

LEIGHTON LINSLADE PARTNERSHIP COMMITTEE

1 December 2016

CENTRAL BEDFORDSHIRE COUNCIL UPDATE

Purpose of report: - for information

1 COMMUNITY SAFETY

1.1 Anti-social behaviour and Statutory Nuisance

The ASB & Stat. Nuisance Team have carried out the following work in the Leighton-Linslade area from the 1st April – 30th Sept 2016:

1 Injunction was awarded for an individual for prolific shop lifting in the town centre.

1 successful prosecution for a breach of Community Protection Notice (CPN) for street drinking.

1 breach of CPN file for street drinking was sent to Legal (awaiting court date).

1 CPN warning was issued for street drinking.

1 CPN issued for street drinking

Cases opened:

Littering – 1

Graffiti - 1

Dog barking - 1

Fly tipping – 14

Nuisance neighbours – 15

Light – 1

Noise – 32

Odour - 5

Rowdy / inconsiderate behaviour – 9

Vehicle nuisance - 3

82 cases in total.

An Environmental Protection Officer has also been working in conjunction with a local farmer to combat the fly-tipping of fridges on the A505 Leighton Buzzard bypass.

**1.2 Summary of recorded CCTV Incidents in Leighton Buzzard
1st July to 30th Sept 2016**

This report contains data gathered by the Council's CCTV Control Room located at Watling House, Dunstable. It includes details of CCTV monitored incidents and

arrests by the police in the towns of Dunstable, Houghton Regis and Leighton Buzzard. It does not include details of the police response to any particular incident where an arrest is not made, nor does it include incidents not captured by CCTV; for this reason the data will not reflect the overall picture of crime and disorder in any area. Personal data is excluded to comply with the Data Protection Act 1998.

Date and Time	Location	Brief Summary	No of Arrests
01/07/2016 23:20	Waterborne Walk	Assault	0
03/07/2016 17:33	North Street	Street drinker sitting outside shops drinking vodka	0
03/07/2016 16:03	Parsons Park	Drug activity	0
04/07/2016 12:02	Parsons Park	2 females restraining a child	0
07/07/2016 13:49	Leighton Buzzard High Street	Shoplifter running from Wilkos	0
07/07/2016 12:57	Leighton Buzzard High Street	Group of shoplifters walking out of Poundland with pockets full of sweets.	0
08/07/2016 16:08	Parsons Park	Drug activity	0
08/08/2016 14:27	Parsons Park	Drug activity	0
11/07/2016 20:34	North Street	Breach of Community Protection Notice	0
13/07/2016 14:37	Waterborne Walk	Wanted persons observed and later arrested in the High Street	3
16/07/2016 02:12	Leighton Buzzard High Street	Breach of the peace	1
19/07/2016 23:22	Leighton Buzzard High Street	Theft 2 bikes stolen from a bicycle rack	0
29/07/2016 19:16	Parsons Park	Robbery 4 males rob a male on a bike	0
07/08/2016 01:55	Lake Street	Affray	2
07/08/2016 03:24	Lake Street	Affray	2
07/08/2016 03:22	Lake Street	Assault	

09/08/2016 15:19	Bridge Street	Theft of mobile phone	0
18/08/2016 14:30	Parsons Park	Grievous Bodily Harm	0
03/09/2016 12:40	Parsons Park	Robbery	0
11/09/2016 23:38	Wing Road	Assault	0
23/09/2016 19:45	Various locations in Leighton Buzzard	Drug deals/use on Various dates and locations	0
25/09/2016 20:51	Leighton Buzzard High Street	Mopeds with no helmets or Registration Numbers	0
25/09/2016 02:35	Lake Street	Offensive Weapon- Male with a knife	0

8 arrests were recorded as a result of CCTV monitoring of incidents in this quarter. The CCTV control room continues to monitor problems with street drinkers in the Market Place in Leighton Buzzard in close liaison with the police. CBC has taken delivery of two re-deployable CCTV cameras on behalf of the Town Council which have now been deployed. We are closely monitoring Astral Park for incidents of Anti Social Behaviour.

1.3 Street drinkers in Leighton Linslade

The Anti Social Behaviour team have carried out the following work with street drinking issues in Leighton Buzzard during the period December 2015 to current.

CPN warnings – 6

CPN – 3

Breach of CPN – 2

Injunction – 2

PSG – 3

Fixed Penalty Notice - 1

Deployment of CCTV camera near North Street - 1

Many of the street drinkers are associated with the Black Horse. As the drinkers have nothing to do or anywhere to go throughout the day, they congregate in town. CBC continues to take Legal action but this is not the entire solution as they are either moving to somewhere else or continuing to breach. Nevertheless we have had fewer complaints about the street drinkers that have had some form of action against them.

The ASB team will continue to work in conjunction with the Police and take enforcement action as necessary if we have the appropriate evidence against them. Assistance has been sought from the alcohol services but resources limit what outreach they can do. To bring about any significant change would require intensive use of personnel/resources that are just not available at the present time. Legal are looking into an overarching Injunction to target this problem.

1.4 Update from Trading Standards/Licensing

CBC are putting together a prosecution case for persistent underage selling following an interview (under caution) with a Leighton Buzzard premises licence holder.

2. BUSINESS AND INVESTMENT UPDATE

2.1 Business support

Leighton Buzzard Business Networking Event - 2017

This is the fifth time we are looking to hold this event and working with the Town Council, Membership organisations and Network groups to plan for the next event in April 2017.

Leighton Buzzard Business Collective Group

Businesses met on 3 November and Jason Longhurst, Director of Regeneration & Business, Central Bedfordshire Council gave an update on the plans and developments for the area, which included:

- latest on a 'full service' hotel that will incorporate conference facilities
- update on the Central Bedfordshire College new Engineering and Construction Skills Centre on Chartmoor Road
- update on longer term plans for the area

There have been many business enquiries relating to start-ups, looking for commercial property, funding support, taking on apprenticeships and potential growth plans.

There have been 2 Business TimeBank sessions held in the last few months on Intellectual property and product compliance

Strategic Accounts

- Peli Biothermal – Business Support team met with the Finance Director and Operations Manager to discuss how Central Bedfordshire Council can support their business. Peli Biothermal are going from strength to strength. The business has expressed an interest in Apprenticeships, following a discussion regarding the Apprenticeship Levy and will be looking to work with the Business Support team further as and when they require assistance.

2.2 Inward Investment

The Business Investment team have managed 137 enquiries since April 2016, this is 91% of the annual target. There has been a significant increase in enquires received through the online BeCentralBedfordshire.co.uk investment portal.

Following Maritime Transports moved into Leighton Buzzard (reported last quarter) Soken Engineering has relocated to the town. Soken is a family firm expanding from

just outside the area. They have further expansion plans and received a CBC Business Growth Fund grant of just under £4k to offset their initial business rates. Our total number of Inward Investment enquiries since April is 137 which is 91% of our target.

Be Central Bedfordshire website (www.becentralbedfordshire.co.uk) continues to attract interest from potential investors with 7000 visits to the site and 750 property searches since 1st April 2016, with Leighton Linlade featuring prominently. The team have launched Twitter and Linked In accounts to further attract website traffic @BeCentralBeds, <https://www.linkedin.com/company/becentralbeds>

The Business Investment team attended MIPIM UK in October – a significant annual property event, attended by the most influential players from all sectors of the international property industry. Over 3,000 delegates from 45 countries gathered in London's Olympia with no fewer than five government ministers in attendance, including Gavin Barwell, Minister for Housing, Planning and London.

Be Central Bedfordshire took a stand at the three-day event promoting key developments across Central Bedfordshire, including Dunstable Town Centre regeneration and development opportunities being enabled by the M1- A5 link and land coming forward at Clipstone Park. This year, the team focused on quality enquiries and, as a result, generated 53 leads, all of which are being followed up.

2.3 Business 2 Business Magazine

We have sponsored a page in the October edition of the magazine with a round up of inward investment and business news <http://www.becentralbedfordshire.co.uk/News/2/Be-Central-Bedfordshire-page-features-in-Business-2-Business-magazine>

New Businesses – According to figures supplied by EGi, there have been 4 commercial deals completed in the Leighton-Linslade area since July 2016.

The business types are as follows:

- 1 x Retail
- 2 x Industrial
- 1 x Office

2.4 Employment and Skills

Since the last update, the Council's Bedfordshire Employment & Skills Service (BESS) has awarded a number of new contracts for two academic years and this supplements the training provided by the Council's own Direct Delivery team. The providers deliver a range of employability related training courses which are primarily aimed at unemployed residents, together with number of employed residents who want to improve their skills. There are six providers who deliver a wide variety of courses. These range from short two day 'Step Into' courses for residents who are interested in a new area of work (i.e. warehousing, business administration etc) through to longer accredited courses such as GCSE Maths & English, IT Skills etc.

While the last academic year finished well with BESS fully utilising the available funding, the new academic year has got off to a slow start. This is mostly due to the declining number of unemployed residents across Bedfordshire as a whole.

Amongst the new providers are NOAH Enterprises and Impact Peer Support. These both offer specialist courses which are designed to support residents who maybe homeless, recovering from addictions or have mild to moderate mental health needs. We are hoping to see this provision grow during the year.

For the Leighton Buzzard and Linslade area, our records show we have worked with 58 residents since August 2016. Of these 21 were recorded as being unemployed and looking for work. There were 15 who said they were unemployed and not looking for work and 22 who were already employed and wanting to improve their skills further. To date eight residents have progressed into further training or voluntary work.

The Council currently funds Work Clubs (which are organised by Voluntary Community Action, South Beds) to provide a first point of contact to unemployed residents who are seeking employment. Advisors from the National Careers Service are also involved to give individual and tailored advice about specific careers and general information.

2.5 High Street Vacancy Levels

Town centre vacancies % in Central Bedfordshire, August 2015 – August 2016

Town	Aug 15	Nov 15	Feb 16	May 16	Aug 16
Amphill	0	2.2	2.2	0	1.1
Arlesey	6.7	6.7	6.7	6.7	6.7
Biggleswade	2.8	3.5	6.9	7.6	6.9
Dunstable	18.8	17.7	17.7	18.8	15.4
Flitwick	2.6	2.6	2.6	0	0
Houghton Regis	7.1	3.6	3.4	3.4	3.4
Leighton Buzzard	2	3.4	5.4	6.9	6.4
Sandy	6.1	4.5	4.5	6	4.5
Shefford	0	2.5	2.5	2.5	2.5
Stotfold	0	5.6	5.6	5.6	5.6
Average vacancy rate	4.6%	5.23%	5.75%	5.75%	5.25%

Source: Central Bedfordshire Council

2.6 Update on Leighton-Linslade Regeneration

Market Intelligence

Central Bedfordshire commissioned GVA to conduct a Market Intelligence Study toward the end of this summer. The commission included a town centre health check, market research on town centre retail/leisure demand/supply and recommendations for Land South of High Street opportunity.

In addition to the Market Intelligence Report we have also been undertaking our own research to help inform the approach to securing suitable investment and development in Leighton-Linslade Town Centre.

We will issue the Partnership Committee a summary report in advance of the meeting on 1 December 2016.

Market Town Regeneration Fund and High Street Improvement Scheme (HSIS)

Central Bedfordshire continues to support Leighton-Linslade Town Council with implementing measures to increase the vitality and viability of the town centre. Applications from prominent shop owners have been received for HSIS. An architect and retail consultant is working with the applicants to work up designs that will help both the businesses and the image of the high street.

Regeneration Delivery Plan

Our ambitions for the regeneration of Leighton-Linslade remains the same, to create an aspirational destination, aimed at building on the town's strong and vibrant market town heritage. Central Bedfordshire is producing a Regeneration Delivery Plan, which includes a number of measures to help support sustainable growth in Leighton-Linslade and ensure the longevity of the town centre's success. Such measures will include the development opportunity at Land South of High Street, town centre parking and high street enhancements. There will be a period of consultation and engagement in order for people to provide feedback. We anticipate that the Delivery Plan will be available from early 2017.

3 LEISURE, LIBRARIES & COUNTRYSIDE

3.1 LEIGHTON BUZZARD LIBRARY AND THEATRE

Library Service Opening Hours review

The opening hours consultation closed on Monday 5 September. There was an excellent response; over 1,000 residents took part. Comments and suggestions from the public are now being reviewed. Any changes to opening hours will be implemented in the new financial year, following a staff consultation.

Looking back

Building works are finally complete and the building now benefits from the installation of energy saving lighting, air handling units and a new ceiling grid. This has been hugely beneficial to the overall appearance of the internal space of the building, offering a light and airy welcome to our visitors.

Throughout the works the building remained open to all customers and staff were able to continue to provide the level of service our customers expect.

Over the summer the library delivered the annual Summer Reading Challenge with the valuable help of 17 young volunteers recruited from the local community. All the staff were impressed with the level of commitment our volunteers showed this year and it has given us an opportunity to develop activities that are of interest to young people who access the library and theatre.

The Library Stitchers group took part in Anglia in Bloom and produced a lovely display to celebrate Beatrix Potter's birthday.

We have recently had an upgrade of our public network machines and customers are noticing the difference with the speed of downloads and efficiency of the system. Clients of the job club that runs on a weekly basis are benefiting from our improved service.

Looking forward

With winter approaching we have a full programme in the Theatre with Panto Snow White headlining our post Christmas events. We continue our very popular National Theatre screenings, film programme, comedy nights and live music.

One of the local upper schools has been able to benefit from a group visit to the library to learn about, and use, our Access to Research on-line facility available in all CBC libraries. Staff will be visiting the school to provide further information on all our on-line resources available to support study and research.

We are increasing our many activities and have recently started a stamp club and an adult colouring club. Over the coming weeks we hope to start Scrabble and board game afternoons.

The Library and Theatre will be attending the Arts Forum event at Astral Park this month to promote the services and events provided by the Library and Theatre.

3.2 ACTIVE LIFESTYLES

This is a busy time for the Friends of Tiddenfoot Waterside Park (TWP) and Linslade Wood, as they continue with their winter work events, that include hedge laying, tree thinning, ongoing works regarding the 'Acid' grassland restoration.

Both sites have retained the 'Community' green flag awards, and currently working on submitting for next years applications for 'Full' site judging.

We are working on doing some 'Tree Planting' in TWP this winter – starting by replacing the reduced poplars along the canal corridor, we are currently working a phased reduction / removal of trees to establish new open areas for future tree planting – the existing trees have started to reach their end of life time and we have experienced a few trees that have fallen across the canal, that have actually closed the canal for a couple of weeks in the past.

We are working with UK Power network regarding fitting of new conductors on the two overhead pylons within TWP, we may have to close some parts of the circular path around the site, although we continue to negotiate to minimise any potential disruption to the park users.

We have been working with Greensands Trust, LLTC and the Environment Agency (EA) in developing the River Regeneration project along the River Ouzel around the town centre – installing deflectors in to the river to divert water flow – to remove build up of silt, creating fish habitat holding areas, increase light levels to the water area

with the hope to create further biodiversity of the river and develop its appearance as a feature of the town for residents and visitors.

3.3 Rushmere Country Park

Looking Back

The official launch of the Kings Wood and Rushmere National Nature Reserve on 12 July celebrated the extension of the NNR onto a large area of the Park, including the SSSI (Site of Special Scientific Interest) areas of Bakers Wood, Rammamere Meadow and Shire Oak Heath, as well as the Stockgrove Parkland, Lords Hill and the southern half of Oak Wood. The NNR designation does not provide any additional protection to the Park, but is recognition of the management that has been carried out to conserve and enhance the habitats and wildlife of the park. The NNR extension includes all the heathland restoration areas, and the heather regeneration on Lords Hill has been exceptional this year with large swathes in flower in late summer. Plans are also being finalised for the conifer removal in Oak Wood this winter to encourage further heathland and mixed woodland restoration.

Sky TV's Wild Things were back in the summer to film another series. The game show features four teams of two people (relatives or couples) completing challenges on a woodland obstacle course and is filmed in the park.

The period, from July to September 2016, has seen the education team engage with 135 young people in the park (this period includes the school summer holidays). Work included leading outdoor evening sessions with local groups of Rainbows, Brownies, schools and young people's activities including sensory games, trail exploration, nature walks, bug hunting and den building. The groups have travelled to the park from Bletchley, Leighton Linlade and Toddington. The last of our regular ongoing sessions with year 1 pupils from Milton Keynes this year, covered one half term topic learning about the animals of Rushmere through associated stories in nature.

All three days of the "Big Summer Weekend" of fund-raising events at Rushmere 12-14 August were successful and very well attended with figures up on last year, justifying the small promotional spend used. Figures suggest 2,833 people came to the Sunday Summer Fayre with 5,574 visitors over the whole weekend.

The Bug Lab 2016 summer events also saw a rise in visitor numbers across all sites with the Rushmere event particularly busy with over 200 participants.

Other events that took place over the summer and were all fully booked included Wild Night Out, The Camera and Nature Tree Top Talk, Evening of jazz, soul and blues.

In addition to the above the park supported a number of other events including a summer ball; birthday parties; hosted a number of external events such as Xplorer (family based orienteering), Rambler & horse-riding events

A weekly Park Run continues to be successful and celebrated its first anniversary on 5 November. Average number of runners per event in the previous quarter was 148, supported with an average of 16 volunteers per week.

Looking Forward

Upcoming events include.

- Knit & Natter - Every first Tuesday of the month.
- Feed the Birds - 23rd October, 11am – 3pm.

- Vintage Lounge Jazz and Blues with Alison Carter @ Tree Tops Cafe - Friday 18th November. 19:00 to 22:30
- 1940s music from Fiona Harrison - Friday 25th November. Doors open 7pm
- Fairy Fun Event 26th November. SOLD OUT
- Christmas Fayre, Sunday 4th December, 11am – 3pm. Entrance to the event is free!

Christmas Trees for Sale

1st December till 20th December. 10.00am - 16:00



Come along to Herons View Visitor Centre and pick your Christmas tree from a large selection of fresh Fir's and Spruce trees, many of which are grown at Rushmere. All proceeds go to support the Park.

Pick Your Own Christmas tree - Saturday 10th December. 10.00am - 16:00 - Visit Rushmere's Christmas Tree plantation to pick your own special Christmas tree.

3.4 TIDDENFOOT LEISURE CENTRE

Claire Byles has joined the CBC team as Leisure Contracts Manager.

We are working with the leisure operator to improve the main wet changing area through a capital investment programme which will look to upgrade some areas to improve the appearance, functionality and flooring. We are currently looking at a number of options, but Central Bedfordshire Council is committed to this investment to improve and enhance the leisure centre.

Preparations are in hand for the 50+ group Christmas party where we are expecting over 100 guests.

In the New Year we will be offering customers the opportunity to join regular Health Walks setting out from the leisure centre. This will be a great opportunity to meet new people, get some exercise and enjoy the local area. Afterwards there will be the opportunity to socialise over a cup of tea or coffee.

The crèche at Tiddenfoot is very well attended and we have opened up the whole of the lower studio to offer more space for activities for the children, the site are looking to invest in more equipment and also how it can expand on the number of crèche places it offers.

The operators are working with Badminton England to improve the Badminton offer. 'No strings' badminton works very well at Tiddenfoot, with an average of 250 participants per month. We are hoping to expand this by offering an additional session together with sessions for children/ families.

4 HIGHWAYS AND TRANSPORTATION

4.1 Salting and gritting - winter road gritting

Between October and March each year Central Bedfordshire Council are on full alert and working hard to keep you on the move.

We spread grit, or more accurately, salt, on roads when freezing is forecast and when roads are damp to melt and prevent ice. We try to do salting before the

morning and after the evening traffic peaks, but we work around the clock in bad weather.

We salt just under half of the roads in Central Bedfordshire. Roads carrying the highest volumes, with the greatest risk of accidents or providing key access are given priority.

Priority 0 gritting routes

Roads we will treat in the rare event that resources are not available for treating priority 1 networks. It includes A and B class carriageways, roads serving Upper and Middle schools and the emergency services.

Priority 1 gritting routes

Priority 1 includes all A and B class roads, most C class roads, some UC class roads, busy peak commuter routes, main peak hour bus routes, routes to fire stations, ambulance stations, hospitals, most school bus routes, roads past all Middle and Upper schools.

4.2 Free Salt Bag Scheme

The free salt bag scheme we have run for the last few years will be repeated again this winter. Either one 1 tonne or a ½ tonne bag of road de-icing salt, is available free of charge, to any town or parish council that requests one in one, two or all of the months of December, January and February if your council wishes.

Deliveries for each month will be on Wednesday 14th December, Wednesday 18th January and Wednesday 23rd February. Once the salt has been delivered we will have no further responsibility for it, or its use. Each bag will need to be kept on private land and each town or parish council will take responsibility for the salt which can be spread by local volunteers on minor roads and pavements that are not covered by our gritting routes.

This scheme gives town and parish councillors the opportunity to take responsibility for bags and identify local community volunteers to help spread the salt. If parishes are worried about the implications of doing this, you can find out more on clearing snow and ice safely and effectively by visiting the snow code page on the gov.uk website: <https://www.gov.uk/clear-snow-road-path-cycleway>.

If parishes would like to receive a ½ or 1 tonne bag of salt on each or any of the aforementioned dates they must email Martin Freeman by;

Friday 2nd December (for the 14th December delivery)

Friday 7th January (for the 18th January delivery)

Friday 11th February (for the 23rd February delivery)

Martin can be contacted by email at martin.freeman@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk. Unfortunately, if you contact him after these dates for the particular delivery month, then we will not be able to process this.

4.3 Parking and enforcement

Following the presentation by Jeanette Keyte, Head of Community Safety, Parking and Programme, at the last meeting of the committee, issues were raised about incorrect signage and markings making it difficult to enforce parking restrictions. The following list of works have been commissioned.

Leighton Buzzard/Linslade and surrounding areas

Birds Hill Heath & Reach outside Co-Op and hse no 27. All L/W bays and Zig Zag markings need repainting

Bassett Rd L/Buzzard opp hse no 19 l.post no's 4&2 SYL signs need replacing

North St L/Buzzard Outside Ocean Fish bar. DYL needs repainting

Church Rd Linslade. Opp hse no 2 SYL has been blacked out, needs repainting

Church Rd Linslade. Opp The Hunt Lodge/near l.post no 3. SYL has a large gap/ been blacked out, needs repainting

Church Rd Linslade. L/W bay signs missing Opp Hse 3a, opp Hse 4 and opp Rochester mews

New Rd Linslade. No L/W bay signs outside hse 27-29 and outside the White Horse Pub

Waterlow Rd Linslade. Outside hse 48-50. needs sign for SYL

High St L/Buzzard. Outside Wilkinson's. needs signage for D/B bays and Loading only bays

High St L/Buzzard. Outside dry cleaners, needs signage for D/B bays

Rock Lane Linslade. SYL sign missing o/s hse 41/l.post 6 and SYL needs repainting from o/s hse 35 to hse 43 and from hse 2 to St sign

Bunkers Lane Linslade time plate missing from l/post no 8

Grange Close Linslade SYL time plate needed near hse no 48

L/W: Limited Waiting Bay

SYL: Single Yellow Line

DYL: Double Yellow Line

D/B: Disabled Bay

Over the last three months:

- 766 PCNs issued in Leighton Buzzard and 205 PCN's in Leighton Linslade.
- 1196 Visits from officers in Leighton Buzzard and 594 in Leighton Linslade.
- Brand new parking system refit for multi storey including the latest automatic number plate recognition (ANPR) technology procured and to be implemented in January.
- Hockliffe being refitted and converted in to a pay on foot car park including the latest automatic number plate recognition (ANPR) technology to be implemented in January.

Key highlights:

- Procurement of new technology.

Key issues:

- Sign and line issues that have been prioritised and are being resolved (order has been placed and agreed see table above).
- We are looking to recruit further CEO's which will lead to increased patrols in both Leighton Buzzard and Leighton Linslade.

Key Priorities over the next 3 months:

- West street Multi Storey refit with the latest automatic number plate recognition (ANPR) technology to be implemented in January.
- Hockliffe St Car Park conversion in to a pay on foot car park including ANPR technology to be implemented in January.
- Replace or reline the priority lines and signs across Leighton Linslade and Leighton Buzzard as part of a replacement program.
- Development of an improved schools enforcement program.

Key messages:

- There may be slight disruption to services when the new technology is installed at Hockliffe Street car park and West Street MSCP however this will be managed through forward planning.

5. YOUTH SUPPORT SERVICES

5.1 Changes in DfE statutory guidance for local authorities (Sept 2016)

The law requires all young people in England to continue in education or training until at least their 18th birthday, although in practice the vast majority of young people continue until the end of the academic year in which they turn 18. Local authorities have a duty to track the destinations of all 16 and 17 year olds in their area with a view to ensuring that they engage in some form of education or training. From September there is no longer a requirement to track young people aged 18 (school year 14) or older. This will have a direct affect on what is tracked and reported by the service. The number of NEET young people will decrease as 18 year olds (school year 14) will no longer be counted. Therefore, care should be taken when comparing values on previous reports.

5.2 Update on NEET – Central Bedfordshire

The levels of young people Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET) still remain low within the Central Bedfordshire area. Out of the total Central Bedfordshire cohort of 5758 young people aged 16 and 17 reported at the end of October 2016, there were 124 (2.2%) reported to have a NEET status and 4627 (80.4%) reported as being in Education, Employment or Training (EET).

The total proportion of young people (school years 12-13) 'In Learning' for year 12 and 13 reported at the end of October was 79.3%.

A total of 1006 (17.9%) young people whose current situation is 'Not Known' exist. This is to be expected at this time of year, as we are currently conducting the Annual Activity Survey where the destinations of all year 12s and year 13s are being confirmed.

Current NEET Overview for Leighton Buzzard

The start of the school/college year normally creates an increase in the NEET and 'Unknown' numbers due to young people moving between destinations. The current overall percentage of the Leighton Buzzard population aged 16 and 17 (school years 12 and 13) reported as having a NEET destination is 2.6%. A NEET status is linked to 22 young people within the area's cohort.

Characteristics of the current NEET Group in Leighton Buzzard:

The following information provides an overview of the characteristics of the current NEET group in relation to:

- **Area:** The ward with the highest recorded NEET number of 11 (50% of the area's NEET group) is Leighton Buzzard North. The Leighton Buzzard South ward has the lowest number and as of Mid-November has only 3 young people with a NEET status (14% of the area's NEET group).
- **Gender:** The gender breakdown shows that there is currently a 2:1 split between the genders (68% Male : 32% Female). The number of females who are NEET has decreased from previous months partly because a large proportion of the female NEETs last year were in the upper age group.
- **Age:** The values reflect the transition of young people leaving compulsory schooling at the end of year 11 and those not continuing with their studies after year 12.
- **NEET Status:** The number of young people within the Leighton Buzzard NEET cohort currently available to the labour market and actively seeking Employment, Education or Training (EET) is 18 (81.9%) compared to 4 (18.2%) who are currently not available for EET due to their personal circumstances (e.g. Illness, pregnancy, etc.). This figure may alter in the coming months as the destinations of those young people who are currently 'Unknown' are confirmed.
- **Time:** 11 young people within the NEET group have been recorded as being NEET for less than 3 months which reflects the number still in transition from year 11 who have no fixed destination in a school, college or training provision.
- **Unknown Destinations:** 123 (14.2% of the area cohort) young people have a recorded destination of 'Unknown'. Included within these were 109 that were transitioning from year 11 and as yet have no confirmed destination. 31 young people could not be contacted using the information held by the service.

The following table gives a break down of the NEETs recorded as living within the area as of Mid November followed by a comparison with the two other areas of Dunstable and Houghton Regis.

Ward	Year Cohort	12-14 NEET	%
Leighton Buzzard North	301	11	(3.7%)
Leighton Buzzard South	249	3	(1.3%)
Linslade	234	4	(1.8%)
Heath and Reach	87	4	(4.6%)

Headline Figures		
Total YPs in area	871	
EET	695	(79.8%)
NEET	22	(2.6%)
Unknown	154	(17.7%)

The next group of tables enables a comparison to be made of the NEET characteristics for the Dunstable, Houghton Regis and Leighton Buzzard areas. The percentages allow comparisons to be made against each area's total NEET population.

Total number of NEETs within each area	Dunstable	Houghton Regis	Leighton Buzzard
	22 (2.7%)	10 (2.3%)	22 (2.6%)

Gender	Dunstable	Houghton Regis	Leighton Buzzard
Male	10 (45.5%)	6 (60%)	15 (68.2%)
Female	12 (54.6%)	4 (40%)	7 (31.9%)

Actual Age (Year 12 & 13)	Dunstable	Houghton Regis	Leighton Buzzard
16	9 (41%)	2 (20%)	7 (31.9%)
17	10 (45.5%)	6 (60%)	13 (59.1%)
18	3 (13.7%)	2 (20%)	2 (9.1%)

Length of Time NEET	Dunstable	Houghton Regis	Leighton Buzzard
Less than 3 months	15 (68.2%)	5 (50%)	11 (50%)
3 - 6 months	4 (18.2%)	2 (20%)	6 (27.3%)
6+ months	3 (13.7%)	3 (30%)	5 (22.8%)

NEETs Available to Work	Dunstable	Houghton Regis	Leighton Buzzard
Seeking Employment or Training	14 (63.7%)	8 (80%)	18 (81.9%)

NEETs Unavailable to Work	Dunstable	Houghton Regis	Leighton Buzzard
Due to Personal Circumstances	8 (36.4%)	2 (20%)	4 (18.2%)

The following table shows the number of young people who have had their destination recorded as 'Unknown'.

Unknown Destinations	Dunstable	Houghton Regis	Leighton Buzzard
Refused Information	0 (0%)	1 (0.3%)	0 (0%)
Cannot be Contacted	18 (2.2%)	17 (3.8%)	31 (3.6%)
Unknown / Left Area	46 (5.5%)	32 (7.1%)	123 (14.2%)

5.3 Next Steps

The Annual Activity Survey takes place between September and January to confirm the current destination of young people in years 12 and 13. This will help to identify any new young people who are NEET.

A new 'Leavers' process has been put in place with schools to ensure the Youth Support Service is notified of sixth form pupils who leave school before completing their course.

6 SCHOOLS

6.1 New School Places for Leighton Buzzard & Linslade

Leighton Middle School is currently being expanded from a 4 form of entry, 480 place middle school for pupils aged 9 to 13 to a 5 form of entry (600 place) middle school.

Temporary accommodation is on site to provide the extra children who joined Leighton Middle School in September with the classrooms required due to a delay on site. Some new facilities were however completed on time and are now in daily use including the new art room and the main part of the new dining room.

Council officers and the school's leadership team continue to work with the contractor to ensure a successful, swift and satisfactory conclusion to the project and a revised completion date of the beginning of April 2017 has been agreed. This revised date will give the school time to ready the new classrooms and ensure that furniture and other facilities are in place ahead of the start of the summer term so that classes can begin to move into the new block at that point.

We continue to monitor housing development in the area and the timing of new school places required as a result.

6.2 School Admissions

Across Central Bedfordshire 97% of parents of children transferring to upper school in September 2017 made their application on time and these are currently being processed by the School Admissions Team. Parents will be notified of which school their child is offered a place at on 1 March 2017 (national secondary offer day).

Parents of children starting school (Reception Year) or transferring to middle school for September 2017 have until 15 January 2017 to make their application to the School Admissions Team. Applications will then be processed and parents will be notified of which school they will be attending on the national primary offer day (18 April 2017).

7. PARTNERSHIPS AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

7.1 Town and Parish Council Conference

The latest Town and Parish Council Conference was held on Tuesday 22 November, at Priory House, Chicksands.

The theme for the event was 'Creating Stronger Communities' and included a presentation from Cllr Tony Morris, Vice Chairman of the Partnership committee. The post conference report will be available on our website shortly.

7.2 My Central Bedfordshire

The council has recently launched My Central Bedfordshire – an online tool that allows customers to access tailored information about their area quickly and easily.

By simply entering their postcode people can search for a range of services and information that includes who their local councillors are, nearest planning applications, schools, recycling, health and emergency services. The new system builds on our current Geographic Information Systems (GIS) and online mapping tool and 'Find My Nearest' applications.

Over time it will expand to include more and more council services and customer focused information.

You can find My Central Bedfordshire here: <http://my.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/>

7.3 Cheering Volunteering 2017

Nominations for Cheering Volunteering 2017 will open in January 2017. The annual awards and celebration event will be held at the Grove theatre on Tuesday 6 June.

8. WASTE

8.1 Looking back

We have exchanged several litter bins for the Town Council, replacing rusty bins with the new "recycle on the go" bins. We have also installed several new litter and dog waste bins in locations requested by members of the public, eg Appenine Way.

Key highlights:

We helped the Town Council clear the route of litter, weeds, etc, for the Anglian in Bloom competition and are working with the Town Council to tackle graffiti in and around the town.

Key issues:

Dog warden patrols for dog fouling have been carried out in: Appenine Way, Bassett Road, Billington Road, Billington Road Recreation Ground, Brookland Walk, Henry Smith Playing Field Brook End, King Street, Oakley Green, Queen Street, Redhouse Court, Stanbridge Road and Vandyke Road.

8.2 Looking forward

Bin collection arrangements over the Christmas period have been finalised and there will be minimal disruption with only one week of collections being affected. Residents will also be able to recycle their real Christmas trees at the kerbside during the week of 9 January 2017 or they can take it to their Household Waste Recycling Centre. Full details of Christmas and New Year collections and HWRC opening times will be on a bin tag received by residents in mid-November, and this will also be widely publicised via the Council website and social media.

The kerbside garden waste collection service will be suspended during December, January and February. This will be publicised widely, including via the Christmas bin tag. Full details of both collections and garden waste suspension are given below.

However, the temporary garden waste site at Vandyke School will operate for a further two Sundays only, on Sunday 4 and Sunday 11 December. As before the site will operate between 9am and 5pm. Permits relating to vehicles and trailers will still be in operation. Prior to both these dates the kerbside garden waste collection will still be in operation.

Refuse and Recycling Collections over 2016/17 Christmas and New Year:

<u>Scheduled collection</u>	<u>Revised collection</u>
Monday 26 December	Tuesday 27 December
Tuesday 27 December	Wednesday 28 December
Wednesday 28 December	Thursday 29 December
Thursday 29 December	Friday 30 December
Friday 30 December	Saturday 31 December

Recycling and domestic waste collections will resume as normal from Monday 2 January 2017.

Residents may recycle their real Christmas trees by leaving the tree **next** to their bin on their normal collection day during the week commencing Monday 9 January 2017. Please ensure it is placed separately, not in any bin or bag. No other garden waste will be accepted. Trees should be no taller than 5ft with trunks no greater than 3 inches in diameter. Alternatively it can be recycled at a local Household Waste Recycling Centre.

All kerbside garden waste collections will be suspended between Monday 5 December 2016 and Friday 24 February 2017.

Central Bedfordshire Household Waste Recycling Centres* are open:

Monday to Sunday 9am-5pm, except Christmas Eve: 9am-1pm and New Year's Eve: 9am-1pm.

Closed: Christmas Day, Boxing Day and New Year's Day.

*The Leighton Buzzard HWRC site remains closed for redevelopment throughout this period.