

H

The Higgins
BEDFORD

WHAT'S ON

April to September 2022



Edward Bawden (1903-1989) Poster for the London Passenger Transport Board:
Kew Gardens, 1936 © The Edward Bawden Estate



BEDFORD
BOROUGH COUNCIL



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About the Higgins 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 about temporary exhibitions and events visit:

www.thehigginsbedford.org.uk

VISIT US



We have several measures in place to help visitors have a safe and enjoyable experience in line with Government and public health guidance.

Please do not visit if you have symptoms of COVID-19.

The latest guidance and booking information is available at www.thehigginsbedford.org.uk or telephone 01234 718618.

EXHIBITIONS

Body & Soul

2 April – 2 October 2022

Wixamtree and Connections Gallery – Free Entry

Drawn from the internationally renowned Cecil Higgins Art Gallery Collection, explore artist's depictions of women over the past two centuries. Old and young, fleshy or ethereal, fashionably dressed or nude, this exhibition examines how beauty and femininity has been celebrated and challenged through the ages, whilst questioning our own modern perceptions.



Edvard Munch (1863–1944), *Woman with a Brooch (Madonna)*, 1903 © Trustees of the Cecil Higgins Art Gallery

Almost 60 watercolours, oils and prints will be on display, including works by Edgar Degas, Edvard Munch, Dora Carrington, Stanley Spencer, Henri Matisse, Gwen John, Roy Lichtenstein and Chila Burman.

A full colour catalogue with essays by the curators will also be available from The Higgins Bedford shop.

British Sign Language Exhibition Tour and Workshop with Access Bedford

Saturday 4 June, 11am - 1pm
Free Entry - Booking Essential

Join Peter from Access Bedford for this Deaf BSL tour of the Body & Soul exhibition, followed by an art workshop. This is a British Sign Language only event – no oral instruction will be given.

Body & Soul Study Day

Saturday 25 June, 11am - 4pm
£20 - Booking Essential

Explore the themes of the Body & Soul exhibition in a guided tour and a series of talks with curators and guest speakers. Enjoy a tour and a history of the collection with Keeper of Fine and Decorative Art Victoria Partridge and a talk from Professor Christiana Payne as she discusses 'Remarkable Women'. Dr Mary O'Neill will share the competing notions of 'femininity' represented in the artworks on display, followed by a talk in honour of Refugee Week from Charlotte Grant, Senior Lecturer in English at NCH and granddaughter of the artist Martin Bloch. Dr Grant will discuss the pioneering women of the Bloch family, including her grandmother Charlotte whose portrait is on display in the exhibition.



Martin Bloch (1883 - 1954),
Portrait of the Artist's Wife, Charlotte,
c.1921 © Martin Bloch Trust

Friends Lecture – Body & Soul

Tuesday 6 September, 12pm
Members Free, Non-Members £10

As part of The Friends of The Higgins Bedford lecture series, join curators Professor Christiana Payne and Dr Mary O'Neill to explore the themes of the Body & Soul exhibition. Professor Payne is the author of *Pre-Raphaelites: Drawings and Watercolours* and curator of the exhibition of the same name at the Ashmolean Museum. Art Historian Dr O'Neill is a researcher and author; she has most recently contributed to a collection of essays on Henry Scott Tuke for Watts Gallery Artists' Village.

Archipelago: Take Part Queen's Park Community Exhibition 2 April - 12 June 2022

Sir William Harpur Gallery – Free Entry

This new exhibition is a celebration of the vibrancy of Queen's Park using film, embroidery and clay, curated by artist Caroline Wendling in collaboration with residents as part of the Take Part Queen's Park project.



Still from the *Archipelago* film of the Allotted sequence © Caroline Wendling

Take Part Queen's Park is an art project both inspired by and created with the community of Queen's Park in Bedford. Through engaging residents of all ages with the creative arts the project seeks to celebrate residents' sense of place and community, and share that with the wider residents of Bedford.

Caroline Wendling is one of three resident artists who has been working in Queen's Park since 2020 to explore the culture, talents and memories of residents and present their stories through new works of art. Through an extensive series of public walks and workshops in schools, in the allotments, with community groups and in Presentation House, Caroline created a film *Archipelago* made of seven stories alongside artworks of clay and embroidery that represent and showcase the talent of residents and shares their unique stories of Queen's Park for all of Bedford to enjoy.

“Queen's Park is like an archipelago [a group of islands] – a place where people who each have their own cultures and traditions come together to form one unique, vibrant and unified community.” Caroline Wendling.

Delivered by Bedford Creative Arts in partnership with The Higgins Bedford and funded by Paul Hamlyn Foundation, The Harpur Trust and housing association bpha.

Future Bedford – An Exhibition of Children’s Work from The Harpur Trust Art Competition

9 July – 4 September 2022

Sir William Harpur Gallery – Free Entry

The Higgins Bedford will host a selection of work produced by local children and young people aged 4-18 as part of The Harpur Trust biennial art competition on the theme of ‘What would be your perfect future Bedford’? To support pupils in taking part in this competition and develop their pieces of art ready for the exhibition, The Harpur Trust offered free art workshops to 32 state schools in Bedford. For further details, visit www.harpur-art-competition.org.uk

Edward Bawden: Artist Plantsman Continues until 15 January 2023

Edward Bawden Gallery – Free Entry

Explore Bawden’s love of plants and gardens in this exhibition of all things botanical. Drawn exclusively from the Edward Bawden archive, view early wallpaper designs, advertising commissions and iconic linocuts.



Edward Bawden (1903-1989) Poster for the London Passenger Transport Board: Kew Gardens, 1936
© The Edward Bawden Estate

Edward Bawden – Art and Gardening From Friday 29 April - Free Online Talk

Join Keeper of Fine and Decorative Art, Victoria Partridge, for a look at some of Edward Bawden’s favourite gardens, including his own garden in Great Bardfield and the public gardens at Kew. Visit The Higgins Bedford website to watch the video.

Artist Plantsman Exhibition Tour

Thursday 26 May, Friday 1 July, 12pm – 12.30pm

£3.25, Concessions £2.75 – Booking Essential

Join Keeper of Fine and Decorative Art, Victoria Partridge, for a lunchtime tour of some of the highlights in the Edward Bawden: Artist Plantsman exhibition.

DISPLAYS

Innovation and Tradition: 40 years of Morris

Continues until 11 September 2022

Outside Somewhere in England Gallery – Free Entry

The last forty or so years have seen great shifts in what most people think of as a fixed and unchanging English tradition. This display traces the impact of innovation and change on tradition through the story of two local Morris teams: Redbornstoke Morris and Bedfordshire Lace Morris. See original objects and costumes connected with these teams and discover archive photographs of their local performances over the years.



Redbornstoke Morris Team, Jack 'O the Green Festival, Hastings, 2015 © Chas Leslie

Blunt Blades

Continues until 30 October 2022

The Higgins House – Free Entry

In 2013, artist Arabel Lebrusan received several crates of confiscated knives and weapons from Bedfordshire Police. Through photography, drawings, sculpture, jewellery and audio, this display curated by Arabel explores our complex relationship with knives, and whether the meaning of an object can be re-established and transformed to evoke different emotions.



© Arabel Lebrusan

To accompany the exhibition, there will be a series of creative workshops in the summer. Keep an eye on our website and social media for more information.

Texas Instruments to Bourns in Bedford: 75 years of Technological Innovation

Opens 20 September 2022

Outside Somewhere in England Gallery – Free Entry

Discover the story behind Bedford's technological innovation industry over the last 75 years through Texas Instruments and Bourns Ltd. In 1957 Texas Instruments arrived in Bedford and 5 years later moved into their purpose built site on Manton Lane (now Bedford Heights). Texas Instruments made semi-conductors used in mass market products including calculators and computers until 1997 when they closed. In 1997 Power Innovations ran the semi-conductor factory for a few years until it was then sold to Bourns Ltd in 2000. For 22 years Bourns have continued to drive forward Bedford's technological innovation industry, manufacturing semi-conductor chips and circuits, which we find in our mobile phones and office equipment today.

Warden Abbey Revealed

Continues until March 2023

Outside Settlement Gallery, Free Entry

Research by the Old Warden History and Heritage Society alongside the results of a geophysical survey by MOLA (Northampton) have revealed the grandeur of one of the most influential Cistercian houses in medieval England. Former English Heritage artist, Peter Dunn, has created a reconstruction painting based on this work, showing how Warden Abbey may have looked

c.1370. The original painting is on display alongside a selection of archaeological artefacts recovered from excavation at Warden Abbey, including architectural fragments, floor tiles, stained glass, and more.



Section of the tile pavement found at Warden Abbey. Reconstruction by C. Marshall and E. Baker. Courtesy of the Southill Estate.

EVENTS



The Higgins Knitting and Crochet Group

Every Third Tuesday of the Month – 19 April, 17 May, 21 June, 19 July, 16 August, 20 September, 11am – 1pm, Free Entry, Booking Essential

Get creative and join this friendly informal group that knits and crochets for charity, community events, displays, and for pleasure. Sessions will be running both at The Higgins Bedford and online as places remain limited.

Email gemma.hutton@bedford.gov.uk to book, or to receive the Zoom login. You can also join The Higgins Knitting and Crochet Group on Facebook: www.bit.ly/HigginsKnittingGroup

Refugee Week

Monday 20 – Sunday 26 June

This Refugee Week we will be working with partners to offer a range of events that amplify refugee voices and experiences both past and present, to dispel myths and to highlight the contributions refugees have made. Keep an eye on our website and social media for more information.

WELLBEING

A great way for local people to improve their physical and mental health while learning new skills and socialising with others.



We also work with partner organisations to provide suitable spaces and workshops for group sessions. There may be a limited number of spaces on our sessions.

Yoga

Every Monday (except Bank Holidays)

10.30am - 11.30am, £5

Enquiries and to book a place:

juandhannigan@yahoo.co.uk

Table Tennis

Every Monday

(except Bank Holidays)

12:30pm - 1:30pm, £3

All levels welcome.



Pilates

Every Monday

(except Bank Holidays)

2:45pm - 3:30pm, £3

All levels welcome.

Bring your own mat.

Mindful Walking

Every Friday

11am - 12pm, (with optional coffee stop after),

Free

Sketch Fridays

Every Friday, 12am – 4pm
Free Entry, No need to Book

Come in, grab a chair and find a painting or object you would like to sketch. Materials and paper provided, or bring your own (no paints please). All levels welcome.



Talk & Draw

Fridays: 22 April, 20 May, 17 June
12:30pm (Talk) – 4pm
Free Entry, No need to Book

Join us for a relaxed and friendly chat about a selection of our favourite artworks and objects on display at The Higgins Bedford. Stay with us to sketch and share your work.

Stressbusting Saturdays

Saturdays: 23 April, 21 May,
18 June, 12pm – 4pm
Free Entry, No need to Book

Enjoy some down time with a variety of relaxing and sociable activities to help improve your general wellbeing. Includes table top games, poetry writing, sound baths and Aragon Lacemakers demonstrating their skills.



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

REMINISCENCE SESSIONS

Remember When?... Reminiscence Mornings at The Higgins Bedford

Free Entry, Refreshments £1, Booking Essential

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

Body and Soul

Thursday 21 April

Explore the latest art exhibition and ideas around things that affect our body and soul in our lives.

'I Say'

Thursday 12 May

Explore different sayings and phrases we hear spoken both locally and nationally.

Jubilee Memories

Thursday 9 June

To celebrate the Queen's Platinum Jubilee, share memories of the last 70 years about our Queen and our nation.

Days Out

Thursday 14 July

Share memories of your favourite days out and about with family, friends, or independently.

Break for August

Radio Gaga

Thursday 15 September

Hear stories about favourite radio shows and channels enjoyed over the decades.

To book your place, please telephone
01234 718618. Limited places are available.

FAMILY ACTIVITIES



EASTER HOLIDAY

Warden Abbey Revealed

Tuesday 5 & 12, Wednesday 6 & 13, Thursday 7 & 14 April

Workshops start at 11:15am and 1:15pm

£3.05 per child - Booking Essential

Explore the Warden Abbey Revealed display and get creative with family activities inspired by medieval tiles and stained glass.

Tuesdays 5 & Thursday 14 April - Print a Bag

Wednesday 6 & 13 April - Make a Mosaic Coaster

Thursdays 7 & Tuesday 12 April - Stained Glass

Tealight Holder

Spring Craft with Art Adventurers

Friday 8 April

Workshops start at 11:15am and 1:15pm

£5 per child - Booking Essential

Get creative with a range of materials, media and techniques.

All Easter workshops last for an hour and are aimed at children under 12 years old. (Not suitable for under 5's.) Children must be accompanied by an adult.

MAY HALF TERM - GARDEN PARTY

Tuesday 31 May

Workshops start at 11:15am 12:45pm, 2:15pm

£3.05 per child - Booking Essential

Suitable for Under 12s

Personalise your own gardening apron.

Wednesday 1 June

Workshops start at 11:15am 12:45pm, 2:15pm

£3.05 per child - Booking Essential

Suitable for 3 to 7 year olds

Enjoy storytelling with Grandma Mo, then make your own seedling pots and plant sunflowers.

Friday 3 June

Drop In Activity from 2pm – 4pm

Free Entry, No need to Book

Suitable for Under 12s

Get ready for your Jubilee Garden Party and decorate a hat or a crown.

SUMMER HOLIDAYS

Kevin's Creation Station

Tuesdays: 2, 9, 16, 23, 30 August

Booking Essential. Suitable for under 12s

Explore The Higgins with Kevin the Platypus and get creative in our arty crafty workshops.

STEM Thursdays

Thursdays: 28 July; 4, 11, 18, 25 August; 1 September

Booking Essential. Suitable for 5-12 year olds

Join Little Science Labs and others for fun activities featuring science, technology, engineering and maths.



Sunday Crafternoons for Families

Sundays: 24 April, 22 May, 26 June,
25 September, 23 October

Drop In Activity from 2pm – 4pm

Free Entry, No need to Book. Suitable for Under 12s

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

Puggle Club

Wednesdays: 3, 10, 17, 24, 31 August

Drop In Activity from 1pm – 3pm

Free Entry, No need to Book. Suitable for Under 5s

Explore a range of natural materials and have a go at creative play. Please note, this activity involves small items that may be a hazard for children under 36 months.



Children must be accompanied by an adult. Please be aware that places are limited and there may be a wait to start. Keep an eye on our website and social media for up-to-date details on all Family Activities.

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 fantastic 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 and art gallery, but offers a range of other benefits, including discounts in the shop and café, the chance to join visits abroad, and access to a catalogue of videos of talks.



William Burges (1827 – 1881), *Zodiac Settle*, 1869-70 © Trustees of the Cecil Higgins Art Gallery

Membership of the Friends is £35 for an individual, £50 for joint membership and £20 for students. Vouchers for Gift Membership are also available. You can join online at www.friendsofthehiggins.org or by emailing the Membership Secretary at annayres@me.com

Lecture Programme

The lectures in April and May will be held at The Higgins starting at 7:30pm.

Free to members, £10 for non-members.

The Forest of Marston Vale - Jo Roberts

Tuesday 19 April

The Country Park for all the family, comprises 61 square miles of woodlands between Bedford and Milton Keynes. It has evolved as a Community Forest to make life better for people and wildlife. Jo Roberts, Community Engagement Officer is presenting a lecture entitled “Creation, Present and Future of Marston Vale”, which is one of the few Community Forests in the Country.

English Garden Eccentrics - Dr Todd Longstaffe-Gowan

Tuesday 10 May

Todd returns after his most excellent lecture about his role as Gardens Advisor to Historic Royal Palaces, with his responsibilities at five Royal Palaces in Greater London and his involvement in redesigning the Royal Kitchen Garden and implementing a new garden at Hampton Court. He lectures widely on landscape history and design, both in the UK and abroad and is a regular contributor to a large range of publications.

Visit www.friendsofthehiggins.org to find out more information.

TOURS

Fine and Decorative Art Tour

Wednesday 18 May, 11:30am – 12:30pm

£6.35, Concessions £5.10 – Booking Essential

Have you ever wanted to know how the art collections were formed and why they are here in Bedford? Then join Keeper of Fine and Decorative Art, Victoria Partridge, for a tour of the Cecil Higgins Art Gallery Collection.

The Higgins Tour

Wednesday 15 June,

11:30-am – 12:30pm

£6.35, Concessions £5.10

– Booking Essential

This introductory tour of the highlights of The Higgins Bedford includes collections relating to the history of Bedford as well as the fine and decorative art collections.



William Frenck de Morgan
(1839 – 1917) Rice Plate, c.1900
© Trustees of the Cecil Higgins
Art Gallery

Bringing a Group

Discover the history of outstanding collections, stop for lunch at The Higgins Pantry café, shop for gifts and enjoy the surrounding attractions of Bedford's Cultural Quarter.

If your group is interested in booking, email thehiggins@bedford.gov.uk. Please allow a minimum of four weeks' notice for group bookings. Tours are subject to availability during opening hours.



COMING SOON

The Higgins Bedford on Tour: Picasso & the Masters of Print at Discover Bucks Museum, Aylesbury

2 April - 2 July 2022

On loan from the collections at The Higgins Bedford, see seven prints by Pablo Picasso showcasing his mastery of printmaking, accompanied by a wider display of original prints by major artists from Dürer to Hockney. Visit

www.discoverbucksmuseum.org

for more information.



Armand Guillaumin (1841 – 1927),
The Red Rocks, 1896 © Trustees of
the Cecil Higgins Art Gallery

The Ingram Collection and The Cecil Higgins Art Gallery

Opening 15 October 2022

Wixamtree, Connections and Sir William Harpur Galleries

This exciting exhibition will merge Bedford's own Cecil Higgins Art Gallery Collection with the Ingram Collection, one of the largest and most significant collections of Modern British Art in the UK. The exhibition curated by James Russell, of 'Edward Bawden' at Dulwich Picture Gallery, will be the first exhibition that uses all three of The Higgins Bedford galleries and will be accompanied by a series of complimentary events.

We Are Ten

Opening 29 April 2023

Wixamtree and Connections Galleries, and throughout The Higgins Bedford

Can you believe we are into double figures?! To celebrate the first decade of The Higgins Bedford, we have invited community groups, organisations and people we have worked with over the years to choose their favourite paintings and prints to exhibit. Keep an eye on our website and social media for ways that you can also take part.

SHOP AT THE HIGGINS BEDFORD

Our shop has a range of products inspired by the collections, exhibitions and events. Cards, postcards, books and gifts as well as a bespoke range for exhibitions and a growing number of cards and gifts sourced from local makers can be purchased. Ranges include: Bawden, Exhibitions, Collections, Bedford, Garden, Mini and Seasonal.



National Art Pass members can receive a 10% discount in the shop on stationery and gifts.

CHANGES TO OPENING HOURS

Easter Opening Hours

Good Friday 15 April:	Closed
Easter Saturday 16 April:	Open 11am – 5pm
Easter Sunday 17 April:	Open 2pm – 5pm
Easter Monday 18 April:	Open 2pm – 5pm

May, June and August Bank Holidays

Monday 2 May:	Open 2pm – 5pm
Thursday 2 June:	Open 2pm – 5pm
Friday 3 June:	Open 2pm – 5pm
Saturday 4 June:	Open 11am – 5pm
Sunday 5 June:	Open 2pm – 5pm
Monday 29 August:	Open 2pm – 5pm

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

There are four parking spaces at the entrance to the museum for visitors with Accessible Parking Permits or Blue Badges.

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.

Families with Members with Autistic Spectrum Conditions

An Autism Friendly Guide to the museum is available at reception or download it from the website.

For Families and Young Children

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

CONTACT US

Entrance is free
Donations are welcome

Opening hours

Tuesday to Saturday
11am – 5pm

Sunday and Bank
Holiday Mondays 2 – 5pm

Closed on Mondays,
Good Friday, Christmas
Day, Boxing Day and
New Year's Day

Visit the website at

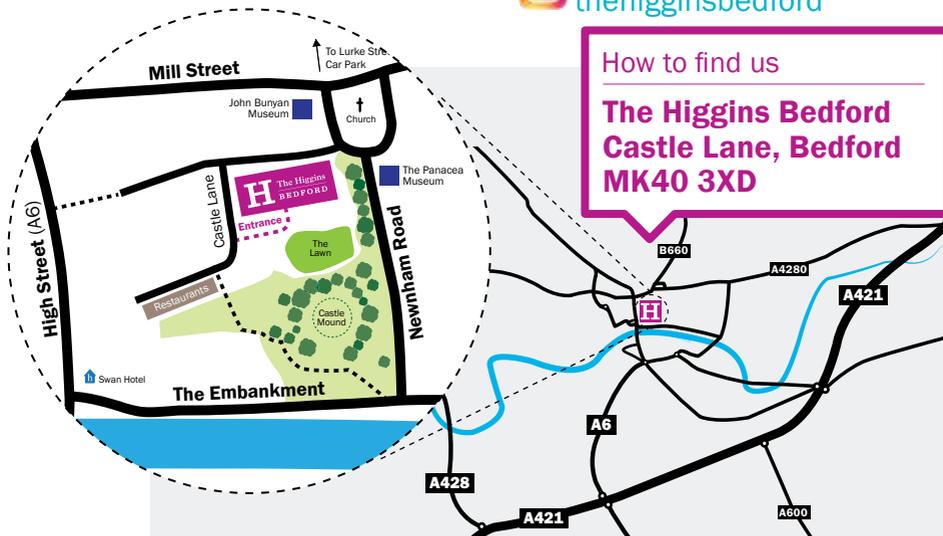
www.thehigginsbedford.org.uk
Email thehiggins@bedford.gov.uk
or call us on 01234 718618

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[higginsbedford](https://twitter.com/higginsbedford)

 On Instagram
[thehigginsbedford](https://www.instagram.com/thehigginsbedford)



Parking

The nearest public car park is at Lurke Street, just 5 minutes walk from The Higgins Bedford. Two hours **free** parking every Saturday 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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design@bedford.gov.uk