

# News Central

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

Get out and  
explore as  
a family this  
summer



● Issue 12 - May/June 2010

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Central  
Bedfordshire

# Welcome!

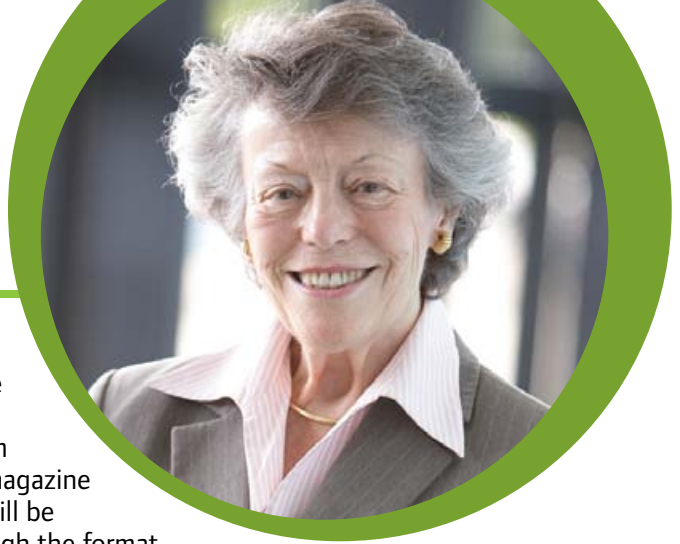
## Every penny counts

I'm delighted to welcome you back to News Central, our magazine delivered to all households across Central Bedfordshire.

During our first year, we produced News Central every month to make sure that all our customers had useful information about our services and how to contact us. As we strive to deliver improved value for money, we have reviewed the magazine to see how we can cut costs while maintaining the product that you've told us you value.

So, we are now producing the magazine every other month, and we are paying for it from advertising within the magazine and from leaflets that will be delivered with it. Although the format is slightly different, we are keeping many of the features that you've told us you find helpful, such as our 'What's On' pages, our feedback section and features on community activities and important services.

As we introduce a range of efficiency measures across the council, we know that there will be various changes to



services. Some of these will be more difficult to introduce than others, but we hope the changes to News Central do nothing to reduce your enjoyment of the magazine. Do let us know what you think.

**Cllr Tricia Turner MBE**  
Leader, Central Bedfordshire Council

# A greener solution for our waste

## The BEaR facts

- BEaR stands for Bedfordshire Energy and Recycling Project
- Waste sent to landfill releases methane – a gas that contributes to climate change
- Rising landfill taxes, transport costs and possible fines in the future make landfill very expensive
- Waste can be a resource. It can be used to generate electricity and possibly heat, which will help us rely less on fossil fuels, such as oil and coal

### Plans to treat our waste more sustainably in the future have been backed by Central Bedfordshire Council.

The Government and EU have set all councils targets to reduce the amount of household waste that is sent to landfill. Failure to meet these targets will result in fines to the council. To help us find more environmentally friendly ways to dispose of waste that cannot be recycled, the BEaR Project is asking businesses, through a competitive selection process, to propose solutions. We'll be considering thoroughly and carefully all technologies put forward as an alternative to landfill, and expect to make a final decision

in 2012. We hope that the new solution is up and running by 2016.

Whatever the chosen solution, waste reduction and recycling remain top priority (see page 6 for recycling tips). Central Bedfordshire Council recycled close to 50 percent this year and aims to recycle as much as 60 percent in the future. But that still leaves 40 percent going to landfill, and a greener solution is needed to treat this remainder.

**To find out even more about our plans to manage waste, visit: [www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/bear](http://www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/bear)**



### Your magazine

News Central is produced by the communications team at Central Bedfordshire Council.

It is delivered to every household in the area 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. Email [newscentral@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:newscentral@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk), or use the contact details on the back cover to get in touch.

### Council meetings

For details about Central Bedfordshire Council meetings, call **0300 300 8000** or visit our website at [www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk](http://www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk)



# Your feedback

**Central Bedfordshire Council is dedicated to helping its users by providing the best possible service at every opportunity, but we rely on your feedback to make things better. Here are just a few of your comments.**

## Light issue dimmed

A resident got in touch to complain about a nearby petrol station's light. They wanted the council's help and after our involvement, said: "The petrol station has now adjusted the light. I hadn't really expected much response when I contacted the council regarding what is probably considered by many to be a trivial matter. However, I have been incredibly impressed with your service. Thank you once again."

## Not wanted

Mr John Haw from Aylesbury, Buckinghamshire called to say that he is fed up with picking up the magazine from his letterbox and putting it directly into the bin. He quoted the number of villages in the LU7 postcode wrongly receiving the magazine and said it was "a real pain in the backside" and "wasted lots of taxpayers' money". We have changed our magazine distributors to avoid this problem in the future.

## So far, so good

The waste services team received a 'thank you' email saying: "I have seen no county examples of householders being fined for putting the 'wrong rubbish' in their bin or fines for other occasional mistakes. Don't polish your halo yet,

I could find something to moan at, but in the main you are doing a good job, well done."

**Email [newscentral@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:newscentral@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk) or use the contact details on the back cover to get in touch. If you have queries about Central Bedfordshire Council services, call our customer services team on 0300 300 8000 or visit your local customer service centre.**

# Dash Direct launches



**People living in southern Leighton Buzzard are enjoying a new bus service, which was officially launched last month.**

The brand new Dash Direct (D1) service runs every 30 minutes, up to 16 hours each day, Monday to Saturday to and from the High Street and the railway station. It offers a real travel choice for residents in the new housing areas,

existing residents and businesses in the town.

The buses, which use hi-tech, cleaner, greener engines, have features to make customers' journeys more comfortable and include real time displays at key points, easy access, space for wheelchairs and buggies and CCTV coverage for everybody's safety and comfort.

Speaking at the launch, Cllr Tom Nicols, the council's Portfolio Holder for Sustainable Development, said: "The new Dash Direct service is a splendid initiative. It offers people living in southern Leighton Buzzard an alternative method of getting around and could reduce the need for families to have a second car in the town."



**Dash Direct was launched by (l-r) Cllr Tom Nicols, Stephen Joseph OBE executive director of Campaign for Better Transport, Cllr Brian Spurr, Mayor of Leighton-Linslade Cllr Karen Cursons, Bob Williams from Arnold White Estates and Arriva Managing Director Paul Adcock.**

**"The service has come about thanks to the Southern Leighton Buzzard Steering Group and the community's support. It is something we can be proud of."**



**Visit [www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk](http://www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk)**

# Potholes galore!

Following the severe cold weather, there has been a vast increase in the number of potholes across Central Bedfordshire. But what is the council doing about it?

This winter we had the most prolonged period of severe weather in 30 years. There were major difficulties at the time, but the after-effects have really caused problems for road users and residents, which the council and Bedfordshire Highways have been quick to tackle.

## Why potholes?

Potholes are formed by water penetrating the asphalt road surface through cracks caused by everyday traffic. When temperatures plunge, the water freezes, expands and causes the surface to rupture. When the ice melts, it leaves a void below the surface, which caves in under the stress of vehicles and eventually forms a pothole.

**CLlr David McVicar was interviewed recently about potholes in the area.**

## 'We're saying snow to potholes'

In January we launched our 'We're saying snow to potholes' campaign to encourage road users to report dangerous potholes that had formed. Since then the highways team has been extremely busy. Once a pothole is reported, it is inspected and given a category (see Potholes explained) before we make plans for its repair.

## 6,500 potholes

By the end of April, we had already repaired 6,500 dangerous and severe potholes. That's an average of about 450 a week or about 90 repairs every day. As part of the council's commitment to maintain all roads and highways to the highest standard, we have spent £365,000 on these repairs as well as traffic management and patching work.

**We know there's still more to do. With so many roads in rural areas, we rely heavily on residents to tell us about potholes. No matter what season, if there's a pothole in your area that needs attention, please call the potholes hotline on 0300 300 8049**



## Potholes explained

Did you know that there are four different types of pothole? Here is a short guide to how each is assessed and how quickly they will be repaired.

### Category - Emergency

Must be dealt with immediately. We aim to have a team on site within two hours. Usually we remove the hazard or it is 'made safe' and programmed for repair as either a category 1 or 2.

### Category 1

Classed as urgent. Includes deep potholes, of up to 150mm<sup>2</sup> and 50mm deep, within the footway or carriageway. Once reported, Bedfordshire Highways has 24 hours to examine the pothole, and then must repair it within 24 hours of this inspection. The repair may be permanent or the pothole may be 'made safe' and programmed for repair as either a category 2 or 3.

### Category 2

Programmed to be completed within eight to ten weeks.

### Category 3

Similar to category 2, but deemed lower priority because of the road condition, type of work required or budget restrictions. Repaired any time between three to twelve months.



# Keeping roadsides clean and green

Pothole repairs aren't Bedfordshire Highways' only task. Our contractors carry out a host of other jobs, including grass cutting, landscaping and tree maintenance.

Throughout this summer, Bedfordshire Highways will cut around 800,000m<sup>2</sup> of grass across Central Bedfordshire. That's equivalent to 120 football pitches – more than all the Premiership, Championship, League One, League Two and the Blue Square Premier football pitches added together.



We cut back trees along roads with a speed limit of 30mph to ensure everyone's safety.

Our teams will also manage trees along the roads in areas where the speed limit is 30mph. We estimated that we'll cut back 7,000 trees this year to keep roads safe for users. And the highways team will also maintain miles of hedges around the district, as well as care for shrub beds, planted areas and our nature reserves.

If you see any road damage or verges or trees that need cutting, please call our Highways Helpdesk on 0300 300 8049 or email [highways@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:highways@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk)

## Your journey

Look out for more information on MyJourney which launches this summer.

It's part of Central Bedfordshire Council's Local Transport Plan aiming to bring alternative, cheaper, and more sustainable travel choices for local residents. We are looking at more long-term sustainable travel solutions for car users, pedestrians and cyclists to help give Central Bedfordshire residents more local travel options. An example of a good solution is the new half-hourly Dash Direct bus service in Leighton Buzzard that runs between the railway station, the town centre and a new development to the south of Leighton Buzzard.

We want to hear from you!

We will be holding a consultation so you can have your say on MyJourney and find out how you can help shape transport decisions in your local area. Check out our website at [www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/myjourney](http://www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/myjourney) to see how you can get involved. If you have any questions or queries please contact us by emailing [myjourney@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:myjourney@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk)



Visit [www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk](http://www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk)

# De-clutter for summer



**Didn't quite manage the spring clean despite your best intentions? Our recycling team has a host of ideas on the best ways to reduce, reuse and recycle this summer as you clear the clutter.**

- Why not recycle old and worn out clothes in your recycling collection, or bag up unwanted clothing in good condition and donate it to a local charity shop? You could try advertising unwanted clothes at [www.freecycle.org](http://www.freecycle.org) or [www.ilovefreegle.org](http://www.ilovefreegle.org)
- Any big furniture items, such as beds, wardrobes and furniture, can often be reused. Give them to local organisations such as Preen Furniture Bank, which has reuse banks at both Ampthill's and Biggleswade's household waste recycling centres. Preen Furniture Bank also offers a free collection service in Central Bedfordshire
- Take all your glass bottles and jars to the household waste recycling centres
- Return used batteries to retailers, if they take them, or drop them off at your nearest recycling centre

Look out for activities between 21 and 27 June in and around Central Bedfordshire as the recycling team helps you take part in 'Recycle Week'. This year's theme focuses on the football World Cup and how to recycle unwanted household electrical items. To find out more, just visit our website (see back page).



## More time to recycle

**Here in Central Bedfordshire we are trying to push our recycling rates up to the 60 percent mark, but we need your help.**

During the summer, household waste recycling centres will stay open longer so you have more time to dispose safely of any:

- glass bottles and jars
- wood
- scrap metal and aluminium cans
- cardboard and paper
- textiles and shoes

- green garden waste
- household and car batteries
- used engine oil and cooking oil
- fridges and freezers
- large and small household appliances
- light bulbs, including fluorescent tubes

Until 31 August, the following sites will be open seven days a week from 9am to 7pm:

- Ampthill – Abbey Lane MK45 2SA, tel 01525 403611
- Dunstable – Frenchs Avenue LU6 1BH, tel 01582 609212

- Biggleswade – Bells Brook SG18 0NA, tel 01767 313684
- Leighton Buzzard – Shenley Hill Road LU7 3BT, tel 01525 371619

Please pre-sort your waste and ensure that you arrive at least 10 minutes before closing to allow time to unload. While the sites will recycle as much as possible, there are a number of items that we cannot accept, including 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, and more than 15 litres of engine oil.



**For more information about recycling, please contact Central Bedfordshire Council on 0300 300 8631 (north) 8632 (south)**

# Too good to be true?

As summer gets underway, Central Bedfordshire Council's Trading Standards team is reminding everyone to watch out for illicit, unsafe and counterfeit goods at car boot sales.

It's always great to find a bargain, but be wary if a sale seems almost too good to be true. Our Trading Standards team has some top tips for browsing the car boot sales.

## Designer goods for a super low price

**Shoppers:** not only will you buy a significantly inferior product, you could be indirectly funding serious organised crime.

**Sellers:** for selling counterfeit goods, you could face up to 10 years imprisonment, unlimited fines, lose your driving licence and have items confiscated that have been bought with proceeds from the crimes, such as your house or vehicles. Don't be tempted to sell-on old counterfeit DVDs – these are still illegal.

## Tobacco

**Shoppers:** cheap tobacco products are often counterfeit. We have seen more and more fake cigarettes passed off as duty free; some have even contained urine and other harmful chemicals.

**Sellers:** you could face the same penalties as those imposed for selling counterfeit clothing.

## Toys

**Shoppers:** make sure the product has a CE mark, which shows that the toy meets safety standards. Take care to inspect any items to ensure they are not damaged and have no loose parts making them unsafe.

## Know your rights

- Remember, if you're buying from a non-trader (standard car-booter) then you have reduced rights. Ask lots of questions about the goods you might buy
- If the goods you're buying are valuable, ask for the name, address and vehicle reg of the seller. You would get similar details from eBay so a car boot sale should be no different
- Where a trader sells either new or used goods, the goods must correspond with their description, be of satisfactory quality and be fit for their intended purpose
- Remember, it is a criminal offence not to declare yourself as a trader



For more advice visit [www.consumerdirect.gov.uk](http://www.consumerdirect.gov.uk) or call 08454 040506

## Easy to book online

A brand new online system, allowing residents to book an appointment to register a birth or a death, is up and running.

We're making it easier for residents to book a registration appointment at any of the registration offices

in either Bedford or Central Bedfordshire through our website. Simply visit [www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk](http://www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk) and follow the relevant quick link on the home page.

The system is hassle-free and can be used 24 hours a day, seven days a week at residents' convenience.

You can even use it to check or confirm an appointment.

Our telephone booking system for appointments is still available if preferred: call 0300 300 8089

# Community focus

**your councillors**



**The council's newly appointed chairman, Peter Hollick, tells us more about his role as a councillor.**

## Why did you become a councillor?

A vacancy arose in my ward and I was asked if I would like to stand at the by-election. I wanted to find out more about the role, so chatted

with the then council deputy leader. Reassured that my experience would hold me in good stead, I agreed to stand, fought and won the by-election. I was interested in politics at school, and now I'm interested in helping people with their problems – which is what made up my mind to stand for election.

## Is the role what you expected?

Yes and no! I expected to give a considerable amount of time to the work of the council, but as well as attending and speaking at council meetings, training and briefing sessions, councillors are expected to take on a governor's role in one or two schools as the local authority representative. There are also trustee and board positions for many other bodies such as the fire and rescue service, the police authority and

local charities. I'm a member of the Council Executive, which is a bit like being a member of the government's cabinet but at a council level, so there are, of course, many additional responsibilities and calls on a councillor's time.

## It's really a full time job then?

Well, it certainly takes up a lot of time. And yes, some may well consider it to be a full time job – especially those councillors with an Executive role. But it's not a job in the generally understood sense of the word. A councillor can be involved all day and in the evening; whereas on another day, one might have no council business at all. There is often work to do from home, such as helping to sort out residents' problems and keeping up with emails. It is certainly not a nine to five role.



**Cllr Peter Hollick has represented the Watling area in South Bedfordshire since 1993 and was elected chairman of Central Bedfordshire Council last month.**

**Central Bedfordshire has plenty to offer its residents, businesses and visitors.**



## Do you see yourself as a politician?

By the very nature of being a councillor and allying oneself to a political party means you can be considered a politician. However, once the elections are over, you usually find excellent co-operation between the parties. Yes, we have our political differences, but where we can agree, we do. As chairman, I play an apolitical role and seek to ensure fairness between the parties at our full council meetings. I try to promote the council in its work rather than plying a political line.

## What issues are you contacted about most often?

In my ward the general concerns are about the state of the roads, so-called nuisance youths and, occasionally, an individual is concerned about a service the council provides. There are also wider local issues expressed by residents not only in my ward, but across Dunstable, such as the bypass and the guided busway.

## What's the most important skill for a councillor?

You have to like and be good with people, listen to them, be patient and be able to communicate clearly about complex issues. On occasions you have to be able to say 'no' and explain why what a person wants cannot be provided. Generally a councillor should be able to advise someone about the right person to contact or help them to do so.



**Central Bedfordshire councillors get involved with a host of schemes and initiatives around the area to make life better for all of their residents.**

## And how do you feel about being elected chairman?

It's a real privilege to be elected to represent residents in my ward. To be elected by my peers to the role of chairman, I consider a privilege and an honour. Representing the council at various events and having the opportunity to promote the council's work is an important role, and I'm delighted to be able to serve the council in this way.



# Outstanding service

**Central Bedfordshire Council street cleaner Paul Perryman has been honoured by Sandy Town Council for his service to the community.**

At the Annual Parish Meeting last month, Paul picked up his award from the Mayor of Sandy, Cllr Geoff White, who paid tribute to Paul's sterling work. Nominations for the award are made by members of the public. The winner is then chosen by a panel comprising the mayor, deputy mayor and the immediate past mayor.

Mr Perryman received a number of nominations for his work, but a special mention was also made for his

extra commitment. Not only does he keep Sandy's streets and pavements clean, he goes that bit further by clearing up spilled rubbish after the bins have been emptied and often replaces wheelie bins that have been left out of place.

Sixteen-year-old Joe Kier was also honoured at the meeting and is the first recipient of the 'services to the community by a young person' award. Joe is an active member of the community who was recently elected to the Central Bedfordshire Youth Parliament and from there to the National Youth Parliament. He is also an explorer scout and helps out with Sandy's beaver and cub packs.

# Let's talk central

**Central Bedfordshire residents will have a new website in June. Let's Talk Central ([www.letstalkcentral.com](http://www.letstalkcentral.com)) will be a site dedicated to giving local people a place to talk to each other, post comments, photos and videos about where you live.**

Central Bedfordshire Council is keen to understand how you feel.

- What's the best thing about where you live?
- What do you think is special about Central Bedfordshire?
- What do you want to see protected or developed for the future?
- What challenges do you think Central Bedfordshire will face in the future?
- What are your hopes for Central Bedfordshire in the future?

We are launching the website to hear directly from the public about these and other issues. Only by listening to local people can the council take decisions that reflect our communities' priorities.

Let's  
**talk**  
central

Existing social networking sites such as Facebook, Twitter and YouTube will be used to promote Let's Talk Central, which will be free and easy to use for the council and our customers.

So, look out for the new website in June and let's start talking.

twitter

facebook

POWERED BY  
YouTube

## We're asking you

**Do you want to be consulted on issues important to you? Register your details and we can get in touch.**

The council always considers the views of residents when making decisions about local services. We want to make it easier for you to tell us what you think, and be involved in our decision-making. Registering your contact details and telling us which areas of the council's activity interest you means we can let you know when we are consulting on these issues. You can complete a registration form online at [www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/consultationregister](http://www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/consultationregister) or telephone 0300 300 8162.

**To find out more about consultations at Central Bedfordshire Council, visit [www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk](http://www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk) and click on consultations in the quick links box on our home page.**





# Fostering

## something to talk about

**Deciding to become a foster carer is no easy decision and it's understandable that you might be nervous about being accepted, but you won't be the only one.**

Social worker Ian Greaves explained: "When we first go to meet a prospective foster family, we are nervous too. We want the family to be comfortable with us so we can support them in the best way possible." As part of his role, Ian meets all prospective foster carers to present the 'skills to foster' training, which helps enhance the skills they need. Ian added: "You can always give the team a call. It doesn't mean you have to foster, you can just ring us for information."

Ian went on to say that he finds his job tremendously rewarding. "Some of the people I've met and who have become foster carers are really good fun, and I can see how a lot of children flourish while placed with them. The key to maintaining the high standard of foster carers is support, working together and positive communication. All our foster carers are an important part of our team and the more great people that ring us about fostering the better."

**Ian qualified as a social worker in 2001, working for The Children's Society and then Surestart. In 2007 he joined Bedfordshire's Children's Services as a child care social worker, working with children in care. Ian said: "When I joined the fostering team in 2009 it was really enlightening to see how the foster carers are supported and the processes they go through to become foster carers."**

**If you are interested in becoming a foster carer, why not have a quick chat with Central Bedfordshire Council's foster care team? Call them on 0800 218 2002 and don't worry, they know you might be nervous!**

## Do something incredible today...

# Foster in Bedfordshire

You may be someone who has a desire to care for a young person and could offer a safe, caring home.

You may be someone who is single, married, divorced or in a civil partnership.

You may be someone who could make a real difference to a young person's life.

To find out more, ring the Fostering Service

## 0800 218 2002

[www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk](http://www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk)



Central Bedfordshire Council  
and Bedford Borough Council  
working together



Visit [www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk](http://www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk)

## Family and Youth Information Service

Professionals



Young People



Parents and Carers



### New 'one stop shop' for families

Family and Youth Information Service (FYIS) 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

☎ on the telephone  
**0300 300 8119**

@ by email  
[fyis@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:fyis@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk)

🌐 on the web  
[www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/fyis](http://www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/fyis)

FYIS can also be found on Twitter and Facebook

## Join us

If you want to work for one of the country's largest unitary councils, improve the local community, develop your skills and take on responsibility, Central Bedfordshire Council could be for you.

For the latest job opportunities, please visit the council's website: [www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/jobs](http://www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/jobs) where you can also register for 'job alerts' so we can let you know when a suitable opportunity becomes available.

**We actively promote equality of opportunity in employment to reflect the community in which we serve.**

## News Central

To advertise in News Central call

**0300 300 5089**

or email [newscentral@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:newscentral@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk)



## More and more people are getting onto the property ladder with Orbit HomeBuy Agents.

We are the HomeBuy Agent for Bedfordshire and Cambridgeshire, and we help people in all sorts of circumstances to find their dream home.

In this role, we act as the first point of contact for all those seeking a home through one of the range of HomeBuy low-cost home ownership and discounted market rent products.

For full details visit our website at [www.orbithomebuyagents.co.uk](http://www.orbithomebuyagents.co.uk) or call us on **03458 50 20 50**.

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Terms and conditions apply – ask for details. Orbit HomeBuy Agents is managed by Orbit Homes (2020) Limited, a member of Orbit Group Limited which is an exempt charity registered under the Industrial and Provident Societies Act 1965.

# Celebrate National Family Week

**Once again we're supporting National Family Week and celebrating family life between 31 May and 6 June.**

The average family spends just 45 minutes a day together according to recent research. National Family Week aims to encourage families to spend more quality time together and champions the benefits of a healthy, active and positive family life.

As part of this year's National Family Week we're offering a range of family events. The council's children's centres are hosting some exciting activities throughout the week including a family picnic in Shefford and a fun day at Tithe Farm on 2 June. There are plenty more events in other areas too; for more information call 0300 300 8000 and ask for the children's centre team.

Bedfordshire Libraries are also supporting family time together by launching their Book Festival during National Family Week. Sandy Library is running a special craft event based on pirates on 3 June and a colouring competition throughout half-term. Dunstable Library is holding an 'At the seaside' themed afternoon with

fun activities for children of all ages on 1 June. For more details go to [www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/libraries](http://www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/libraries).

The possibilities for family-related activities in Central Bedfordshire are almost limitless. You don't need to join an event; why not go for a walk in Rowney Warren, Chicksands or take a bike ride along the canal in Leighton Buzzard? Whatever you do, enjoy half-term together as a family.

## National Carers' Week, 14-21 June

With three in five people becoming carers at some point in their lives Central Bedfordshire Council and its partners are supporting National Carers' Week. We are running a variety of events throughout the area including drop-in centres at local GP surgeries offering advice to local carers and service users, as well as free blood pressure checks.



**Carers**  
Support Bureau



## Move from Vernon Place

Adult Social Care and Children's Services is moving from Vernon Place, Dunstable (next to the library) to the council's offices in Dunstable High Street. We've yet to confirm the exact moving date; it will probably be in June. We'll continue to offer the same services without any disruptions. For more information, please call 0300 300 8000 or check our website.

## Transforming people's lives

In June we're hosting several roadshows to help inform service users and carers about improvements to local care services in the community such as adult education and leisure. It's all part of our Transforming People's Lives initiative, which aims to give local people more control and choice over their social care and support.

If you're a carer or service user why not join us at one of the following?

Friday 11 June, The Forest Centre, Marston Vale (9.30am – 1pm).

Monday 14 June, Dunstable Fire Station (6 – 9pm).

Friday 18 June, Priory House, Chicksands (9.30am – 1pm).

**For more information, please contact Diana Blackmun, Central Bedfordshire Council's service user engagement officer, on 0300 300 6647 or email [diana.blackmun@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:diana.blackmun@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk)**



May, June

& July

# what's on...

We can only highlight a few of the events coming up in the Central Bedfordshire area. You can find a more comprehensive listing on our website – just click on 'what's on' at [www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk](http://www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk).

## Barton Music Group

Every Wednesday, 8.30pm

Function Room, The Bull, 77 Bedford Road, Barton-Le-Clay

Folk, blues, jazz, contemporary and traditional music with open sessions, and guest nights. Contact is Ross Scrivener 01582 883374.

## May

### Bedfordshire Craft & Food Fair

Saturday 29, Sunday 30, Monday 31, 10am – 6pm

Woburn Abbey, Woburn

Admission: £6 adults, £5.50 OAPs, £2 children. More details at [www.craft-shows.co.uk](http://www.craft-shows.co.uk).

## June

### Artists' Network Bedfordshire – Open Studios

Tuesday 1 – Wednesday 30

Studios across the area.

More information at [www.artsnetbeds.org.uk](http://www.artsnetbeds.org.uk) or call 0844 357 5420.

## Flower Festival

Saturday 5, 10am – 5.30pm, Sunday 6, 12.30 – 5.30pm

All Saints' Church, Campton

Admission: adults £3, accompanied children free.

## Music in the Park

Sunday 6, 13, 20, 27, 3 – 5pm

Parsons Close Recreation Ground, Leighton Buzzard

A summer season of band concerts, free admission.

## Orchid hunt and nature walk

Monday 14 and Sunday 20, 11am – 1pm

Chilterns Gateway Centre, Dunstable Road, Whipsnade

Soup and a roll in the visitor centre afterwards. Admission: £6. Booking essential; email [dunstabledowns@nationaltrust.org.uk](mailto:dunstabledowns@nationaltrust.org.uk) or call 01582 500925.

## Brilliant butterflies guided nature walk

Saturday 26, 10am

Sandy Smith nature reserve

Visit [www.greensandtrust.org/events.html](http://www.greensandtrust.org/events.html), email [info@greensandtrust.org](mailto:info@greensandtrust.org) or call 01525 378101.

## July

### Alice Through The Looking Glass

Saturday 10, 6pm

Chilterns Gateway Centre, Dunstable Road, Whipsnade

A Quantum Theatre outdoor production. Admission: adults £10, children £7, concessions £8, family £28. Booking essential. Tickets from Chilterns Gateway Centre shop or call 0845 4505157.

Spot a painted lady butterfly on a nature walk.



If you have an event in Central Bedfordshire you would like to publicise, please email brief details at least six weeks in advance to [whatson@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:whatson@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk).

## Brenda Jackson – a positive contribution lives on

**Tributes have been paid from across Central Bedfordshire to Brenda Jackson who sadly passed away on 7 April.**

Brenda (pictured right) enthusiastically volunteered as a member of the Older People's Reference Group, which actively involves older people in ensuring that their needs are considered and

met by local services. She valued the opportunity to meet other people in a social setting and to feel recognised and valued as an important member of the community, having her voice (and others') heard by the local authority.

Although an extremely softly spoken lady, Brenda was always prepared to speak her mind and was willing to persevere if she felt an issue needed further investigation. Like many

volunteers, Brenda made a positive contribution to improving the quality of life for older people in Central Bedfordshire. She will be missed, but not forgotten.





## Monitor your energy

**From 5 June, which is World Energy Day, Central Bedfordshire residents will be able to borrow an energy monitor for free from their local library.**

Available on a three-week loan, the monitor will be offered to any member of the library service. Several libraries across the country already loan out energy monitors and the scheme has proved very popular.

These monitors allow you to see exactly how much energy you are using at that moment in time. And by using one you can see which appliances are electricity hungry and which are less so – making it easier to find ways to reduce your overall energy consumption.

The monitor also tells you how much your electricity is costing in pence per hour as well as the monthly cost. In small-scale trials customers have typically saved five to 15 percent in the first year of owning a monitor, which could equate to up to £75 off a £500 bill.



**To find out more, contact Nicola Avery of Central Bedfordshire Libraries on 0300 300 8053 or email [nicola.avery@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:nicola.avery@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk)**

## Work and care

**jobcentreplus**

**Central Bedfordshire Council and its partners are committed to supporting carers to enjoy a life outside of their caring role.**

Your local Jobcentre Plus can provide employment support to carers wanting to combine paid work with caring responsibilities. Jobcentre Plus advisors can help with:

- employment support tailored to your needs
- expenses for certain costs, for example interview travel costs, training course fees, childcare costs and replacement care costs enabling you to attend interviews or training
- financial assistance, such as the £15 per week training premium

**Contact your local jobcentre or visit [www.jobcentreplus.gov.uk](http://www.jobcentreplus.gov.uk)**

## Useful numbers for Central Bedfordshire services

**For general enquiries, call 0300 300 8000**

Service	Mid Beds	South Beds
Adoption and Fostering	0300 300 8090	
Adult Education	0808 100 3140	
Automated Payments	0300 300 8030	
Births, Deaths and Marriage registration	0300 300 8089	
Children With Disabilities	0300 300 8097	
Child Protection	0300 300 8149	
Concessionary Bus Passes	0300 300 8041	0300 300 8641
Council Housing	0300 300 8007	
Council Tax	0300 300 8011	0300 300 8611
Domestic Violence	08082 000 247	

Service	Mid Beds	South Beds
Elections and Electoral Register	0300 300 8008	
Environmental Services	0300 300 8642	0300 300 8643
Highways	0300 300 8049	
Nurseries and Playgroups	0300 300 8119	
Occupational Therapy	0300 300 8050	
Older Persons Team	0300 300 8033	
Planning	0300 300 8692	0300 300 8670
Road Safety	0300 300 8074	
Waste and Bulky Waste Collection	0300 300 8631	0300 300 8632

**Visit [www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk](http://www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk)**

# Central Bedfordshire in contact



on the telephone...

**0300 300 8000**



by email...

**customer.services@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk**



on the web...

**www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk**



Alternatively, you can write to:

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

**Serving our communities**

News Central is produced by the communications team at Central Bedfordshire Council.  
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## Find out more...

Get in touch if you would like more copies, a large-print edition or more information about News Central.

## More information

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**Central  
Bedfordshire**