

October 2024 to March 2025





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About The Higgins Art Gallery and Museum, Bedford

We are a Bedford Borough Council cultural service that showcases wonderful and varied collections of fine and decorative arts and changing exhibitions drawn from the nationally significant collection of British watercolours, drawings and prints. Displays of archaeology, social history and ethnography demonstrate how Bedfordshire has developed over time. These collections inspire a programme of temporary exhibitions, active learning and events.

In our permanent collection spaces you can:

- tour the 1840s house built by the Higgins family next to their brewery. Uncover family stories and Cecil Higgins' collection of internationally important glass and ceramics
- explore the biggest collection of painted furniture created by William Burges, the leading Gothic Revival architect and designer of the 1800s
- admire the decorative artwork and techniques of the most influential designers from over four centuries including fine glassware, textiles, enamels and metalwork
- study the Edward Bawden archive, the collection of one of the most influential artists of his generation. Discover the work of this versatile artist in changing exhibitions
- uncover the geology of Bedfordshire and discover how people from the Stone Age to Medieval times lived in and shaped the landscape we see today
- follow the development of the local area through agriculture, engineering and the brickworks, airships at Cardington, the Second World War and technological advances
- enjoy changing displays about local people who have influenced the story of Bedfordshire
- take a glimpse into the world of The Collectors and cases of natural history, ethnographic and archaeological items from near and far.

For the latest information about temporary exhibitions and events visit: www.thehigginsbedford.org.uk

EXHIBITIONS

Community Portrait Exhibition

28 September – 23 February

Sir William Harpur Gallery – Free Entry

In partnership with Bedford Creative Arts and Fuji film



The Community Portrait exhibition explores the history of photography from 1840s glass-plate techniques, through to current digital techniques and onwards towards a potential future involving AI. The exhibition features images taken by local school-age children, Bedford College students, community groups and professional photographers.

Co-produced

by Bedford Creative Arts, in partnership with Fujifilm, it showcases the Bedford community through their own portraits, whilst inviting the viewer to reflect on the art of image-making through the decades and beyond.

This project is supported by Arts Council England, The Wixamtree Trust, The Steel Charitable Trust and sponsored by Fujifilm.

Peter Brathwaite – Rediscovering Black Portraiture

Continues until 2 February 2025– Free Entry



Peter Brathwaite's restaged version of The Virgin of Guadalupe, and the original artwork, right. Anon, 'The Virgin of Guadalupe'. Oil painting, 1745. Wellcome Collection. Attribution-Non Commercial 4.0 International (CC BY-NC 4.0) / Cropped from original and colour saturated.

During the first lockdown in 2020, with all his performances cancelled, local baritone, artist, broadcaster and writer Peter Brathwaite began researching and reimagining more than 100 artworks. These

artworks featured portraits of black sitters, as part of the online #GettyMuseumChallenge to use household objects to restage famous paintings. He called the photographic series *Rediscovering Black Portraiture*.

Brathwaite's exhibition features a collection of his most fascinating images. His works emphasise issues of power, privilege, and identity, as well as the absence or marginalisation of black individuals in European art.

In Conversation with Peter Brathwaite and Dr Lucy Peltz

21 November, 6.30 – 8.30pm

£6.85, Concessions £5.50 Booking Essential

The artist and singer talks to Dr Lucy Peltz, Head of Collection Displays (Tudor to Regency) and Senior Curator 18th Century Collections from the National Portrait Gallery about the exhibition and *Rediscovering Black Portraiture*. There will be time in the evening to see the exhibition.

Edward Bawden and Me

continues until 26 January

Wixamtree Gallery – Free Entry



The Gnat and the Lion, 1970 by Edward Bawden ©The Estate of Edward Bawden

Some of the biggest names in British art, illustration, ceramics and textiles come together in this eclectic exhibition to celebrate the work of printmaker, illustrator, watercolourist and designer Edward Bawden (1903–89).

Edward Bawden & Me is curated by Bawden's good friend, the illustrator and printmaker Chris Brown, who invited a diverse group of thirty artists and makers to respond to works by Edward Bawden in The Higgins Bedford collection. These include Lulu Guinness, Mark Hearld, Vicky Lindo & Bill Brookes, John Broadley, Rob Ryan and John Lawrence. The exhibition features their artistic response, alongside the Bawden work that inspired it.

The range of artists makes Edward Bawden & Me a stunning and fascinating retrospective that celebrates the work of one of Britain's most inventive and influential artists.

Fig Rolls and Coffee Mate - Talk by Chris Brown

4 December, 12 – 1pm

£6.85, concessions £5.50 – Booking Essential

Chris Brown's first contact with Edward Bawden's work was as a child looking at his illustrations for Andrew Lang's book 'Tales of Troy and Greece'. Twenty years later his tutor at the Royal College of Art arranged for them to meet and so started a lifelong friendship. In this talk Chris, curator of Edward Bawden & Me, will talk about their time together and Bawden's influence on his work.



When the Lion and Unicorn
went on Holiday, 2018
by Chris Brown

Edward Bawden & Me Exhibition Tours

16 October, 22 November, 17 January,

12 – 1pm £6.85, concessions £5.50

– Booking Essential

Join the Keeper of Fine and Decorative Art for a half hour tour of some of the highlights of Edward Bawden & Me.



Long Live Great Bardfield,
2023 by Sussex Lustreware

Edward Bawden Archive Sessions

22 October, 26 November, 10am - 11.30am

£12.90, concessions £10.35 – Booking Essential



Edward Bawden in his Studio,
image commissioned by
Braintree and Witham Times.

This session is the perfect opportunity for Bawden fans and those new to the subject to have an up-close look at the extensive Edward Bawden collection. Works from the collection, including some that have never been on display before, as well as old favourites, will be introduced by The Keeper of Fine and Decorative Art.

Edward Bawden & Me – The Cat Tour

15 November, 12 - 12.30pm

£3.50, concessions £2.95 – Booking Essential



Play with Me, 1981 by Edward Bawden
©The Estate of Edward Bawden

The Keeper of Fine and Decorative Art has been finding it increasingly hard to not just focus on all the cats in the exhibition in her tours so for half an hour that's all she is going to talk about! Cats include Jonny Hannah's boxing cats, Chris Corr's dreaming cat, Sheila

Robinson's tabby cat and of course a clowder of Edward Bawden's cats.

Rag Rug workshop

25 October, 11.15am – 3pm (with a break for lunch)

£10 – Booking Essential



Hare and Tortoise Rag Rug,
2023 by Lu Mason

Join renowned rag rug artist Lu Mason for this special rag rug workshop. Lu will be showing us how she made her two beautiful rugs in the Edward Bawden & Me exhibition. Techniques shown will be the loopy and clippie method. Hessian and hooks will

be provided, please bring some old fabric and scissors.

Rag Rug Christmas Wreath workshop

22 November, 2pm - 4.30pm

£10 – Booking Essential

Join local artist Anne-Marie Abbate to make a rag rug inspired Christmas wreath. A metal frame, ribbon and some materials will be provided, please bring additional material if required.



To book places on exhibition tours and workshops please call the Box Office on 01234 718044 (open Tues – Sat 10am – 4pm) or go to the website, www.thehigginsbedford.org.uk/Book_Online.

Edward Bawden & Circus of Illustration

continues until March 2025

Edward Bawden Gallery – Free Entry



Eat Your Greens, 2023 by Katie Allen

As part of the Edward Bawden & Me celebrations, we asked the Circus of Illustration, a collective of Bedford based artists, to commission new illustrations inspired by the Edward Bawden Archive. The four committee members and eight up-and-coming artists have each produced a work shown alongside the work by Edward Bawden that inspired it.

The results are a testament

to the artistic talent of Bedford and the influence of Edward Bawden whose generosity has meant Bedford is forever linked with his work.



Play with Me, 2023 by Elly Loughlin

Visitor Survey

We would love to hear from you after your visit. This survey helps us to learn about our audiences and improve The Higgins for everyone. The data collected is non-identifiable, it cannot be traced back to individuals.

To fill in the survey follow this link or use the QR Code.

www.illuminate-data.org.uk/survey/wdddnb



DISPLAYS

Cultural Roots Sound System Museum

Continues until 3 November

Outside Settlement Gallery, ground floor

The Sound System Museum is live at The Higgins Bedford. Cultural Roots Sound System Museum was started in 1979 by a group of friends in Bedford. This equipment provided valuable entertainment to Caribbean households in Bedford, owing to discrimination excluding them from socialising in local bars and clubs. The Sound System Museum has preserved these precious memorabilia and hope it will jog the memories and hearts of yesteryear. Visitors can see first-hand what it takes to build and run a reggae sound system and experience this at special events and workshops, please see our website for further details.



Bedford Car Club Continues until May 2025

Somewhere in England Foyer - Free Entry



This display celebrates the history and heritage of Bedford Car Club. In February 1906 Bedford Automobile Club was founded and in December 1907 were meeting at the Swan Hotel, Bedford High Street. In 1914 the Bedford & District



Motorcycle Club was formed and was meeting at The Lion Hotel. By the 1920s these two clubs had merged and became known as Bedford Motor Club. Members took part in competitions, trials, driving tests, gymkhanas, treasure hunts, dinner dances etc. In 1953 some members broke away to form Bedford Automobile Enthusiasts Club concentrating on the competition aspects. For three decades the two clubs in Bedford co-existed, but in the early 1980s united as Bedford Car Club, going on to great success in various forms of motorsport such as autotests and rallying. During the 2000s club motorsport declined and Bedford Car Club closed in 2023, donating their heritage trophies to The Higgins Bedford, which are shared with visitors in this display.



Mary Anning Rocks

9 November – 23 March

Outside Settlement Gallery – Free Entry



Find out more about the awe-inspiring story of Mary Anning, the pioneering fossil hunter who unearthed marine reptiles and discovered the secrets of Jurassic life. Explore the Jurassic specimens held at The Higgins Bedford in this display curated in partnership with Bedfordshire Geology Group.

Mary Anning Rocks - The Road Trip



The stunning mini-statue, a maquette made by artist Denise Dutton is touring the country and will be at The Higgins Bedford from 9 November to 5 January. This is a great opportunity to see the statue that was unveiled in May 2022 in Mary's home town of Lyme Regis.

Find out more
www.maryanningrocks.co.uk

Image courtesy of Nick Pierpoint

TOURS

Bringing A Group

The Higgins Bedford is the perfect place to bring a group. Join one of our knowledgeable tour guides and discover the history of The Higgins Bedford's outstanding collections. You could also stop for lunch at our onsite café and restaurant or pick up gifts from our beautifully curated shop. If your group is interested in booking a group tour, please email thehiggins@bedford.gov.uk. Please allow a minimum of four weeks' notice for group bookings. Tours are subject to availability during opening hours. **The following tours can be offered for groups of 10-15 people.**

Art Exhibition Tour

A tour of the current art exhibition with the Keeper of Fine and Decorative Art. Time: 30 mins, Cost: £3.50 (Concessions £2.95)

Edward Bawden Exhibition Tour

A tour of the current Edward Bawden exhibition with the Keeper of Fine and Decorative Art. Time: 30 mins, Cost: £3.50 (Concessions £2.95)

Fine and Decorative Art Tour

A tour of the internationally renowned Cecil Higgins Art Gallery Collection. Highlights include the furniture by William Burges, linocuts by Edward Bawden and European porcelain. Time: 1 hour, Cost: £6.85 per person (Concessions £5.50)

The Higgins Tour

The perfect introductory tour of the highlights of The Higgins Bedford. The tour includes collections relating to the history of Bedford as well as some of the fine and decorative art collections. Time: 1 hour, Cost: £6.85 per person (Concessions £5.50)

William Burges Tour

Take a closer look at some of the furniture and objects by the eccentric Gothic designer, William Burges. Time: 30 mins Cost: £3.50 (Concessions £2.95)



William Burges (1827 – 1881), Zodiac Tile – Sagittarius
© Trustees of the Cecil Higgins Art Gallery

Bedfordshire Lace Archive Session

This session explores the rich history of Bedfordshire lace with a chance to view and handle objects not usually on public display.

Time: 1½ hours Cost: £12.90 per person (concessions £10.35)



Bedfordshire Lace Edging,
Rose petal design, Late
19th Century, Lester Lace
Collection, BML68a

Edward Bawden Archive Sessions

This session is the perfect opportunity for Bawden fans and those new to the subject to have a closer look at works from the collection. Time: 1½ hours Cost: £12.90 per person (concessions £10.35)

CURRENT TOURS

Get more from your visit by coming along to one of our tours.

Bedford's Planes, Trains and Automobiles Tour

16 October 11.30–12 noon

£3.50, concessions £2.95

Booking Essential.

Join the Keeper of Social History and explore Bedford's transport heritage including Airship R101, Bedford Times coach, Dan Albone cycle, the coming of the railways and the Adams car.



Adams Mail
Phaeton Car, 1907
© The Higgins Bedford

Fine and Decorative Art Tour

28 November 11.15 – 12.15

£6.85, Concessions £5.50 – Booking Essential

Have you ever wanted to know how the art collections were formed and why they are here in Bedford? All will be explained with a tour of the Cecil Higgins Art Gallery Collection.

The Higgins Highlights Tour

6 February 11.15am – 12.15pm

£6.85, Concessions £5.50 – Booking Essential

Join us for an introductory tour of the highlights of The Higgins Bedford featuring Bedford's heritage.

FRIENDS OF THE HIGGINS BEDFORD

The Friends group was founded in 1988 to support, promote and raise funds for The Higgins Bedford. Over the years, the Friends have been able to support new acquisitions, conservation work, exhibitions and many other projects.



The Friends organise a range of events, including a varied annual lecture programme delivered online and in person, previews of exhibitions, and visits to rarely seen houses and gardens. Becoming a Friend not only supports the museum but offers a range of other benefits, including discounts in the shop, the chance to join visits abroad and access to a catalogue of online talks.

LECTURE PROGRAMME - FREE TO MEMBERS

8 October, 7.30pm, St Andrew's Church Hall

Alison Evans on Dod Procter, the famous early twentieth-century English female artist

15 October, 7.30pm, St Andrew's Church Hall

Boyd and Evans - A Life in Art, a fascinating 60 year story

29 October, 7.30pm, St Andrews Church Hall

Michael Croker, Director of Art, Bedford School

Live Creation - painting a portrait of a member of the audience

12 November, 7.30pm, St Andrew's Church Hall

Dr Giorgia Bottinelli, Director of the Norwich Castle Museum on Catherine Maude Nichols (1847-1923), Making her Mark, the gifted and prolific Norwich artist

Wednesday 27 November 12 noon, The Higgins Bedford

David Boyd Haycock on his new book, Lucy Kemp-Welch 1869-1958: The Life and Work of Lucy Kemp-Welch, Painter of Horses

10 December, 7.30pm, St Andrew's Church Hall
Charlotte White on Casablanca - the best war movie ever made!

14 January, 7.30pm, venue TBA
Patrick Baty on The Paint Detective

31 January, 7.30pm, The Higgins Bedford
Dr Denis McHugh on Bedford and the Raj

11 February, time and venue TBA
Pamela Birch, County Archivist, on John Usher, architect of Bedford

11 March, time and venue TBA
Pamela Birch on Many Mansions, the architectural records of Sir Albert Richardson



Sell and Willshaw's Shop Front, Bedford 1930 by Albert Richardson

Membership of The Friends of The Higgins Bedford for 2024/25 £35 for an individual, £50 for joint membership or £20 for students.

To join visit www.friendsofthehiggins.org or scan the QR code.



Lectures are currently not taking place in The Higgins Bedford lecture room due to building repairs. Information is correct at the time of printing but may change. Please check the website for further details of venues and times plus private visits and special events.

EVENTS

The Higgins Knitting and Crochet Group

15 October, 19 November, 17 December, 21 January,
18 February, 18 March, 11am – 1pm

Free Entry, Booking Essential



This friendly, informal group meets on the third Tuesday of every month to knit and crochet together. They sometimes work on their own projects, but also knit for charities and events throughout the year. To join the group or for more information email gemma.hutton@bedford.gov.uk

Fun Palaces

Saturday 5 October: 11am – 4pm - Free Event

The Higgins Bedford will be joining hundreds of Fun Palaces nationally and internationally to explode with fun free activities for all. Come and join us for a packed museum and art gallery full of creative and fun things to try.



Holocaust Memorial Day

HMD 2025: For a Better Future

Entrance Foyer: 25 Jan – 2 February, Free Entry

This Holocaust Memorial Day (HMD) on 27 January marks the 80th anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz-Birkenau, the largest Nazi concentration camp complex, and the 30th anniversary of the genocide in Bosnia. HMD 2025 is an opportunity to come together, learn from and about the past, and take action to make a better future. The display about the HMD 2025 anniversaries will share responses from our local community. For more information about display and events please see the website or email lydia.saul@bedford.gov.uk.



LGBT+ History Month February 2025

LGBT+ History Month shines a light on LGBT+ history and encourages the community to Claim our Past, Celebrate our Present and Create our Future. Every year Schools OUT encourages us to get involved in LGBT+ History Month to celebrate and 'Usualise' LGBT+ lives in their full diversity. Rainbow Bedfordshire meets regularly and run Queer Craftivism. Come and create your own artwork and join the display in The Higgins Foyer on this year's theme of activism and social change. Celebrate with us on our Festival Day with talks and workshops from local speakers, artists, poets and creatives, see the website for more information, or email lydia.saul@bedford.gov.uk [#SocialActivism](#)

Murder in the Museum

Starting in October 2024

Cardboard Clues is coming to The Higgins Bedford! Don your detective hat for Murder in the Museum, a unique mystery adventure. Search for clues and track 'cardboard' characters throughout the exhibits to piece together their stories and solve the mysteries. Perfect for families and friends, tickets are £25 per team. To book visit www.cardboardclues.com.



Portable Antiquities Scheme

25 September, 27 November, 29 January, 26 March
 1pm - 3pm. Free Entry, Booking Essential

Have you ever found objects whilst digging in the garden, or metal detecting? Would you like to find out more about them? Matt Fittock, the Finds Liaison Officer for the Portable Antiquities Scheme run by the British Museum can help. Email Matthew.Fittock@stalbans.gov.uk to book your place. To find out more visit the website www.finds.org.uk.

REMINISCENCE SESSIONS

Remember When...? Reminiscence Mornings

Thursdays 11am – 12.30pm

Free Entry, Refreshments £1, No Need to Book

Join in with friendly and informal reminiscence coffee mornings. A great way to meet new people, be inspired by memories and stories of the past.

17 October - Home of the 1950s

The post-war boom brought massive changes in the home; it was out with the old and in with the new. Open-plan living and fitted kitchens with brand new appliances were all the rage. Come and share some of your favourite things about the home of the 1950s.

21 November - Photography and Community Portraits

Come and share some of your favourite moments captured on camera and explore some of the objects and themes in our Community Portraits exhibition.

12 December - Rhymes to Remember

Can you recite a poem from memory? Do you have a favourite nursery rhyme or verse that means something special to you? Join us and share your rhymes to remember, along with some advent treats.

Break for January

13 February – Recipes and Remedies

Do you have a family recipe with a 'secret' ingredient? What were the best and worst foods you shared at home and at school? Which special foods had healing qualities? We would love to hear about them.

20 March – Gardening and Allotments

How does your garden grow? There are many private and public gardens that we all enjoy, come and share your favourite plants, flowers, produce and green spaces.

WELLBEING

A great way for local people to improve their physical and mental health while learning new skills and socialising with others. There may be a limited number of spaces available in our sessions. Unfortunately, it may be necessary to cancel sessions at short notice if trainers are not available.

Table Tennis: Every Monday (except Bank Holidays)

11.15 – 12.15 and 12:30pm – 1:30pm, £3 per session
All levels welcome.

Pilates: Every Tuesday

10am – 10:45am, £3
All levels welcome. Bring your own mat.

Mindful Walking

Every Friday,
11am – 12pm,
Free walk with optional
coffee stop afterwards at a local café.



Sketching Station during opening hours

Being creative can help to improve your mental wellbeing. Grab a chair, materials and find a painting or object that you would like to sketch. Materials and paper provided, or bring your own, but no paints please. All levels welcome.

For further details on any of these activities please email thehiggins@bedford.gov.uk

COMING SOON

Colour and Light

Opens 15 February 2025

Wixamtree and Connections Galleries – Free Entry



La Bouée 1894 by Paul Signac, lithograph on paper
©Trustees of the Cecil Higgins Art Gallery

Discover the effects of colour and light on artists in this new exhibition drawn from the internationally renowned Cecil Higgins Art Gallery Collection. The two exhibition rooms will explore colour contrasts, sunshine and lowlight, southern light and eastern inspiration. Works will include sun-drenched watercolours by JMW Turner, ethereal moons by Arthur Rackham and explosions of

colour by Patrick Heron. In the Connections Gallery works from the abstract art collection are shown alongside a new digital art installation produced by artist Alison Goodyear in collaboration with four community groups. Reflecting on the works in the exhibition, together they will create a virtual abstract painting, which will be filmed in Virtual Reality and shown in the gallery as an animated film.

A full colour catalogue by curators Professor Christiana Payne and Dr Mary O'Neill will be available from The Higgins Bedford shop.

Bedfordshire Police: A history

Opens May 2025

Somewhere in England Foyer, First Floor - Free Entry

Come and discover the history of our local Bedfordshire Police forces curated by the Bedfordshire Police Historical and Museum Society. The society is run by volunteers who carry out research and maintain a display at Bedfordshire Police Headquarters. The bulk of the collection is housed at the former Police Station at Kempston, visits by appointment only. The display at The Higgins will highlight objects and their stories collected over the decades.



Ukrainian Folk Art and Heritage Exhibition

5 April 2025 onwards

Outside Settlement Gallery,
Entrance Foyer and Dressing Room

Join us for an exhibition that will be a celebration of the rich cultural heritage of Ukrainian Folk Art, curated by a local Ukrainian artist. It will showcase beautiful hand-crafted textiles, jewellery, woodwork and Petrykivka art. The display will share the history and cultural roots of Ukraine as well as a fun Pysanky egg trail around the galleries.



FAMILY ACTIVITIES

October Half Term

29, 30 and 31 October

11.15am, 12.45pm and 2.15pm

Booking Essential, £5.50

Join local artists and providers for a variety of art and craft creative activities including making a clay pumpkin.



February Half term

18, 19, 20 and 21 February - Booking Essential

Join local artists and providers for a variety of creative activities.

All workshops last for an hour and are suitable for ages 5 to 12. Check our website and social media for up-to-date details on availability and charges for holiday activities.

To book a place on all holiday activities visit the website at www.thehigginsbedford.org.uk/Book_Online or call the Box Office on 01234 718044 (open Tuesday – Saturday 10am – 4pm).

Puggle Club

Creative activities for Early Years (age 5 and under)

4 October, 1 November, 6 December, 3 January, 7 February, 7 March, 10.30 – 12 and 1 – 2.30pm

A chance to get creative, have fun, and socialise!

It's a free drop-in activity, so no need to book. Just pop in any time and stay for as long as you like. Please be aware some activities might not be suitable for children under 36 months. Children must be accompanied by an adult, come and join in the fun.



Sunday Crafternoons

29 September, 27 October, 17 November, 15 December,
5 and 26 January, 23 February, 23 March

Free Drop-In, no need to book, 2-4pm



Monthly creative activities for families to have a go at together and enjoy.

Suitable for under 12s. Children must be accompanied by an adult.

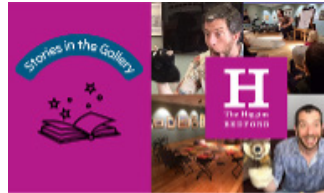
Please be aware that space is limited and there may be a wait to start.

Toby's Tall Tales

Sundays: 6 October, 3 November, 1 December,
19 January, 16 February, 16 March

Free, no need to book, 2.30pm

Join trained actor and teacher Toby in the art gallery on a creative exploration of stories. Toby will engage children with immersive story reading and help children create their own



stories using puppets, drawings, songs and the artwork from the gallery. Ideal for ages up to 7. Children must be accompanied by an adult. Please be aware, space in the gallery is limited and is offered on a first come first served basis.

I Spy with Kevin the Platypus

Kevin the Platypus has been with the museum for well over 100 years and he still loves exploring. Pick up a free 'I Spy' trail and discover awesome objects and amazing art all over the galleries and collections.



SCHOOL VISITS

The art gallery and museum has so much to offer school groups across all key stages and topic areas.

Hands-on, curriculum linked sessions and workshops provide students with opportunities to investigate and learn from real and replica artefacts as well as the fascinating historical objects and world-renowned works of art on display.

All visits by school groups must be booked in advance. We strongly recommend that you contact us to chat about your requirements. Pre-visits are welcome at any time during opening hours.



Self-Led Visits for Schools

Book a visit for your group to explore the galleries and collections at your own pace. We can advise on the best galleries to visit to suit your area of study and have a range of resources including themed trails to support your visit. Admission to The Higgins Bedford is free and self-led visits can be booked for any time during our usual opening hours.

Volunteers Wanted: Could you help to support school visits?

We are looking for volunteers who would like to lead or support our formal learning sessions, school visits and holiday activities. The sessions are fun, creative and hands-on. You would be joining a dedicated, experienced and knowledgeable team. Full training will be provided. With more volunteers we will be able to provide meaningful and memorable sessions to even more school children.



For a volunteer application form and more information contact gemma.hutton@bedford.gov.uk or on 01234 276365.

History and Art Sessions for Schools from less than £3 per pupil



Explore the galleries and investigate local life over thousands of years of human history using real and replica artefacts and costume.

Discover a local

Bronze Age burial, investigate life in Bedford Castle, take part in a Victorian Wash Day, find out about local people, places and events, and much more.

Explore the diverse and world famous art in our collections. Be inspired by the work on display and create your own art.

Exhibition-led and Topic-led workshops are inspired by the themed art exhibitions on display or objects that link to cross-curricular topics and use a range of media to encourage creativity and imagination. We can usually find links to most cross-curricular topics.

Art with Local Artists – Workshops for Schools

We work with a range of local artists and crafters and can arrange workshops at The Higgins led by specialists in areas that include printing, clay and lace-making. Charges vary according to workshop and provider.

Please email thehiggins@bedford.gov.uk to discuss your curriculum needs or for further information on booking and charges for school groups.

VISIT US

Booking

If you are required to book for an event please visit the booking section of our website www.thehigginsbedford.org.uk/Book_Online or telephone the Box Office, 01234 718044 open 10am - 4pm Tuesday to Saturday.

Christmas opening times

Monday 23	closed	Saturday 28	11am–5pm
Tuesday 24	11am–3pm	Sunday 29	2pm–5pm
Weds 25	closed	Monday 30	closed
Thursday 26	closed	Tuesday 31	11am–3pm
Friday 27	11am–5pm	Weds 1 Jan	closed

Usual opening hours resume from 2 January
Please check the website before your visit for any changes.

The Higgins Pantry

Why not stop for coffee, lunch or tea at the adjacent Pantry café as part of your visit to the Higgins. For large groups it is advisable to make a reservation ahead of your visit, call 01234 276340 or email eat@thehigginspantry.co.uk

Shop at The Higgins Bedford

Shop for a range of products inspired by the collections, exhibitions and seasonal events. Cards, gifts, books and toys are available during museum opening hours as well as a bespoke range for temporary exhibitions. Every purchase helps to support The Higgins Bedford. National Art Pass members can receive a 10% discount in the shop on stationery and gifts.



ACCESS

General Access

The Higgins Bedford has step free access to all levels. Wheelchairs, mobility scooters, pushchairs and assistance dogs are all welcome.

Disabled Parking

Limited parking is available in front of the courtyard entrance to the museum and art gallery for visitors with limited mobility, Accessible Parking Permits or Blue Badges. The car park gate is kept shut so please contact us ahead of your visit or phone reception on 01234 718185 on your arrival so that the gate can be opened for you.

Wheelchair Users

There are two adult wheelchairs available to borrow, please contact us ahead of your visit if you would like to book one. There are three wheelchair accessible toilets on the ground floor.

D/deaf and Hard of Hearing Visitors

Reception areas, meeting and activity rooms are equipped with induction loops, which correspond to the 'T' position on most hearing aids. A portable loop is available for use. The Higgins works with Access Bedford to provide BSL talks, tours and events.

Blind and Partially Sighted Visitors

Large print captions for temporary exhibitions are available on request at reception. QR codes are available in some of the galleries to read captions online.

For Families and Young Children

There is a separate baby change facility on the ground floor.

Changing Places Toilet

Toilet providing sanitary accommodation for people with multiple and complex disabilities located at the end of the Settlement Gallery, includes an adult-sized changing bench and hoist.

CONTACT US

Opening hours

Tuesday to Saturday
11am – 5pm

Sunday and Bank
Holiday Mondays 2 – 5pm

Closed on Mondays,
Easter Sunday, Christmas
Day, Boxing Day and
New Year's Day

Entrance is free
Donations are welcome

Visit the website at

www.thehigginsbedford.org.uk

Email thehiggins@bedford.gov.uk

or call us on 01234 718618

Stay in touch...



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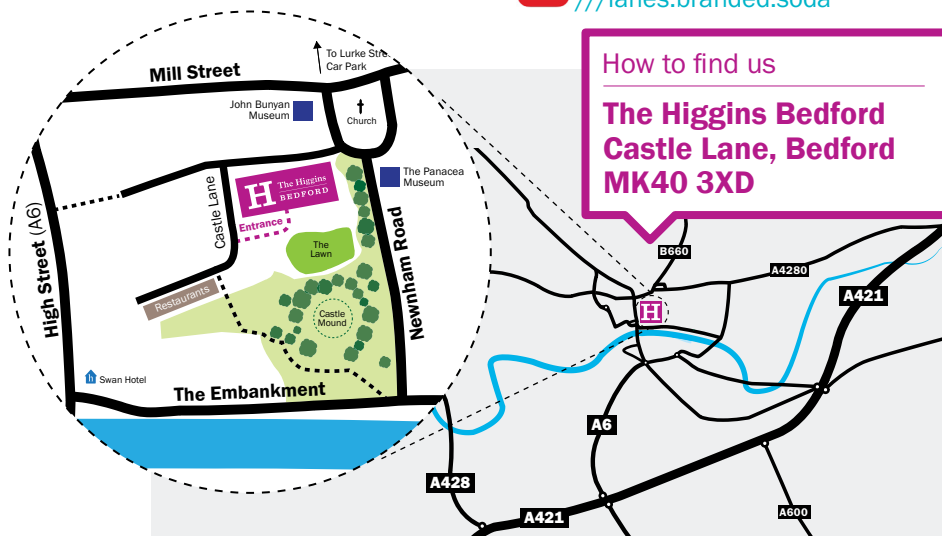
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Parking

The nearest public car park is at Lurke Street, just 5 minutes walk from The Higgins Bedford. Two hours **free** parking every Saturday and all day **free** parking every Sunday in all Council-owned town centre car parks. Further information is available at www.bedford.gov.uk/parking. There are limited parking spaces at the entrance of The Higgins Bedford for visitors with Accessible Parking Permits or Blue Badges.

The Higgins Bedford is a Bedford Borough Council Cultural Service. Home of the Cecil Higgins Collection.

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