are being trialled in two libraries.

Video screen Touch screen

The two access points will be in Sandy and Houghton Regis Libraries and this will mean local residents can benefit from interacting with the council closer to home.

Look out for more information about the launch of the Customer Access Points, which will include a live demonstration of how the Customer Access Points work.

Reduce your travel costs and access council service on your door step

Speak with the council closer to home

Central Bedfordshire in contact

Why
not cut
out and
keep ...



Council and democracy

including elections, jobs, consultation

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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



Email:

customer.services@
centralbedfordshire.gov.uk



Write to:

Central Bedfordshire Council,
Priory House, Monks Walk,
Chicksands, Shefford,
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Website:

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