



A Bicester Town Council  
Newsletter for  
the Community

# BICESTER

## GARTH GAZETTE

January 2020

### HEALTHY BICESTER

Goes from strength to strength  
with several new projects

### AWARDS GALORE

Bicester's award-winning  
groups and businesses

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### Garth Gazette Information

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# Welcome to Bicester

Although we are well into the New Year, there is so much to catch up on since our September edition.

As always, Bicester comes out in force to support community events and this is particularly poignant for the Remembrance event. As well as thousands of Bicester residents who lined the streets, we were especially honoured to have a dignitary from the United States Air Force based at RAF Croughton attend.

Bicester Festival was another successful event that began with a sing-a-long The Greatest Showman in Garth Park on the Friday night and ended on the Sunday with fun for everyone at OYAP. It is wonderful to see that OYAP have been recognised with a Queen's Award for their work, the highest honour a charity can receive. They continue to inspire and support our young people and we're very lucky to have them in our town.

Graven Hill also picked up a couple of Build It awards in November and the new Perch Eco Business Centre was commended at the Royal Town Planning Institute Awards. It's lovely to see the efforts Bicester is making to be sustainable being rewarded.

The Christmas Lights and Santa Fun Run were enjoyed by all who took part and brought an end to another year of growth and celebration for Bicester. I am always inspired to see what community groups, churches and charities are doing to support individuals and the community, and I am looking forward to seeing what 2020 will bring for us all.



Don't forget to save the dates for Bicester Town Council's events in 2020, as well as perhaps discovering something new in Bicester to enjoy.

*Samantha Shippen*

**Samantha Shippen**

Chief Officer, Bicester Town Council

If you don't see your organisation, group or activity listed or covered in the Garth Gazette, please email at [lucy@psmkt.co.uk](mailto:lucy@psmkt.co.uk) or call on **07813 846569** to find out how to get free editorial space or book advertising.

# Bicester's Eco Business Centre scoops award for planning innovation

*Bicester's newest office and coworking space has been commended by industry experts for planning excellence.*

The Eco Business Centre, in North West Bicester, was developed by Cherwell District Council and is an exemplar in sustainability. It is zero carbon and the first non-residential Passivhaus Plus building in the UK, a rigorous standard for energy efficiency, quality and comfort, planned to create employment alongside sustainable new residential development.

At the Royal Town Planning Institute Awards for the South East, the project was recognised for 'excellence in planning for a successful economy' by supporting local entrepreneurs, homeworkers, and small businesses, and increasing the vibrancy of the

local economy.

Robert Jolley, Cherwell's assistant director for growth and economy said: 'The design of the centre needed to provide value for money whilst not compromising on the sustainability of the building and creating an attractive and healthy working environment.'

'The centre uses the latest technology to generate its own power and preserves heat and cool air, resulting in its exceptional energy efficiency rating. Anyone working in the building can be sure they are operating in the most environmentally sustainable way'.

The Eco Business Centre has been open since September and is run by Town Square Spaces Ltd. It includes a coworking space, operating under Cherwell's Perch brand, complimenting the existing Perch facility at Franklins House in the town centre. There is also dedicated office space for small businesses to operate from.

Robert Jolley continued: 'By giving people a way to change their working habits and removing the necessity of a daily commute, it not only has a positive impact on the environment but can also improve mental and physical wellbeing'.

## The Graven Hill team at the Build It Awards

*During an evening in London on 29th November hosted by Build It Magazine, awards ranging from Best Self-Build Architect or Designer to Best Joinery Product were handed out.*

Taking home the Best SIPs Home award were Plot 36, Catherine Buttery and Justin Metcalfe. Justin and Catherine were first-time buyers, both renting separately in different parts of the country. What began as a 'fancy self-building your own home' in-joke, became a

reality when the Graven Hill site in Bicester provided a commutable middle-ground between their two rental properties and gave them the chance to build.

We were also extremely pleased to see our Grand Designs Pioneers,

Terry and Olwen Brown-Waite, win for Best ICF Home with their Blue House and Durisol UK.

The Awards ceremony was a great night all round and a brilliant way to start our wind down for the Christmas period, and wrap up what was a fantastic 2019!

## Industry recognition for Healthy Bicester

*The November issue of The Clerk, the magazine of the SLCC, the professional body for local council clerks and senior council employees, featured the 'inspirational' Healthy Bicester programme over a double-page spread.*

Samantha Shippen, Chief Officer of Bicester Town Council, commented 'I was immensely proud that Healthy Bicester was featured over two pages and was pleased to be able to contribute to Rosie Rowes' article'.





## Bicester barber wins national award

*Andy's Barber Shop in Pioneer Square Bicester has been named Barber Shop of the Year 19/20 at the annual Master Barber Awards.*

These national awards are highly respected in the barbering industry and it is an incredible achievement. Owner and barber Andy Willis said: 'We are absolutely delighted to be flying the flag for Oxfordshire and more specifically my home town of Bicester. We know the competition is high and so we were so surprised and delighted to win the award and it's given all our team a real lift – there's such a buzz about the shop.'



## Prestigious Queen's Award for OYAP

*A Bicester charity has been presented with the prestigious Queen's Award for its work – the highest honour a charity can receive.*

Tim Stevenson, the Lord Lieutenant of Oxfordshire, handed over the 'richly deserved' crystal award and certificate from the Queen to OYAP Trust in October 2019.

The Queen's Award is the equivalent of an MBE for volunteer groups and OYAP is one of a handful of organisations in Bicester to ever achieve the accolade. It marks a triple celebration for OYAP, which this year celebrates its 21st birthday, while earlier this year its founder, Helen Le Brocq, was awarded the High Sheriff Award for her outstanding contribution to youth arts and education in Oxfordshire.

Ms Le Brocq said: 'We are hugely honoured. After 21 years of working so hard to develop creative and cultural opportunities for young people, this award is recognition for everyone who's been part of the OYAP story. We started with absolutely nothing and our aim was to engage with young people, from age eight to 21, through arts and culture, and given them the opportunity to express themselves through arts activities. In the past 21 years, we've seen tens of thousands of young people come and go through our doors and have life-enhancing experiences. The Queen's

Award is seen as a kitemark of excellence and it means the Queen has recognised the contribution this organisation has made. It's a real honour and we hope it will open new doors for us.'

Current mayor Cllr Slaymaker, who attended OYAP as a young person, said: 'It was fantastic to see OYAP receive the award. The support and work OYAP do with young people in our community is amazing and it has such a big impact. For me, I wouldn't be where I am today if it wasn't for OYAP Trust.'





# Save the date: Bicester Festival 2020, 18th to 20th September

*Be a part of something special and join the organising committee*

The second annual Bicester Festival took place last September, bringing residents and visitors together to celebrate performance, creativity and culture.

More than a thousand people sang along to an open-air viewing of The Greatest Showman in Garth Park on the Friday and then on the Saturday local talent was showcased on the Best of Bicester stage in the Market Square. A food and craft market brought hundreds onto Sheep Street and the heritage zone offered visitors the chance to view the Dovecote in Old Place Yard and absorb the history at St Edburg's Church.

Saturday's festival parade presented a giant running fox and flapping bee to the crowds gathered. The huge puppets were accompanied by dancers and musicians as well as a special visit from 'The Queen'. Then, it was back to Garth Park for



an eclectic live music event, Roots, Rock and a Whole Lotta Brass.

OYAP's Studi02 hosted Sunday's Earth Day, bringing families together to experience activities including yoga, Chinese craft and a drumming workshop. Older members of the

community were also encouraged to take part in the festivities with an age-friendly creative pop-up at Bicester library.

For more details on getting involved, please visit @BicesterFestival on Facebook.



## Hello from the League of Friends

*The League of Friends continue to support the hospital, our volunteers make beds and serve drinks morning and afternoon. We raise funds to support the hospital by purchasing items that the NHS do not supply.*

We held our annual Coffee Morning/Bring and Buy on Friday 22nd November 2019 at the Littlebury Hotel and we raised £587.30. I would like to thank Michael Mckeon, who hosted us, Councillor Les Sibley, Chairman of Oxfordshire County Council, and his wife Mary for attending, and also all the League of Friends committee and our volunteers for their help.

Another big thank you goes to Ray Rushby, our wonderful Santa, who has been giving up his Christmas

morning for 18 years to go into the hospital and distribute gifts to the patients which the League of Friends have purchased.

We are always pleased to receive donations; cheques should be made payable to League of Friends Bicester Community Hospital and sent to:

Rose Stratford, Bicester Community Hospital, League of Friends,  
8 Queens Court, Bicester, OX26 6JX.

E-mail: rosetjstratford@outlook.com



# Christmas Light Celebrations 2019

*Thousands of people joined the festive fun and helped launch Christmas 2019 in Bicester.*

The town centre was transformed into a winter wonderland with a host of festive stalls and activities.

Organised by Bicester Town Council, the day started with the OneBicester Christmas market, then from 12pm the entertainment began and ran until 7pm.

One of the highlights was the lantern parade, which involved scores of young people who had made 'stunning' lanterns at workshops hosted by OYAP Trust, based at the former St Edburg's School in Cemetery Lane. Led by the LED Drummers, the parade weaved its way through Sheep Street and into Market Square, where Mayor Jason Slaymaker and Chloe Kinch Jones, who won the prize for the best

lantern, pressed the all-important button to light up the town's Christmas displays.

Cllr Slaymaker said: 'What a perfect day. It was wonderful to see the town centre so busy with families enjoying the festive fun. For me, the lantern parade was one of the highlights – it was a spectacle to see. So many young people had been involved in both creating some amazing lanterns and taking part in the parade. It was certainly a difficult job to pick the winner. Launching Christmas in Bicester was very special. I hope people will now enjoy the lights and the sparkling trees as we build up to December 25th'.

Bicester Village kindly sponsored the entertainment and Christmas tree

in Sheep Street and K2 Recruitment sponsored the Christmas tree in Market Square.

Throughout the day, street entertainers including roller-skating baubles and a light-up icicle roamed the town centre; there was an ice rink, toddler fair rides, nativity farm animals and huskies, and even Father Christmas made an appearance.

On the main stage in Market Square, a host of local talent performed songs, sketches and dance routines, including students from Adele Peters Performing Arts School, Stagecoach and Just Dance, along with local bands Rhythm Street, Roguey Roads and singer Emily Ottaway.





# A sea of Santas

*About 500 people took to the streets of Bicester dressed as Santa Claus for the annual Christmas run on Sunday, 15th December, organised by Bicester Town Council.*

Runners, including the Deputy Mayor Nick Mawer, raced around the 4k route that finished in Pingle field. First, second and third place went to Edward Jolliffe, Richard Gould and Ollie Gore, respectively. All runners were presented with a medal, hot

drink and bacon roll.

Mayor Jason Slaymaker said: 'It was fantastic to see all the sea of Santas running across Pingle field. Well done to everyone who took part. Our thanks must also go to Evolve Health and Fitness, who kindly

sponsored the event for the fifth year running'.

Money raised from the day will go to the Mayor's charities, OYAP Trust, Nai's House, Bicester Fire Cadets and Alexandra House of Joy.



## Bicester's Remembrance Day event

*Thousands of people joined Bicester's Remembrance Day event to pay their respects to the town's fallen heroes.*

Organised by Bicester Town Council, the service was held at St Edburg's Church, followed by a parade around the Market Square involving about 500 people.

Among the dignitaries who attended were Deputy Lieutenant Miranda Markham, Bicester town Mayor Cllr Jason Slaymaker, Lt Col Lyndon Robinson of Bicester Garrison, Lt Col Nathan Crew of 1 Regt RLC and Col Ramstack of the United States Air Force based at RAF Croughton.

The service began in the grounds of

the church with a call to attention led by troops from 1 Regiment Royal Logistic Corps, then a lone bugler played the Last Post to signal two minutes' silence.

Afterwards, wreaths were laid on the war memorial by representatives of a host of organisations from across the town, including military regiments, councils, local groups, charities and businesses. Representatives from Bicester's twinned towns in Germany, France and Poland also laid wreaths.

Following the church service, serving soldiers, veterans, the Royal British Legion, retired members of WRAC, along with representatives from local groups and organisations, including Scouts, Guides, Air Force, Army and Fire Service cadets, mustered in Church Street and marched down the Causeway and into Market Square, where the mayor and Deputy Lieutenant took the salute. Crowds lined the Causeway and Market Square clapping as the parade, led by 2507 ATC Sqd Band, marched past.

Mayor Cllr Slaymaker said: 'I was so proud to see the people of Bicester come together to recognise the sacrifice made by so many in conflicts around the world. It was an honour to take the salute and watch the hundreds of people in the parade. I would like to thank all those who took time out of their day to join the service and parade and those who lined the streets to watch and clap as the procession went by. It was certainly a fitting tribute'.





# Introducing Nai's House

*Nai's House is a new holistic support service that provides counselling and holistic activities, as well as focussing on suicide intervention and prevention.*

It is a free service delivered by volunteers and aims to change the way that young adults and their families receive support for their mental health, currently being held at Kingsmere Community Centre, 2nd Floor, Whitelands Way, OX27 1LG.

## What's on:

**Tuesday's 4-7pm:** Nai's Lounge (a safe place to chill), appointments

for counselling and holistic treatments and supporters.

**Thursdays 4-7pm:** Nai's Lounge, appointments for counselling and holistic treatments and supporters.

The parents support group will run from 5-7pm on the following dates in 2020:-

- January 9th and 23rd
- February 6th and 20th

- March 5th and 19th

Nai's House will offer SafeTALK training, a 3.5 hour workshop to learn how to identify, and talk to a person with suicidal thoughts and connect them to someone who can help keep them safe.

All enquiries to [hello@naishouse.co.uk](mailto:hello@naishouse.co.uk) or find us on Facebook at /NaishouseBicester.

# Bicester's Secret Garden

*There is a peaceful haven near the centre of Bicester for the whole community to enjoy; the Bicester Community Garden. Previously part of the grounds of St Edburg's School that had fallen into disrepair and vandalism, it is now a thriving wildlife garden buzzing with bees and butterflies, and producing fruit and vegetables.*

Grassroots Bicester developed the garden with funding from Bicester Village's Make a Difference fund, Cherwell District Council's Spark Funding and support from Sanctuary Housing. Generous donations of plants, trees and tools also came from members of the public, Wyevale Garden Centre, and local organisations, councils and businesses.

Established in October 2010,

Grassroots Bicester comprises local residents, aged from two to ninety-two, of varying skills, knowledge and abilities who share a common interest in sustainability and community spirit. They work across Bicester devising sustainable projects to make a real difference to their local environment.

The Community Garden is easily accessible and open to the Bicester Community, and always hope that

new people will come along to the garden to join our happy band of gardeners. We are planning to hold a garden party during the spring/summer 2020, when the weather is better and the plants are abloom.

To find out more about Bicester's Community Garden, you can email us at: [grassrootsbicesterag@gmail.com](mailto:grassrootsbicesterag@gmail.com) or find us on Facebook: Bicester's Community Garden.



Before



After



# DIY SOS transformation complete

*It may have taken slightly longer than a weekend – but the final result was worth the wait.*

Last month, The Hummingbird Centre unveiled its brand-new holistic building which offers therapeutic treatments for people from Bicester and all the surrounding areas that are affected by cancer.

The new facility boasts dedicated therapy rooms for a range of complementary treatments and its all thanks to builders and tradesmen from the local area.

The charity launched an appeal earlier this year for builders to get involved in a DIY SOS-style weekend

transformation of a former office.

Hummingbird volunteer Fiona Wastie, who led the project, said 'We have been humbled and amazed by the extraordinary generosity of all those who have been involved. Without the support of all these individuals and businesses this project would have cost thousands of pounds and we would still be at a very early stage'.

Mirella Lingwood, of building firm Leon Construction, said 'When we saw the DIY SOS call we immediately

wanted to help. We are proud to have been involved'.

Other organisations who donated time, materials or money include The Highfield Social Club, Bicester-based Andura Paint, Eco-electrical, NT Plumbing and James O'Brian plastering, Carpets for Less, Village Fabrics, John Nicholls, Howdens, The Granite House and Bicester Tradesmen Direct.



## Building community on Graven Hill

*It was only a small Christmas tree – but then right now Graven Hill is only a small community, with around 150 houses occupied so far.*

It was decorated with colourful messages of hope and peace supplied by the residents, who gathered to sing carols as part of their Christmas celebrations, which also included an innovative advent calendar organised around the development.

'Community is about people coming together', says Rev Helen Baker, 'and Christmas is a great opportunity to share some joy and goodwill, help

residents to get to know each other better, and contribute to making Graven Hill a great place to live'.

Helen is the Community Minister for Graven Hill, employed by Orchard Baptist Church on behalf of Churches in Bicester, with the aim of helping to build community. She and her husband Nick are themselves part of that community, hoping to get their own home ready for occupation by the end of March.

## Lend a hand with Bicester Green

*Bicester Green only exists because of and for its volunteers. Some of our volunteers teach the others new skills, those who learn new skills want to learn more and more, and our staff are always on hand to facilitate. Does this sound like somewhere you'd like to be a part of?*

There's plenty of opportunity to join us; we are always looking for volunteers in our wood workshop, electrical workshop, bike workshop, shop, or to help with the admin. Our Sheds project takes place on a Tuesday and is a fun way to see what we do, get involved and let your volunteering experience at Bicester Green blossom! Sheds is

an opportunity to come to Bicester Green's workshops and potter, tinker, make, repair or just chat with like-minded people.

To find out more about Bicester Green, call in to see us (Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday or Saturday) at The Yard, The Garth, Launton Road, Bicester, OX26 6PS, or follow us on Facebook.com/

BicesterGreen  
or visit [www.bicestergreen.org.uk](http://www.bicestergreen.org.uk).



# THRIVE: Pioneering workplace wellbeing project piloted in Bicester

*A new programme has been launched in Bicester to help businesses provide better health and wellbeing support for their staff.*

'Thrive' offers an easy-to-use framework, introducing small and medium-sized businesses to the most up-to-date practices on workplace wellbeing, enabling them to look after their employees' mental and physical health.

The free programme, created by the West Midlands Combined Authority, has been adopted by Cherwell District Council, with Bicester

selected for the pilot, in line with its Healthy New Town priorities.

Webmart, a print management company in the town, was among the first cohorts to sign up. Helen Greener, Finance Manager at Webmart, said 'The wellbeing of our staff is our number one priority, so when we heard about Thrive, it was an easy decision to sign up.

'The programme is free, easy to adopt and offers excellent advice on how we can support the mental and physical health of our employees. It has been designed to put us in control, so we can implement it gradually without it taking up huge amounts of time'.

For more information on how to get your workplace signed up, contact Jane.McDonald@Cherwell-dc.gov.uk.

## One small step for climate change

*Climate change emergencies have been declared by both Bicester Town Council and Cherwell District Council, and we can all help to address the emergency and make a real difference by making changes to our everyday lives.*

Ditching the car in favour of walking or cycling has the biggest potential to reduce our carbon footprint, while improving air quality and keeping us fit and healthy.

Avoiding the daily commute and working closer to home can also help. Perch at Franklins House has been operating for two years, offering dedicated coworking space in the town centre. That has been joined by Perch at the Eco Business

Centre, proving a shared working environment alongside office space in the award-winning, energy-efficient building in North West Bicester.

But sometimes you need a vehicle. Electric cars are significantly better for the environment but can be expensive. That is where E-Car Club can help. The hire scheme gives you access to two top-of-the-range electric cars when you need

a vehicle, without the hassle of maintenance and insurance costs. Based at Elmsbrook, they are a ten-minute bike ride from the town centre, or the E1 bus drops you right next to them.

**Lifetime membership is being offered free to Bicester residents along with six free hours of rental to get you moving.**



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# Bicester school girl sees her design on recycling lorries

*Josie Briant from Bicester was a winner of a Cherwell District Council competition which challenged pupils aged nine to 11 to create illustrations showing what they can recycle in the blue bin.*

Josie's designs stood out amongst entries submitted by children from six primary schools. Their work has now been enlarged and printed onto two of the council's recycling lorries and will be seen on the highways and byways of north Oxfordshire.

Josie, a pupil at Longfields Primary

School, said: 'I was really, really shocked I had won!'

Cherwell's waste resource manager, Ian Upstone, said 'Congratulations to Josie, who has really done her school proud. Scores of creative and imaginative posters were submitted to the competition. Clearly the

schoolchildren know a lot about recycling. I just hope this helps the message gets through to any adults who are still putting the wrong thing in the wrong bin'.

Josie is pictured high-fiving CDC recycling mascot Binbo.



# Bicester families getting active together with FAST

*A project helping families to get fit together has been launched in Bicester.*

FAST, which stands for Families Active Sporting Together, has been running in specific areas of Banbury for the last year, chosen due to the high levels of inactivity registered among residents. Funded by a £215,000 grant from Sport England, it has helped more than 1,700 adults and children in its first 12 months.

The results have been so impressive that Cherwell District Council (CDC) has received a further £375,000 from Sport England to roll out FAST in Bicester and Kidlington. Pictured is Tom Gubbins, Sport and Physical Activity Manager CDC, Nicola Riley, CDC's Assistant Director for

Wellbeing and Mike Diaper, Executive Director for Children, Young People and Tackling Inactivity (at Sport England).

FAST families in Bicester East, Bicester West and Bicester Town wards are now entitled to money off a variety of sports and wellbeing initiatives, while local schools will be offered physical activities designed for parents and pupils to take part in together for FREE.

Incentives include a family swim (two adults and three children) at Bicester Leisure Centre for £3 instead of £13, as well as deals on gym membership and classes.

For more information on how to sign up for a FAST card, the special offers available and the terms and conditions, go to: [www.cherwell.gov.uk/FAST](http://www.cherwell.gov.uk/FAST) or follow @healthybicester on social media.

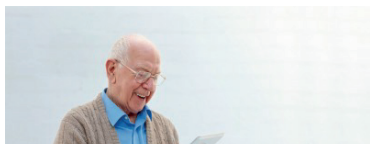




## Free IT Drop in Session

### Bicester Area

**Bicester Library** Franklins House, Wesley Lane,  
OX26 6JU, every 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesday of the  
month 10.30am-12 noon. (starting Oct 2019)



Would you like to learn basic computer skills, or gain more confidence so that you can: Email your friends and family, shop online, keep in touch with friends abroad using Skype, contact Services directly, downloading digital photos. We are willing to help at the venues above!

For more information call Troy Bryan on  
07957 981381 or just turn up on the day!



## Bicester Ladies Circle

*Bicester Ladies Circle once again spent their December evenings out and about around Bicester, collecting for local charities with Santa himself!*

Bicester Round Table organise this impressive annual event and together we try to visit as much of Bicester as possible. With the expansion of the town, this is becoming a challenge and we really appreciated everyone coming to their doors to donate and give Santa a wave. We were also with Santa at the town's Christmas lights switch on, finding out what the children of Bicester wanted for Christmas while being entertained by the wonderful performers. Continuing the Christmas theme, Ladies Circle had a tree at the always beautiful St Edburg's Christmas Tree Festival to celebrate a very busy year of fun, friendship and fundraising for us. Coming up in the New Year, we have badminton, dinners out and a trip to Butlins!

We are a friendly society for women aged 18-45 for fun, friendship and fundraising. We'd love to meet you! Find us on Facebook and Instagram, or at [www.ladiescircle.co.uk/bicester](http://www.ladiescircle.co.uk/bicester). Lads, check out Round Table, and for those over 45 the fun continues in Tangent and 41 Club.

## Down a Dark Alley

*Bicester Camera Club recently held a winter competition and congratulations go to Rodney Hughes for winning with his picture titled 'Down a Dark Alley'.*

We are a friendly club with members of all abilities and we meet in Kingsmere Community Centre, Whitelands Way, Bicester on alternate Mondays throughout the year. Doors open at 7.00pm and the meeting starts at 7.30 pm.

For more information, please call Lynne Hooper on 01869 601576.





## Emergency Dog First Aid

This course could help you save your dog's life. The aim of this half-day course is to teach you how to be that 'first responder' in any emergency situation to give your dog the best possible chance of recovery when they reach the vet. We cover scenarios such as Poisoning, Choking, Burns and Scalds, Seizures, Road Accidents, Eye Injuries, Bleeding, Heatstroke and Drowning, plus much more.

The course is an Accredited CPD course providing professionals with 3.5 CPD hours. We are the only Trading Standards Approved course of its kind in the world. Courses are held across Oxfordshire, Buckinghamshire, Warwickshire and Northamptonshire, including Bicester. For more information, please visit our website.

### Dog First Aid Course

Please contact us to book onto a course.

📞 07809 423157

✉ [bridget.simms@dog-first-aid.com](mailto:bridget.simms@dog-first-aid.com)

📌 [/dogfirstaidoxfordberksbucks](https://www.facebook.com/dogfirstaidoxfordberksbucks)

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*Peter James*  
C E R E M O N I A L S

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*'You made a hard day feel slightly easier  
and we all thank you for that'*



# Enjoy reading with Bicester Book Group

*We have been meeting for the last ten years to discuss and review a book every month.*

We meet at The Littlebury Hotel at 7.30pm, usually on the first Tuesday of the month. If you love to read and would like to share your thoughts with a variety of like-minded people, then the Bicester Book Group is for you!

You will be introduced to books you may never have thought of reading. We can't promise you'll always enjoy them, but they should hopefully provide plenty of lively discussion. We read all sorts of books from

fiction to non-fiction, from fantasy to crime thrillers, nothing is off limits. All members are encouraged to suggest books for the group to read and we select books a couple of months in advance. Recent books include:

Black Water Lilies by Michel Bussi and The Female Persuasion by Meg Wolitzer.

There is also a sub-group that meets on the second Monday of the month at 2.30pm at The Nightingale in

Langford, reading different books to those above.

Everyone is really welcome, and we are always open to new people coming along. There are no joining or subscription fees.

So, if you want to see what it's all about, please look up 'Bicester Book Group' on Facebook or pop along to our next meeting.

[www.facebook.com/groups/Bicesterbookgroup/](http://www.facebook.com/groups/Bicesterbookgroup/)

## Fright night at OYAP

Dozens of young people transformed a former school to stage a spooky fright night.

OYAP's Rock School, junior and senior youth theatre groups, Youth of Bicester, aka the YOBs, and young makeup artists teamed up with young people from Cherwell Theatre Company in Banbury and Wrong Shoes Theatre Company for this year's Halloween offering.

Youngsters wrote original music and short plays, and directed and performed the Fright Night production.

In promenade-style theatre, the audience was taken around different areas of OYAP's spookily transformed headquarters Studi02, the former St Edburg's School, in Cemetery Lane, as they tried to solve the mystery of the missing professor.

However, instead of clues, each room shared a gruesome tale of horror and death – while spooky original music was performed in the background.

Helen Le Brocq, OYAP director, said Fright Night had become one of the Trust's 'signature' events.

She said: 'This year it was a real thriller. The young people have been working on this project since the September and have made such an amazing effort'.

For more info about OYAP, go to [www.oyap.org.uk](http://www.oyap.org.uk)





# What's on at Bicester Methodist Church 2020

## Monday

### Ride On Time

10am – 12pm active play for under 5s.

### Musical Minis

11am – 11.45am fun music programme (birth – 4).

### Age UK Strength and Balance

12.15pm – 2.30pm classes for over 60s.

### BMC Wives Club

8pm friendly group often with speaker, new members welcome.

### Bicester Widows

1.30 – 3.30pm help, friendship and support. First Monday of every month.

### Diabetes Prevention

Various dates, call for info.

## Tuesday

### Acorn Toddler Group

10.30am – 12pm fun for under 5s, pre-registration required.

### Forget Me Nots

9am – 3pm friendship, activities and lunch club for seniors.

### Rock of Ages and Coffee Morning

In church foyer 10am – 12pm come for a cuppa and socialise.

### Tai Chi

2pm – 4pm – increase your flexibility and fitness.

### Tuesday Fellowship

2.30pm call for dates.

## Wednesday

### Grapevine Toddler Group

9.45am – 11.15am fun for preschoolers.

### Scrabble Club

2pm – 4pm first and third Wednesday of every month.

### Knit and Natter

10am – 12pm friendly knitting group, call for dates.

### Bicester Memory Cafe

10.30am – 12pm last Wednesday of the month, check for dates.

### Bicester Art Club

2pm – 4pm please call for more info.

### Wednesday Fellowship

2pm – 4pm fortnightly meetings.

## Thursday

### Achieve Healthy Weight Loss Oxfordshire

Please note, this is a closed group; for more info call 01865-338119 or check website [achieveoxfordshire.org.uk](http://achieveoxfordshire.org.uk).

### Forget Me Nots

9am – 3pm friendship, activities and lunch club for seniors.

### Narcotics Anonymous

7pm – 9pm help, support and advice.

### Rethink

6.30pm NEW monthly mental health support group starting 27th Feb, call for more info.

## Friday

### Coffee Morning with Lunch

9.30 – 1pm refreshments and friendly chat.

### Musical Minis

9.45am – 10.30am fun music programme (birth – 4).

### Diabetes Prevention

11am – 3pm various dates, call for info.

### Elim Aspire Ladies Group

7pm – 9pm call for dates.

## Saturday

### Bicester Crafters

10am – 4pm first Saturday of the month.

### Open Doors

In church foyer 11am – 1pm come for a cuppa, make new friends.

### Alcoholics Anonymous

7.30pm – 9pm help, support and advice.

*Please watch this space for new events as we have an ever-changing programme!*

*We also hold regular meetings in the evenings for Rainbows, Brownies, Rangers and Guides, Beavers and Scouts and Explorers.*

*Please note: most classes are term time only and run subject to availability.*

For more information on any of the above classes, or to enquire about hiring our halls, please e-mail [churchadmin@bicestermethodist.org.uk](mailto:churchadmin@bicestermethodist.org.uk) or phone the Church office on Bicester 323030 (answerphone out of office hours)

Would you like to play in a friendly environment with advice from experienced Bridge players and teachers?

Join us every Thursday | 2.00pm to 4.00pm

At the Kingsmere Community Centre, Bicester, OX26 1EG

£5 per session with tea and coffee provided.

More details at:

[www.bridgewebs.com/bicesterlearning](http://www.bridgewebs.com/bicesterlearning)

Please call David Tarsky on **0786712618**



## Could you help a child to read and change their life forever?

### Volunteers needed

ARCh (Assisted Reading for Children) is a local registered charity which operates in Oxfordshire primary schools to help children who are struggling with reading.

All it takes is one and a half hours twice a week during the school day as an ARCh volunteer in a primary school near you.

Full training is given and we provide ongoing support and reimburse travel expenses.

To find out more, visit our website [www.archoxfordshire.org.uk](http://www.archoxfordshire.org.uk)

Or telephone us on **01869 320380**

The charity obtains enhanced DBS checks on all volunteers before placement.  
Registered Charity Number 1146276



# SAVE THE DATES!

## Bicester Town Council 2020 Events



EVENT	DATE	VENUE	TIME
VE Day 75th Anniversary Community Picnic	Fri 8th May	The Garth Park	12:00 – 17:00 (TBC)
VE Day 75th Anniversary Open Air Remembrance Service	Sun 10th May	Market Square	10:30 – 12:00
Bicester Carnival / Armed Forces Day	Sat 27th June – subject to confirmation	Pingle Field	12:00 – 17:00
Superheroes Day	Weds 5th Aug	The Garth Park	11:00 – 15:00
Music Event	Sat 8th Aug	The Garth Park	19.30 – 22.30
Music Event	Sat 29th Aug	The Garth Park	19.30 – 22.30
Christmas Light Switch-On	Sat 28th Nov	Bicester Town Centre	10:00 – 19:00



## Trinity Camerata

Conductor - Sam Laughton

*"Local orchestras don't get much better than this!"*

09 February 2020 - 3:45pm  
St. Edburg's Church, Bicester

**MOZART** - Idomeneo: Ballet music

**TCHAIKOVSKY** - Variations on a Roco Theme

**BEETHOVEN** - Symphony no.3 'Eroica'

Tickets: Adults £10 in advance (Cole's Books), £12 on the door

[www.trinitycamerata.org](http://www.trinitycamerata.org)

Come and join in the magic!

## THE SNOW QUEEN

The local pantomime with big theatre effects!

A traditional family pantomime, based on the classic story by Hans Christian Anderson.

Come and join us and see if Gerda can rescue her friend Kai from the wicked Snow Queen.

With an original script packed with comedy, magic, audience participation and live music.

Suitable for everyone to enjoy, from age 0 to 100!

All profits go to good causes.

### Box Offices:

The Bull Inn  
Bicester Road  
Launton  
OX26 5DQ

Coles Books  
4 Crown Walk  
Pioneer Square  
Bicester  
OX26 6HY

### Opening Times:

Sun-Thurs: Noon – 11pm  
Fri-Sat: Noon – Midnight

### Opening Times:

Mon-Sat: 9am – 5:30pm

Cash, cheques and credit/debit cards accepted at both Box Offices