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Hello Readers

I'm told that Thursday is the new Friday. So last week I was invited along by Filippo, the new owner of The Bell in Westoning to experience one of their Thursday nights. I wasn't expecting it to be very lively, but how wrong was !!! Find out more about my experience there on page 16!



May I also entice you not to miss the middle pages this month (40 & 41). There, you will find details of a production a good friend of mine is putting on at the Connolly Hall in Amphil on Saturday 4th May. Robert Daws has spent the last 40 years working in television, theatre and film and he wants to share his stories with you. Who doesn't like to hear the secrets behind the red curtains? Bob is a great raconteur so it's sure to be an entertaining evening of songs and stories. Get your tickets now and I'll see you there.



It's very nearly almost summer ... hang on in there!

All the best,
Kirsty

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- that simply wouldn't happen if we didn't adhere to our overriding principles.

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every installation we carry out!

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JOIN THE BEDFORDSHIRE STOP AND SEARCH COMMUNITY SCRUTINY PANEL

What does the Bedfordshire Stop and Search panel do?

The aim of the panel is to hold the police to account for the use of stop and search powers. The main aim is to build confidence in policing, ensuring that their powers are used in a way that builds this confidence. We also aim to support training of officers and to instil best practice.

Who is on the panel?

The panel is made up of a representative group of around fifty people from across the county of Bedfordshire. This includes men and women, people of different ethnicities and religions and people of different ages. All panel members are trained. The panel meets quarterly and members also talk by email on a regular basis.

What is the commitment?

The commitment is to attend two or more meetings out of four per year. We like members to get involved in other ways too, such as identifying community issues or being part of working groups. The input varies.

How do you involve people in the panel?

We are always providing training. We're particularly keen to ensure that people know there is a panel in Bedfordshire,



representing the community and doing this work. After training we offer people the opportunity to join the waiting list so that when people drop out we have a ready-made pool to come in. We are keen to spread awareness around young people so we go into schools and colleges as well.

How do people know about the panel?

We regularly raise awareness of the panel on social media, in schools, colleges and at community events. We produce articles like this and encourage all our panel members to promote in their own circles.

What difference does it make?

The overall benefit is that there is better policing and it creates greater confidence in policing by helping officers to explain tactics and to ensure that they focus on being efficient, effective and fair in helping to keep our communities safe.

If anyone is interested in joining the panel or would like to find out more information, please email Montell Neufville at att10tive@gmail.com

Montell Neufville
Chair of Bedfordshire Police Community
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DEALING WITH BEREAVEMENT

My name is Chere Hunter and I work as a Bereavement Consultant at AL & G Abbott Funeral Directors in Kempston. I offer 6 sessions of "Listening" to clients whose loved ones have been placed in the care of Abbotts. There is no monetary fee involved. These people may not be coping as well as they had hoped following their loss. They are the kind of people who do not wish to take medication, but feel that "talking therapy" is the way forward. So they talk and I listen!



I have had over 25 years' experience working in pastoral care and over this time I've met many people suffering with depression and anxiety as a direct result of bereavement. Previously, I worked as a Head teacher which involved a great deal of contact with younger people who can be affected by the death of a loved one in many different ways. I have also received three years of theological training in the Church of England.

My aim is to try to be someone who has a heart for those who hurt. I have spent many years working as a Chaplain both in the Prison Service and at a local Hospice where I encountered many hurting people.

I feel privileged to work at Abbotts. I mainly work on a 1:1 basis but occasionally I see family members together. Abbotts kindly provide me with a beautifully peaceful room to hold my sessions in. There are often many tears shed, but there is also a lot of laughter. It helps to talk and to have someone really listen and then and

my aim is to help the client move on, little by little.

Grief is a strange thing – there's no right or wrong way to deal with it. Everyone experiences it differently. It never really ends, but it does change and it is the price we have to pay for loving. It is my job to help with making that change.

A wonderful Dutch author and incredibly spiritual man, Henri Nouwen, once said this:

"A friend who can be silent with us in moments of despair and confusion, who can stay with us in our hour of grief and bereavement, who can tolerate not knowing, not curing, not healing, that is a friend who really cares"

Do contact me at Abbotts if you feel that I might be able to help you.

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New Willen Hospice Shop in Ampthill

Our new shop in Ampthill is the first new shop the charity has opened in almost a decade and brings the total number of its stores in Milton Keynes and surrounding towns to ten.

Belinda Booth, Shop Manager said “Our shops are not only an important source of income for us, they also bring jobs to the local area and opportunities for people to volunteer and gain valuable retail experience. We’d love to chat to anyone who is interested in volunteering with us. Please pop in anytime for a chat.”

The shop stocks men’s and women’s clothing, brand new decorative pieces for the home and garden, greeting cards, books, shoes and jewellery.

Willen Hospice provides complex and

individual care to all adults affected by life limiting illness in our community and support to their families and friends. Our care is assuring, equally accessible and advanced and often takes place in people’s own homes. It is free to the patient and provided by a highly skilled team of professionals. We receive less than a quarter of our funding from the NHS and need the support of the local community to provide us with financial stability to ensure that we are always there to care.

Willen Hospice needs to raise £4.7 million a year, or £9 a minute to continue caring for end of life patients at the Hospice and in the community. Every penny spent in our Hospice shops contributes to this.



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The Oracle at The Bell

How many times have I driven past The Bell in Westoning on my way to Toddington or the M1? Too many to count. But for some bizarre reason, I've never actually been in the restaurant to eat.

I've been aware that it has undergone a few transformations over the past years – sometimes a thai, sometimes an Italian. But it never quite seemed to find its way. Well, having finally made a visit, I think it has found itself!



The interior is unpretentious and homely – more resembling a village pub than a trendy restaurant. But a restaurant is not made by the colour of its walls. What counts is the food and the staff. New Manager, Filippo is just lovely – welcoming and charming and patently very sincere about what he is doing. Filippo originally came to England from Abruzzo, Italy five years ago to study Law. But, having worked in restaurants and bars since he was 14, his heritage got the better of him and he sidestepped into working at the Continental Hotel then the Savoy in London.

As he took us through the menu he talked at length about the different dishes and recipes he had collected – particularly the Mozzarella Carrozza which is very close to his heart as the recipe came from his Grandmother who still runs a bar in Romania!

The tapas way of eating has become very trendy recently – small plates for sharing. You have the classics like Pimientos de Padron and Zucchini Tempura but also some off beat ones like Whiskey and Chorizo. There are also larger plates if you don't like sharing!

Emma and I were here on a Thursday night and the restaurant was full. There was a very friendly vibe so I talked to a few fellow diners asking them why they had come. One couple told me they'd dropped in for a drink during the week. Filippo had been so friendly, even offering them free taster samples of some of the dishes which they

thought were delicious, so they'd come back. That's how a restaurant becomes successful!!

I would have been happy with just the food and wine, but at 8pm along comes Joe Corrigan, a talented and confident Jazz singer who played the room to perfection, even managing to entice Filippo to the microphone at one point.

It was a great evening. Filippo's mantra is 'The more you give, the more you get' and he's giving loads!

If you would like The Oracle to review your restaurant, just email kirsty@thebedfordshireoracle.com

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To spot all five 'Big Five' species in one safari trip is ambitious as the lion, leopard, rhino, elephant and buffalo are the most dangerous and toughest animals to hunt on foot. Here are the best locations for viewing each of them: Lions - the Kalahari Desert in Botswana. Elephants - the Tuli Block of southern Botswana. Black Rhinos - Damaraland in Namibia. Buffalos - Serengeti or the Masai Mara. Leopards (the most elusive of all five) - Sabi Sands in Kruger National Park, South Africa.

There are countless ways to experience the holiday of a lifetime with a spectacular safari. Here are a few of the top choices, but do ring me to help you plan what type of Safari adventure would best suit you:

Jeep Safari: An overland expedition on a jeep safari allows you to cover larger areas or a variety of different habitats in a single trip. Ride in 4x4 safari vehicles in the capable hands of a knowledgeable game ranger, as you experience close encounters with Big Five animals.

Walking Safari: A walking safari is without a doubt the best way to experience the African wilderness areas. Walk alongside a qualified and experienced professional guide as you explore the wilderness, offering you a unique up close and personal style. Among the very best walking safaris are in the Luangwa and Zambezi Valleys in Zambia and in Kenya's Mara region.

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Let's Cook

Sue Lang owns and runs the Black Cat Farm Shop. She delights in offering locally grown, fresh, seasonal fruit and veg, along with hand-crafted bread, cheese, meat, milk, oil, honey and preserves. She's passionate about supporting local producers and is now sharing her favourite recipes with The Oracle.

Rhubarb Trifle

I know I did Rhubarb last month, but it's still plentiful and I love it! I also love Trifle, but sometimes I find that they can be quite heavy going. This is a different way to combine the two that makes a great everyday dessert. But it can also be easily upgraded to dinner party standards. This will serve 2-3 people easily.

INGREDIENTS

**100g rhubarb, trimmed and washed,
cut into 1" lengths**

25g white sugar

½ pint double cream, whipped.

250ml yogurt, plain or Greek style

**Approx. 100g cake e.g. Madeira, Victoria
Sandwich. Cut into small cubes.**

2 tall glasses or bowls

METHOD

1. Gently cook the rhubarb and sugar together with about 2 tablespoons water, until the rhubarb is just going soft. Try not to stir as it will cause the rhubarb to break up. Taste for sweetness and add a little extra if necessary.
2. Remove a couple of nice looking pieces to a separate plate. Allow everything to cool for about an hour (this can be done up to 24 hours in advance, cover and keep in the fridge).
3. In a very large bowl, whip the cream, and stir in the yogurt. Stir in a couple of tablespoons of the rhubarb juice.
4. To assemble the trifle – place a spoonful of cream/yogurt mix into each glass, then a spoonful of fruit and then a few cubes of cake. Repeat the layers ending with a layer of cream/yogurt. Place the reserved pieces of rhubarb on the top. Serve immediately, or keep in the fridge for a couple of hours until required.

To 'upgrade' the trifle:

Use Strawberry or Rhubarb flavoured yogurt or finely chop two pieces of stem ginger (in syrup) and fold into the yogurt/cream mix with a spoonful of the syrup. Then sprinkle a few drops of Kirsch/Sloe Gin/Rhubarb Gin over each layer of cake.



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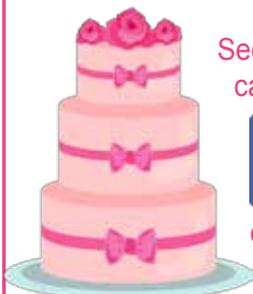
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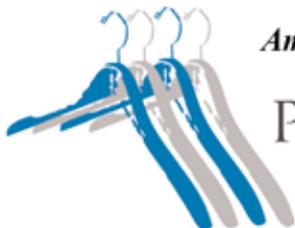
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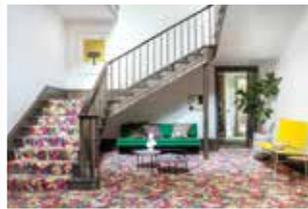
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The Garden Diary

RHS Chelsea 2019 (Sneak Peek)

It's still one of the most prestigious flower shows in the world - and it's almost here! From the 21st-25th May, RHS Chelsea opens its gates once again.

At Chelsea for the first time is designer Andrew Duff. His garden is reminiscent of a woodland clearing, with all the essential environmental messages in place (the water-cleaning wetland, permeable surfaces, etc), but it will be interesting to see how his meadow grass looks, and if his nature-tamed style sits well in a show garden.

Another woodland theme comes from Andy Sturgeon - and in my humble opinion, this is the one to watch! If you've ever struggled to plant in shady areas, Andy's vision, with mosses, ferns, charred wood and rock, is something to behold and really shows off the way plants can colonise different changing habitats over time.

Sarah Eberle is back again this year - having won more Chelsea medals than any other designer. Her garden for The Forestry Commission features plants and trees, such as *Araucaria araucana* (monkey puzzle tree) and *Ginkgo biloba* (maidenhair tree), likely to thrive in habitats threatened by climate change. The biggest puzzle here for me though is the inclusion of a large grain silo (which looks more like a rocket). Let's see if it appears in the final garden!

Kate Gould (based in Radlett) is creating her first Main Avenue garden in 2019. Her split-level design for Greenfingers Charity, which includes a water-powered lift, features a mix of tropical planting. It's created to highlight how outside spaces can have health benefits - let's hope that the engineering doesn't let her down.

I have to be honest, I'm a bit worried about Chris Beardshaw's garden for Morgan Stanley this year. It feels a little 'samey', with its relaxation pod, water rill and domed topiary. Chris' planting is always a joy though, so let's hope that really breathes some life into it.

Not on Main Avenue, but still one to look out for, is Sue Hayward. Her Artisan gardens are among some of my favourites, and this year is no exception. Looking at how nature is gradually reclaiming the garden and garage (very wabi sabi!), her design for Motor Neurone Disease Association features plants we can all identify with. Sue uses them in a romantic and relaxed way - although, there's only so long I can feel relaxed about ivy!

See all of the gardens at www.rhs.org.uk/shows-events/rhs-chelsea-flower-show

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Staying Safe IN THE SUN

Spring is upon us and it's never too early to wear protective sun cream. It's important to remember to ditch last year's sun cream because the UVA/UVB protective filters will have expired if the bottle has already been opened.

Don't fool yourself into thinking that the SPF levels in your makeup products are enough to protect you against the sun's harmful rays. You would need to use a whole 30ml bottle of foundation for the SPF to have any protective effect for your skin.

It's not all doom and gloom, it just means making a little effort and spending money but you cannot put a price on your health and there are many other steps you can take to avoid irreversible damage to your skin and health.

You know these things: Avoid being out in direct sunlight during the hottest part of the day (12pm – 3pm), wear lighter clothing, a hat and sunglasses and don't neglect your lips in the sun, as they can burn and dry out too.

The World Health Organisation recommends using 35ml of sun cream for the whole body (around 7 teaspoons). Not applying enough product greatly reduces the amount of protection.



Those of us that need to combine a working day, with heat and wearing makeup, need not worry. Follow these simple steps and you will be good to go even in sweltering heat.

1. Wear a waterproof mascara.
2. Drink lots of water as this will dramatically reduce fine lines and plump out your skin, meaning you will not need to apply as much product.
3. Moisturise, moisturise, moisturise!
4. Use a good setting spray. Urban Decay All Nighter is my go-to product.
5. Use cream blush/bronzer for a fresher look rather than powder, which can get patchy with your own body heat when the weather is extremely warm.
6. Keep your lips moisturised, even at bedtime. I love Burts Bees and shea butter lip care.
7. Pop a mini hydrating mist spray in your bag, it really helps freshen you up during the day and reduces the horrid hot sticky feeling. I love Neal's Yard Organics Frankincense Hydrating Mist.
8. Powder free blotting paper is a life saver if you're prone to an oily t-zone. Try any of the makeup counters or Boots.
9. Remember, to remove your makeup and cleanse thoroughly the night before. This will make a huge difference to how your skin looks during the summer months.

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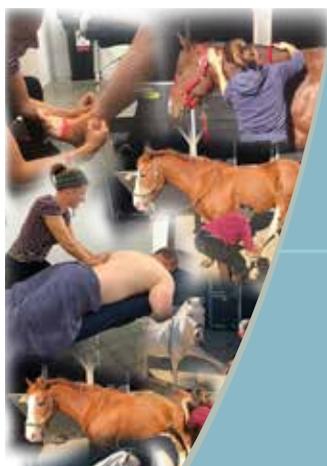


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With Anne Bryant

Is Stress Stressing You Out?

You know that moment when stress pushes you over the edge? When someone says or does the tiniest thing and you bite their head off? Or that moment when someone cuts you up on the motorway, and we find ourselves screaming profanity at them in a way that leaves us feeling a bit shocked and out-of-control?

That, my friends, is stress. That familiar feeling of adrenaline flooding your body, your heart-rate increasing and breathing becoming shallower. Then before you know it, you've said something you regret to your boss / colleague/ partner / child (delete as appropriate).

So why is it that even the smallest thing can trigger it? Often it's because of chronic stress – this is when your cortisol response stays switched on because you deal with hundreds of 'micro-stresses' every day. Like trying to get the kids to school every morning, dealing with bills piling up, job pressures, or the demands of elderly parents. Whatever it is for you – it all builds up in the body.

So when that tiny thing happens, it's the straw that breaks the camel's back. And you might blow your top in a way that feels disproportionate to the event that triggered it.

And we know of course that chronic stress is serious and can lead to health issues such as heart disease, anxiety, depression, headaches, digestive complaints, weight gain, poor memory and sleep disturbances.

So what can you do to take back control of your stress response?

1. Stress 'First Aid' for the moment you are triggered: Breathe! 60 seconds of breathing in for a count of 3 and out for a count of 5 takes your body out of the 'fight or flight' cortisol response and into 'rest and digest' calming state.
2. Ongoing Stress Resilience: Get curious about what your stress triggers are – look for patterns. What kind of events trigger you? How does it make you feel? What thoughts are present?
3. Reduce Lifestyle Stressors: Getting good sleep and nutrition makes you less likely to feel stressed. Reducing caffeine can also downgrade your cortisol response, making you less likely to bite someone's head off!

I'm running a Stress Resilience Workshop on the 29th of June with Mind Body Practitioner, Olena Baker, at akarmalife studios in Ampthill. Book your slot at www.akarmalife.com/workshops or by scanning the QR code below. You can also visit www.lifesparkcoaching.net/what-we-do/stress-management for more information on taking back control of your stress response.

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With Robert Daws

*Depending on your age, you will know Robert Daws for different reasons. If you're my generation you will have seen him in *The Royal* (which is still being shown on ITV) or indeed any number of successful television shows like *Casualty*, *Midsomer Murders* or *A Bit of Fry and Laurie*. If you are younger and are partial to a bit of Aiden Turner, then you will have seen him recently in *Poldark*.*

I know Robert as a friend and fellow resident of Ampthill where he has always been a huge supporter of community events. He is also a great raconteur and on 4th May he is putting on a show at the Connolly Theatre where he lifts the curtain on his life in television, theatre and film. Robert explains more

"Back in the 1980s, Nigel Planer and Christopher Douglas wrote a book called 'I An Actor'. It was a brilliant comic parody of an indulgent actor's autobiography. The actor was called Nicholas Craig and although fictional, he immediately struck fear into the hearts of many real, cape wearing, fedora-sporting actor-luvvies throughout the world of show business.

Among the many topics Mr. Craig dealt with in his memoirs were the following:

Should you sport a moustache in your publicity photo? What should you never call Alec Guinness during rehearsals? Is it true Brian Blessed only weighs 9 1/2 stone? What should you do when Hollywood comes calling?

It was a book that blew the lid off the secrets of the acting profession, leaving no reputation safe. Its legacy was powerful. Indeed, the worst thing you could say to an actor of my generation was, 'That's a bit, Nicholas Craigie.'

It is, therefore, with some trepidation that I find myself heading down memory lane with an evening full of song, anecdote and legitimate name-dropping – all inspired by surviving forty years as an actor.

With the help of pictures (some moving) and song I'll be telling tales of my exploits in drama school, repertory theatre, the West End, radio, television, and film. Many have been fun, some have been disastrous and others just plain dangerous. If you have an interest in how actors really work and why we do it, this could be the show for you. Hopefully, it won't be too *Nicholas Craigie*, although, having worked with Brian Blessed, I can certainly give you a more realistic approximation of his weight.

An old school friend once said to me, 'Don't you sometimes wish you'd gone into insurance?' Well, come along to the show and I'll give you my answer to that question".

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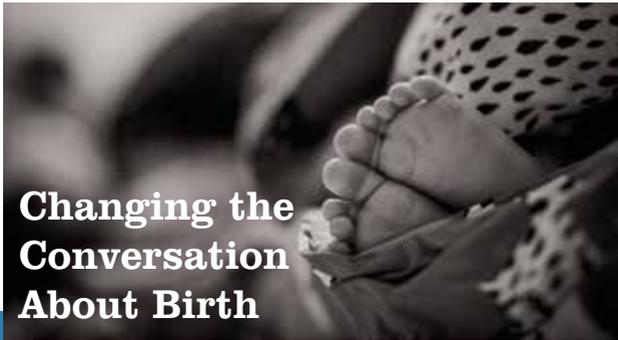
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Changing the Conversation About Birth



“Doula”, an ancient Greek word for female servant, is today best known as a non-medical yet specially-trained person who provides mothers-to-be practical and emotional support during pregnancy, childbirth and beyond. For many local parents, doulas are playing a calming and instrumental role in supporting safe birth experiences that enhance labour, delivery and the postpartum experience in unparalleled ways.

There are around 12 doulas in Bedfordshire offering a variety of experience, skills and services for women wanting home or hospital births and those that just need post natal support. By providing information and continuous emotional support throughout the transition into parenthood better outcomes are experienced for mother and baby.

"Hiring Gosia was certainly one of the best decisions in my life. I thought we could do on our own but it turned out she helped us to stay in control through the labour." Client of Doula Gosia Kalka, @bedforddoula

Numerous studies show that women who received continuous labour support are more likely to give birth spontaneously without induction and may be less likely to use

pain medications or to have a caesarean birth ('Continuous support for women during childbirth', 2017). In addition to the evidence, local families who have benefitted from working with a doula are also singing their praises.

"Pippa was amazing during my labour. She also gave me words of encouragement at a time I think only another woman who had experienced birth herself could." Client of Pippa Moss, Karma Birth

Post-natal services offered includes debriefing the birth, breastfeeding support, household errands, light cleaning and meal preparation; supporting mothers to relax into motherhood smoothly and in confidence.

"Tea, meals, washing, tidying and bags of encouragement in those early days when I wasn't sure what I was supposed to be doing. Total moral and practical support at a time when you need to be so kind to yourself." Client of Rosie Carter-Suso, @doularoot

Women have been supporting women through childbirth for millennia and doulas are responding to a need for continuity, non-judgemental companionship and calm in navigating birth and early parenthood decisions.

"Jess was a great sounding board, providing information, ideas and an alternative viewpoint. Her energetic approach while being calm shows how much passion she has for supporting mothers and families through their birth." Client of Jess Slender

Bedfordshire Doulas are not there to replace the partner's support (in fact have many ways to support them too), or replace the care of a midwife. In providing non-judgemental care doulas do not advise on the best cause of action but rather empower families to make the best decisions for themselves by providing lots of unbiased, evidence based information and resources.

We want to change the conversation around birth so that women are supported in experiencing empowering, supportive, safe and remarkable birthing experiences.

For further information or to direct you to speak to a doula in your area please contact:
Rosie Carter-Suso, 07543 280171,
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THE Outdoors Mum

The spring sunshine has arrived and this is the perfect time to venture outside with your little ones. When I had my daughter, Daisy, I soon discovered my love of the great outdoors. I found days and nights a little tough but the fresh air was instantly calming. Now, 2 years on, we spend most of our time together outside, exploring nature, discovering wildlife, climbing fallen trees and discovering new parks. It's a huge stress reliever for me and gives my daughter freedom and independence.

It's very easy to fall into the 'no' trap when you're inside. By being outside and going to open spaces you can let your child be free and it takes the heat off you even for a minute. It's a safe place to be.

I can see the confidence growing in Daisy daily. The look on your child's face when they figure out how to conquer a climbing frame and fling themselves safely down the slide is amazing. The confidence it gives is priceless and it takes great concentration to navigate around some of the play equipment. Daisy recently learnt to hold on to the guide ropes on the wooden wobbly bridges at the local park and I could tell how happy this achievement made her.

I do understand that it's not always easy to get out the house though so I wanted to share some tips with you: Make a plan for tomorrow and write it in your diary. Invite a friend if that helps. Prepare for your adventure the night before; get petrol, make a packed lunch etc. There's always an excuse not to go out. Remind yourself you will both feel better for it.

One of our favourite activities is seeing what we can find. A stick can be a magic wand, a trowel for digging in the mud or an instrument. Ask your child if they can find something green, if they can spot a squirrel or bird, find a brown leaf, a daisy or dandelion. It's also great for developing their speech too and allowing them to take in their surroundings and don't worry if they don't understand, they will still gain enjoyment from collecting items with different textures and sizes.

Where ever you decide to go this month I hope this helps you to rediscover your love of the great outdoors.

Jenny



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WHY SHOULD I VOLUNTEER?

I joined Scouting at the age of six. It gave me the opportunity to go places, meet people, learn skills and achieve things I could only dream of and will remember all of my life. As an adult volunteer I'm still doing all of these things, but now I get the added bonus of helping the next generation to have fantastic opportunities too.

Nearly 30 years after first joining Scouts I now have the pleasure of leading our local Scout District - a collection of eight (soon to be nine) Scout Groups consisting of over 1000 members between them. Between us we have a key target to make sure we can offer a place to every young person in our local community who wants to join - we already have a waiting list. The only way we can achieve this safely is with the help of more adult volunteers - people just like you!

If you don't really like camping, would struggle to light a fire even with a flame thrower and can't even fold a map, but are willing to learn, we'll teach you. But if being a Scout Leader still isn't for you maybe you're perfect for one of our other adult roles.

Just as important as our Leaders is our team of supporters working away in making sure things like Scout huts are maintained, the

finances are managed and buckets of tea are available for parents at awards evenings. Without our supporters, Leaders would struggle to provide the fantastic activities and opportunities for our youth members. Lots of people think there are many reasons why they can't become an adult volunteer with Scouts, but with our flexible approach to volunteering, we'll try to find the perfect role for you.

Becoming an adult volunteer for me was a natural progression, but even if you've never previously been involved with Scouting, you too can still help out and make a real difference in your local community.

As an adult volunteer with Scouting, you'll receive, free of charge, full training for your role. Our training scheme is externally recognised by the Institute of Leadership and Management, so looks great on your CV!

I know the amazing opportunities and experiences I've had as both a youth and adult member of Scouting have shaped my life for the better. That's why I volunteer with Scouting.

Mark
 District Commissioner

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All our cabinets are manufactured at our Ampthill factory offering the flexibility and the cost effectiveness of buying directly from a manufacturer.

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Seat Leon Cupra

Speed comes at a cost. That's my first thought when I drive the Seat Leon Cupra. It's a fast five-door hatchback and the price paid is modest economy of around 38mpg. In these days of high insurance premiums and costly fuel is this a price worth paying for what is arguably a very stylish, well-made car?

Well, let's see.

Standing in my dining room I am able to savour the design of the car as it stands on our driveway. Its side profile highlights some interesting lines, slightly higher at the front and lower at the back. Then there are the bright red brake callipers inside the black alloys and their low profile tyres.

The test model is finished in a staid silvery grey; it is a wolf in sheep's clothing. There are tell-tale twin tail pipes, the Cupra name and a little 300 emblem on the bootlid, giving a little hint as to what is under that bonnet - a Seat TSi engine producing... 300bhp. This is coupled to a six speed manual gearbox. The result is a boy racer's delight; a blisteringly hot hatch. 0 to 60mph in 5.6secs and a top speed of 155mph. These figures are quite an achievement for a family vehicle powered by a 2-litre petrol engine.

On the motorway when there seem to be no spaces to join, the Leon quickly gathers

speed and creates its own gap. The little accompanying roar is enough to make the driver next to us do a double take. "Slow down Daddy," my whole family repeat. To which I reply, look at the dial, I am only doing 70mph. Because the Leon is quite low to the ground and is fitted with low profile tyres it has the uncanny ability of making it feel as if you are going faster than you actually are. The addition of cruise control ensures that the speed limit can be set and not exceeded.

While driving through Kensington I have to smile as I pass Lord Alan Sugar behind the wheel of his Rolls Royce (days after his chauffeur pranged it) parked by the roadside outside the Apprentice house, deep in conversation - no doubt in the midst of another business deal.

Facts at a glance

Model tested: Seat Leon Cupra 300 2-litre TSi

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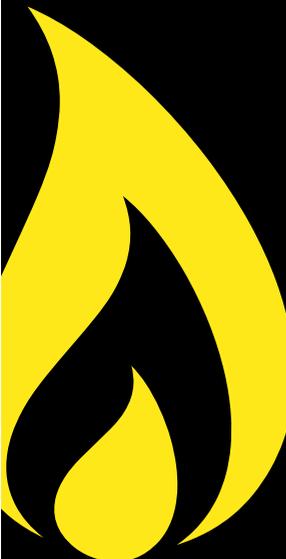
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Barnardo's is looking for people who can help at their contact centres, to facilitate meetings for parents and young people at various locations in Bedford.

Royal Air Forces (RAF) Association is looking for a befriender volunteer in the Sandy area to deliver welfare support to members of the RAF families and help to alleviate isolation and loneliness.

The Hope Programme offers services for people who have suffered sexual violence. They are looking for a volunteer to offer one to one life coach support to clients.

Tools with a Mission has an opportunity for a volunteer tool collector, responding to requests from members of the public to collect donated tools and store them until they can be picked up by the Tools with a Mission van.

Greensand Country Landscape Partnership would like to engage walk/cycle/ride volunteers to help them put together the 'walk/cycle/ride of the week' on the Greensand Country website and Facebook.

cvsbeds.org.uk/volunteer
volunteering@cvsbeds.org.uk
 01234 354366

Facebook: CVS Volunteering Bedfordshire



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Every Tues 1.45-3pm	Pram service (term time only). Free group for newborns to 5 yr olds. Music, stories ...	St Andrew's Church Amphill	Kate McFarlane 01525 838223
Every Wed 1-3pm	Bumps, Babies and Beyond	Village Hall Flitwick	Jane Lee janelee3@hotmail.co.uk
Every Wed 2-4pm	Afternoon Tea in Church	St Mary's Church Marston Moretaine	www.stmarysmarston.co.uk
Every 2nd & 4th Sat	Go Club for families affected by ASD. 10am-noon. Lego, coffee and a chat.	Maulden Baptist Church	Deborah 07859 048832
3rd Friday 10-11.30am	Mid Beds Twins Club meet at the Flitwick & District Children's Centre	Malham Close Flitwick	Laura Marshall 07747 175288
Every Frid 9am-4pm	Shefford Charter Market. Free Parking.	High Street Shefford	Paul 07807 219044
Every Mon 10-10.30am	Armchair Exercise suitable for all abilities followed by refreshments.	Village Hall Flitwick	Cheryl 07977 322897
Every Wed 10.30-12.15	Cognitive Stimulation therapy for people with early dementia/cognitive impairment.	Flitwick Library	Brenda 07970 666711
1st & 3rd Wed 7.30pm	Houghton Conquest Art Society.	Village Hall Houghton Conquest	www.houghton-conquest-art-society.co.uk
Most w/ends am & pm	Adult and teen bushcraft sessions in the woods. From £25.	Amphill Great Park	ntcbushcraft.co.uk 07855 805756
Fri 3 May 10am start	Walk4 Health. 75 min led walk in a friendly gorup. Check web for more dates.	Maulden Woods A6 layby	amphillhealthwalks.blogspot.co.uk
4 & 5 May 10am-4pm	SPA Art Exhibition & Sale. Refreshments available.	Village Hall Flitwick	paul.birtles@gmail.com
Sat 4 May 7.30pm	Wine Tasting with appropriate bites. Donations to a new church boiler.	St Mary's Harlington	Tricia 07711 511729 to book
Sun 5 May 11am-4.30pm	Houghton Conquest Art Society Exhibition and tea room. Free beginners workshop.	Village Hall Houghton Conquest	houghton-conquest-art-society.co.uk
5/6/27/29 10am-4m	Summerfields Miniature Railways open to the public.	A600 btwn Bedford & Shefford at Haynes	www.bedfordmes.co.uk
Sun 5 May 5am	Bedford RSPB Dawn Chorus. Free to all.	Priory Country Park, Barkers Lane MK41	www.rspb.org.uk/ groups/bedford
Thu 9 May 7.45pm	Mid Beds Flower Club practical evening. Visitors welcome. Bring flowers.	Village Hall Flitwick	Marion Tucker 01234 742396
Thu 9 May 7pm	Felicia Opera presents Cosi Fan Tutte (in English). £25.	Village Hall Stewartby	feliopera.com 07712 530550
Sat 11 May 9am-1pm	Farmers Market. Free parking.	High Street Shefford	Paul 07807 219044
Sat 12 May 12-5pm	Made in Maulden - local crafts, cakes, produce etc.	St Mary's Church Maulden	rev.l.klimas@btinternet.com
Thu 16 May 7.30pm	Bedford RSPB talk on the Campaign to save the albaross.	ARA Club, Manton Lane, Bedford	rspb.org.uk/ groups/bedford
17 & 18 May 7.30pm	Stewartby Amateur Operatic Soc WI Centenary Celebration. £16 inc. meal. No bar.	Village Hall Stewartby	boxoffice@saods.org.uk 07557 670703
Sat 18 May 10am-1pm	Rhythms Dance Workshop for age 16 and above.	Parkside Hall Amphill	pips6@hotmail.com to book
Sat 18 May 2.30-3.30pm	MK Playpals Concert. Free entry. Refreshments.	Steppingley Church MK45 5AU	Brenda 01525 715292
Sat 18 May 7.30pm	Amphill & District Choral Soc Spring Concert. Tickets £10.	Methodist Church Amphill	
Thu 30 May	Stewartby Am. Operatic & Dramatic Soc. Open rehearsals for Pirates of Penzance.	Church Hall Stewartby	Carol 01234 767618

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May 2019



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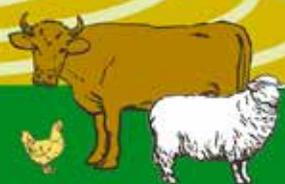
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Monday 6th May 2019

5K Fun Run • Junior 1 mile • Under 8's Flit Sprint

Registration in Flitton Church Hall, Brook Lane
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Please let us know if you can help in any way!

For more information please contact
 David Sedgley 01525 714961 or email
 flittonflit@gmail.com

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Millbrook Summer Fete

Sunday 9th June 2019

12.30-4pm

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Friday 10th May 7:30pm - Parkside Hall, Ampthill

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Sunday 23rd June 2019

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Meet at The Hub - 11am

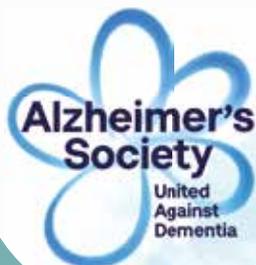
Join us for a GREAT dog walk in Ampthill GREAT Park for a GREAT cause.

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For more information contact
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