

Marsh Farm  
**Futures**

working for all the community



NEWS



## BUSINESS CENTRE IN THE COMMUNITY



**SPRING 2020**

Improving the well-being and quality of life for those who  
live and work in Marsh Farm & the surrounding areas

# Foreword & Welcome From CEO



Dear reader,

Since the COVID-19 outbreak Marsh Farm Futures (MFF) has been working with its partners to collate useful information that can be shared with you. Unfortunately, following Governments advice last

week MFF has had to temporarily close Futures House to the public and we continue to monitor developments and advice from the Government. Some key services continue to be provided, including the foodbank that will still be operating on Monday's from 11.00 am to 1.00 pm from a mobile unit in the front car park at Futures House and tenants who continue to work with vulnerable individuals.

MFF team are still working remotely and is fully set up to continue to keep our communication lines open to residents. We would ask people to e-mail us rather than telephone so that we can direct your requests to the most appropriate member of our team to deal with. If you would like to get in touch for any reason please e-mail [info@marshfarmfutures.co.uk](mailto:info@marshfarmfutures.co.uk)

Some of the information that we managed to collate includes details for employed and the self-employed. You will have no doubt heard about the help in place from the Government for Job Retention scheme, where 80% of your salary will be paid and other help for the self-employed. Other recent announcements include reclaiming Statutory Sick Pay, Business interruption loans and Grant funding, holiday for business rates payable as well as VAT payment deferral. Further information is available on the 'gov.uk' website. If Marsh Farm Futures can help with any details on these please do contact us. We would always recommend that you seek specific and independent legal advice before making any strategic decisions for your business.

If you are struggling, need advice or a sounding board, or would just like to share what is going on for you, simply e-mail [info@marshfarmfutures.co.uk](mailto:info@marshfarmfutures.co.uk) with a subject heading 'Talk to us'. One of our support team will get in touch to arrange a one to one call. They will

listen and be there for you. If they can't support you directly, then they will link you with the information or contacts that they can.

If you are elderly and vulnerable or just struggling and need to talk please call Marsh Farm Futures Youth and Communities Manager, Cathy McShane on 01582 586133 or email her: [cathy@marshfarmfutures.co.uk](mailto:cathy@marshfarmfutures.co.uk). Cathy will help and support you as much as possible.

MFF cannot give medical advice kindly contact the NHS 111 online or website <https://111.nhs.uk/covid-19> or your GP.

As I write this brief message a poem by John O'Donohue comes to my mind:

"This is the time to be slow,  
Lie low to the wall  
Until the bitter weather passes.

Try, as best you can, not to let  
The wire brush of doubt  
Scrape from your heart  
All sense of yourself  
And your hesitant light.

If you remain generous,  
Time will come good;  
And you will find your feet  
Again on fresh pastures of promise,  
Where the air will be kind  
And blushed with beginning."

John O'Donohue

"This is an extraordinary time. We want to support you during this period of uncertainty. No matter what you are facing in your life, we are here to listen and support your wellbeing. You are not alone. Please stay safe and well"

Whilst every care has been taken to provide this update, this will change in the coming days and weeks. We hope that you find the information in this newsletter informative and useful.

M. Rafi (CeO)  
Marsh Farm Futures

Improving the well-being  
& quality of life for those  
who live & work in Marsh  
Farm & surrounding areas

**OFFICE SPACE**  
**CHILDREN & YOUTH ACTIVITIES**  
**HALL FACILITIES FOR HIRE**  
**COMMUNITY EVENTS**  
**MEETING ROOMS HIRE**  
**COMMUNITY I.T. FACILITIES**  
**FUN FACTORY INDOOR SOFT PLAY**

## Calling **ALL** Local Businesses Advertise With Marsh Farm Futures

1. **Website Banner** (Added to our new website - on a rotation)
2. **Email Campaign Banner**, a banner in the header or footer sent out to our Database of over 4,000+ & growing.
3. **Featured article** in our Email Campaign, sent out to our Database of over 4,000+ and growing. A full article with **YOUR** contact information and links to your website and social-media platforms.

**1 £25**  
Month

**2 £40**  
Month

**3 £55**  
Month

**LUTON FOODBANK**  
**REMAINS OPEN TO THIER CLIENTS VIA THE**  
**MOBILE UNIT PARKED OUTSIDE**  
**FUTURES HOUSE ENTRANCE!**



### Marsh Farm Coronavirus Support



If you are stuck at home due to coronavirus and you need some help with simple things like picking up shopping or prescriptions, posting mail, dog walking or even just a friendly chat on the phone, we can help!

People have volunteered in your neighbourhood to support those in need for free.

You can get in touch with us in the following ways:

Email: [MFCVcare@gmail.com](mailto:MFCVcare@gmail.com)

Phone: **01582 345555** (if you get the answerphone please leave a message)

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/MarshFarmOutreach/>

Google Form: <https://bit.ly/38PdhTu>



Please note: We are not able to give medical advice. For this please contact NHS 111 online or by phone, or your GP.

c/o Marsh Farm Outreach CIC, Marsh House Community Centre, Bramingham Road Luton  
LU3 2SR



# Cyber Security workshop

Futures Business Voice hosted a free Cyber Security workshop on 29th January 2020 at Futures House. Presented by Sean O'Neil, Fraud & Cyber Security Advisor for Bedfordshire Police, the two-hour workshop focused on known and new cyber threats and how to avoid becoming a victim of cyber-crime.

## Key advice to take into consideration:

### **Always Install the latest software & app updates**

Cyber criminals use weaknesses in software and apps to attack your devices and steal your identity. Software and app updates are designed to fix these weaknesses.

### **Don't 'jailbreak' or 'root' your smartphone**

Switching off software restrictions leaves your phone vulnerable to malicious software or applications (malware), which can infect your phone and damage or delete data including your valuable photos and videos.

### **Always back-up your most important data**

### **Don't use public Wi-Fi to transfer sensitive information such as card details**

**Safeguard your most important data** - such as your photos and key documents, by backing them up to an external hard drive or a cloud-based storage system.

Programmes Manager and event organiser, Ishaq Kazi said: "As Cyber criminals get more and more sophisticated in obtaining sensitive and personal information it is extremely important to keep up to date with new threats and how to prevent them. The feedback from attendees was very positive and we will be looking to hold more of these workshops as needed."

Futures Business Voice is a networking platform for local and surrounding businesses. One of the key objectives is to "help local businesses to grow and create jobs". This forum is intended to identify key issues affecting businesses. The intention is to increase collaboration between businesses and develop new ways to compete in global economy.

**If you would like to join Futures Business Voice, please email:**  
[ishaq@marshfarmfutures.co.uk](mailto:ishaq@marshfarmfutures.co.uk)



## Comes to an end after two years

By Bonnie Hewson Programme Manager

I work on Power to Change's Empowering Places programme, which seeks to use community business as a mechanism to make places better by tackling local issues. Through the programme we work closely with locally rooted catalyst organisations, in urban neighbourhoods. We had the pleasure of working with Marsh Farm Futures for two years on this programme (until the end of 2019) and in this time worked closely with the organisation to understand local challenges and opportunities. One of the key questions we tackled together was what role Marsh Farm Futures could play in being a catalyst for community business and local change, and how as a community anchor organisation it could become a better agent for building local power.

We have been pleased to support Ishaq Kazi-Project Manager, Mohammed Rafi (CEO) and the Board of Marsh Farm Futures to reflect upon their role and to develop ideas for reviving Community Voice as a mechanism for local community members to have a greater say in the organisation – we hope that this will be an opportunity that is seized by diverse members of the community who feel they want more control over local decisions. We have also been pleased to support other objectives set out by Marsh Farm Futures when they entered the programme, including the development of a Community Business Resource Pack and training programmes with the University of Bedfordshire. Through a relationship with Groundwork there is also work underway to develop Marsh Farm Futures as a food hub and to envisage more productive uses of the green spaces around Futures House, with the first project supporting disabled young adults at Heywood House Day Centre to grow vegetables for the food bank.

We hope the Marsh Farms Futures'

ongoing work to engage more openly with its community continues from strength to strength and that the team continues with its desire to help many more interesting and much needed local projects to spring forth from the increased community use of the Futures House.



power to  
change



LOTTERY FUNDED



# Futures Community Voice



For Children aged 0-5 Years  
**EVERY WEDNESDAY**

**SUSPENDED  
DUE TO COVID-19**

## STAY & PLAY

Tea / Coffee for parents/carers  
Fruit Platter for children

Community Hall 3, Futures House, The Moakes  
Every Wednesday during term time 9.15am - 11.15am  
£1 per family including refreshments  
Call 01582 512 555

### Futures Community Voice

Futures Community Voice has been busy over the last year with 'Stay & Play' sessions, which are held at Futures House every Wednesday morning. We also ran 'Learn to Bake' sessions with Futures Fun Factory in the school holidays. These sessions have become very popular and the children enjoy themselves. We ran sessions in the February half term and places went very quickly.

In partnership with Marsh Farm Futures we also baked cakes for the Macmillan coffee morning and the Halloween and Christmas parties in Futures Fun Factory. Also in partnership with Marsh Farm Futures we have held residents' coffee morning during January & February. these will continue to take place on the last Tuesday of every month.

## WE ARE LOOKING FOR NEW MEMBERS

Are you passionate about doing your part to help the Marsh Farm Community?

It doesn't matter if you can only spare a couple of hours, we want to hear from you.

Futures Community Voice wants to give you, the residents of Marsh Farm Community, a voice and the opportunity to express your views, issues, concerns and recommendations in improving the experience of living in the area. Help us put your views and ideas into a project/s that will

benefit our community, or volunteer to help on one of our events.

Futures Community Voice are looking to do more across the Marsh Farm community, and we would love to hear from all residents as we value your input.

For more information please email us on [fcv.lu3mf@gmail.com](mailto:fcv.lu3mf@gmail.com)



**Luton**



# Community Services

## Halls for Hire

Looking for a space for your group to meet ?

Looking for somewhere to hold your training/ conferences ?

Looking for a room to hold your Celebration Event?

Want to hold a Childrens Party?

We can help!

We have large halls for hire at competitive rates, please give us a call for more information on 01582 492166

**SUSPENDED  
DUE TO COVID-19**

## Available for Hire



## Available for Hire



Luton Food Bank  
Limbury 50+ Group  
Sundon Park Arts  
7-10,11-13yrs Youth Sessions  
Futures 50+ Group  
Mini Music Makers  
Sangam Ladies Group

Shah Jalal / AMA Prayers  
Zhuri Trust  
KICC Church Group  
Tai Chi Classes  
Ladies Dance Aerobics  
Yoga  
Pilates

## Services at Futures House

Service Provider	Services
Free computer use	Free computer use with internet. Printing available 5p per copy (black and white only)
Customer Services Luton Borough Council	Council Tax, Housing Benefit, Advice on Council Services etc.
Job Club	Employment support and assistance with online job searches, CVs and application forms

**LUTON FOODBANK  
REMAINS OPEN TO THIER CLIENTS VIA THE  
MOBILE UNIT PARKED OUTSIDE  
FUTURES HOUSE ENTRANCE!**

Money Matters Credit Union	Financial advice, loans and savings
Councillors Surgery	Local Councillors Anne Donelon and Yasmin Waheed meet with residents to discuss their issues.

**CHILDRENS PARTY PACKAGE: Saturday & Sunday**

3 hours ONLY £50.00 Plus a £50 Deposit.

This includes (1/2 hour set up, 2 hour party, 1/2 hour clear up)



## Community Focus - Mini Winter Wonderland 2019



Kim, who came to enjoy the winter magic said: "Well my son, niece and their friends had such a fun time yesterday. They all got together and went again today thanks for doing something so fun for the kids, it's kept our teenagers amused this weekend".

Another visitor, Carol, said: " Mine had an AMAZING time and did not want to come home. The staff are great, allowing me to fulfil a family dream I've been waiting for 4 years for and equally a tearful mum!

Cathy McShane, Youth and Communities Manager and event organiser said: "This is our second mini winter wonderland and we have had even more people attend this year, which is brilliant!

"Hearing children and adults say that they've always wanted to try ice skating but couldn't because of the cost makes it worthwhile.

"Look out for more events coming soon and of course mini winter wonderland will be back again next year."

Mini Winter Wonderland 2019 took place over the weekend of 7th and 8th December 2019 and was a huge success.

Futures House was transformed into a magical winter land with an ice rink, crazy golf, a bubble disco and even Santa Claus, who came all the way from the North pole, in his grotto to meet some of the children.

The free ice-skating rink proved to be very popular with both adults and children and they had a wonderful time zooming or in some cases, stumbling across the ice! The snowboard simulator also proved to be very popular as was the Sparkles Café. Futures Fun Factory mascot, Sparkles also made a special guest appearance.

The event was organised and sponsored by Marsh Farm Futures as part of its commitment to providing free, enjoyable, interactive and memorable events for the local community of Marsh Farm and Luton as a whole.





## Ambassadors of Change - Success Story

Shoyaine Nembhard, against the odds, has gained a 2:1 degree in Youth and Community Development from De Montfort University. Shoyaine took part in the Marsh Farm Futures' Ambassadors of Change Project for young adults who are on a transitional pathway to changing their lives.

The Ambassadors of Change Young Adults project, funded by a grant from the Police Crime and Commissioner's Office, was a partnership strategy led by Marsh Farm Futures (MFF), The Walk to Freedom Foundation and Develop.

The Walk to Freedom Foundation helps young people through mentoring, self-development, workshops and other programmes to change their mindset about being involved in serious youth violence, gang exploitation, knife crime, adolescent drug abuse and lack of self-worth.

Having interrupted his university degree course due to mental health, Shoyaine was battling several challenges while living in a local hostel."

In a vulnerable state and unsure of the direction to take, a fellow young person in the hostel who was on the programme, encouraged him to attend a session at Futures House.

He joined the Personal Development course in Futures House.

Shoyaine spoke about what the Ambassadors of Change Project did for him: "I was lost and in a very dark place

when I was introduced to Cathy and joined the Ambassadors Programme. It gave me a sense of belonging, family and community which I was lacking at that time. Most importantly, it helped me believe in myself."

"It wasn't easy at all, if anything, it was tough! I was encouraged to think 'I can' rather than 'I can't' and experienced tough love, from 'this new family'. Also, they reminded me that not only was uni possible, but I mattered, which made a world of difference. I had so many parts of me that needed healing, it felt like a losing battle, but I did it."

"I started volunteering with young people, even helping Cathy with the youth club, got stronger and started to believe in myself. I decided to go back to university and have now attained a 2:1 in my course. It has been a tough road, I'm not entirely there, but I see a future and I see what I want to do - youth work, helping other young people struggling with life to see a way forward."

Cathy McShane, Youth and Communities Manager for Marsh Farm Futures said: "I am incredibly proud of him.

"Programmes like this can offer a lifeline to 'at risk' young people. We rely on funding to be able to offer this and other services that are so important in the community. We will be working with partner organisations that we hope can offer a similar programme in the future."



## L&D Radio Moves into Futures House



After nearly sixty years of providing programmes to patients in local hospitals, L&D Radio needed to find a new home. After a thorough search we found suitable space in Marsh Farm Futures House and set out to build a pair of new studios. Our programmes are sent to a medium wave transmitter at the L&D Hospital and streamed to the internet, so can be received on most home and car radios as well as mobile phones, tablets and smart speakers.

From the start our move took approximately three months including design, purchase of new equipment and construction of new studios, during which we maintained our programmes for all but two hours when we had to transfer the transmitter signal between the old and new studios. We are grateful to specialist company, Transplan, who outfitted

the studios, the L&D Hospital for their generous help and local companies for their support and funding.

For many members of the station, the move was quite emotional as we built up our facilities over a long time, and while the equipment was old, it was reliable even though it sometimes needed nursing along. Mike Ollivier, Chair of the group, said, "The move was a bittersweet occasion for us all – a sadness at saying goodbye to the old, an excited anticipation of the new. These new studios are a reward for many years effort by everyone concerned. But more, this is an opportunity for us to extend our audience to many other health facilities in the area, nursing homes, GP surgeries, while offering training to people who would like to learn more about working in radio."

Mike Ollivier, Chairman L&D Radio

For further information,  
please contact:-

Mike Ollivier, Chairman L&D Radio  
Post Box 27,  
Unit 18C, Marsh Farm Futures House  
The Moakes  
Luton  
Beds., LU3 3QB

mike@ldhr.co.uk  
07802 435513



## Arts Club brings Community Together

I started my Art club in 2002 at the Sundon Park Community Centre .I was welcomed there as an attractive addition to their other community activities.

At that time the Council ran the Centre for Sundon Park Community members who set up there in 2000 and had organised a number of various classes Under the supervision of local man Pat Shane ,who is still overall director today, a Charitable Trust was set up and I was later



appointed as one of their directors I attended regular meetings thereafter with the trust and often with council members and our local MP.

By this time the Council were mainly acting in a supervisory position and the Trust was running all the day to day activities for the Centre.

My art club became a success as it was the only one in the area and we had a membership of approx. 35-40 members. Part of this success was due to keeping prices low so everyone could benefit and be included in this community activity .

In 2012, we were told that our beloved Centre was about to be pulled down. So the Trust and all its activities including my club moved in to Lealands School on February 5th 2013.

I soon discovered from feedback from members and my personal experiences, that this venue was not suitable for our needs and reluctantly looked around for other alternatives.

I approached Futures House who had a community spirit in line with my own and was made most welcome . The art club started at Futures on Tuesday 7th May 2013 and we have had a very happy association with all their personnel for the last seven years.

We meet every Tuesday evening from 7pm to 9 pm. Fee £3 and Wednesday mornings 9-30 am to 12-30 pm fee £4.

All are welcome to join. Well behaved Children under 16 are also welcome with a Parent or family member at our Tuesday night sessions. There is no charge for the first session for any future member .

We run various events throughout the year such as painting out days, demonstrations and workshops given by professional artists plus two major art exhibitions in the Spring and Autumn/Winter

Funds permitting, we would like to organise more outside events involving coach trips in the future.

In the meantime many thanks to Marsh Farm Futures for all the assistance given in the past and hopefully the future.

Peter Brown – Manager  
Sundon Park Arts





The last few months for Futures Fun Factory were very busy. In October, we had our annual Halloween party with over 100 people in attendance. Then in November it was the Children in need pyjama party and we raised over £100 through ticket sales, selling cakes and having a raffle giveaway on the night.

In 2020 we have planned more exciting events for the months ahead.

In February we held a cupcake and biscuit decorating event, for valentine's day. We also had a pancake brunch on pancake day.



Yasmien and Chloe waiting to welcome you

**Due to Futures Fun Factory being closed as a result of Covid-19, we were not able to hold our St Patrick's Day and Mother's Day celebrations. We look forward to welcoming you back soon.**

**Look out on our website - [www.marshfarmfutures.co.uk](http://www.marshfarmfutures.co.uk) and social media platforms for regular updates.**



**SUSPENDED  
DUE TO COVID-19**



## Marsh Farm Residents Discount Days

(Term-Time)

**Monday and Friday: 10:00am – 18:00pm**

### Prices:

**1-4 years- £1.10**

**5-10 years- £2.10**

**11-14 years- £2.50**

**Adults- £0.60**

**Please provide an item of identification as proof of address when visiting to obtain your discount (e.g. driving licence).**

**Please note that discount is for entry to Futures Fun Factory only.**



**PRICES:**

UNDER 1 = FREE  
 1-4 yrs = £4.60  
 5-10 yrs = £5.65  
 11-14 yrs = £6.00  
 Adults = £1.35

**Session Times**

10.00 – 11.00

**SUSPENDED  
DUE TO COVID-19**

**BUY ONE GET ONE FREE CHILD ENTRY  
ON WEDNESDAY DURING HALF TERM**

**SESSION TIMES WILL APPLY. CHEAPEST CHILD ENTRY IS FREE.**

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION PLEASE CALL 01582 492166**

## Groundwork

### Environmental Agency comes to support MFF

Local community charity Groundwork East has been working with Marsh Farm Futures to create a number of raised beds to enable local residents of Marsh Farm and volunteers and staff of disability groups based at Futures House to grow their own fruit and vegetables. Not only will this help to provide fresh, locally grown produce but it will also allow the volunteers to benefit from being active outside and all the physical and mental health benefits that this brings.

“We are pleased to have been involved and to support this project at such a well-used community resource and which we hope will soon develop further by Marsh Farm Futures becoming involved in Groundwork’s lottery funded Community Food Hub project to involve even more Luton residents in food growing” said Gill Taylor, Operations Director of Groundwork East.

We are also keen to work with Marsh Farm Futures on the other small green spaces around the building to ensure that maximum benefits can be gained through creating improved landscapes in which centre users can sit and relax and spend time with one another.



Groundwork is also working with Luton Borough Council and the Environment Agency on nearby Leagrave Common to identify potential improvements to the river and surrounding habitats and is

looking forward to engaging with the Marsh Farm Community in the summer on opportunities available.



# Marsh Farm Regeneration Completes Another Milestone



The completion of Phase 3 of the transformation of Marsh Farm was celebrated on 27th February. Residents, local councillors and representatives of Keech Hospice, Luton Council and ENGIE,



the contractor responsible for delivery of the whole regeneration project, were present to witness the unveiling of a commemorative plaque.

John Healey MP, Shadow Secretary of State for Housing and Denise Elcock-Jules unveiled the plaque on Anthony Jules Court, named in honour of her late husband, Tony, who had been part of the original Marsh Farm regeneration steering group. Whilst terminally ill, Anthony had helped raise over £40,000 for local charity, Keech Hospice.

Denise said: "I am delighted to be here today. Marsh Farm meant such a lot to Tony. To think that future generations will be made aware of his legacy is truly humbling and together with his sons I am honoured to see him remembered in this way."

John Healey said: "I am proud to join Denise today to unveil this plaque to Anthony Jules.

The final phase comprises 83 apartments, 11 houses, play areas, parking and new landscaping. The housing is all affordable rented accommodation for council residents.

Of the houses, four of them are four-bedroom homes, of which two are dedicated to families with disabilities, including ground floor double bedrooms and wet rooms with capacity for a through floor lift to enable users to have access to all parts of the home. The properties have been built to life time homes standards.

CLlr Tom Shaw, portfolio holder for Housing, said: "This is a momentous day not just for Marsh Farm but for the whole town. We are committed to providing top quality buildings local people can make their homes. Incoming investment is being translated not only in to bricks and mortar, but opportunities for residents as we work towards our goal of tackling poverty by 2040."

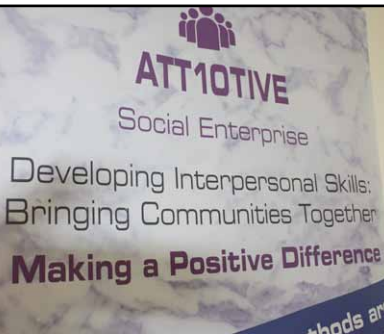


The extensive £32m scheme is part of the council's ongoing commitment to regenerating Luton, attracting new businesses to the town and offering more local jobs for local people. The project has also provided valuable apprenticeships for school leavers looking to begin a career in the construction industry.

Mohammed Rafi CEO Marsh Farm Futures said: "It's great to see this wonderful housing scheme reach its final milestone, originally with the completion of the new shops and now the residential phase. I am very proud that MFF has been a key partner in this development, being an active partner in the steering group, facilitator for local community consultation in Futures House, providing meeting space for local residents to give their views on the planning and other consultation phases and jointly employing a local resident as an apprentice, who eventually secured a full time job as a trainee surveyor, with the developer, Engie".

The entire scheme was designed in partnership with the Marsh Farm Steering Group which consisted of residents, businesses and key stakeholders from the Marsh Farm estate.





**Futures House**  
**The Moakes • Marsh Farm**  
**Luton • Bedfordshire**  
**LU3 3QB**

**TEL: 01582 512555**

**[www.marshfarmfutures.co.uk](http://www.marshfarmfutures.co.uk)**

**Marsh Farm**  
**Futures**



**working for all the community**





- Affordable & sustainable community facilities
- Vibrant local economy
- Build capacity via community 'anchor' organisation
- Support young people
- Improve opportunities & experiences

- 
- Futures Fun Factory
  - LARGE HALLS for Hire
  - Community IT Facilities
  - OFFICE SPACE rental
  - Meeting Rooms for Hire
  - Community Business Events
  - Complimentary Wifi
  - Refreshments & Catering
  - Discount for Community & Voluntary groups



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