



MESSAGE FROM THE CEO, MOHAMMED RAFI

SPRING 2021 NEWSLETTER

THIS ISSUE:



Hello,

Welcome to the Spring edition of the MFF Newsletter.

It's unbelievable that we have been in lockdown for over a year now but thankfully, there is a light at the end of the tunnel and the roll out of the COVID vaccine is well underway.

Futures House remains closed to the public but we are hopeful that we will be able to welcome you all back very soon. My staff and I continue to be available for the community in whatever capacity is required.

As you may remember from our last newsletter, our Children's Christmas Presents project was a huge success and there were lots of happy children and parents. It definitely made all the hard work worthwhile. Unexpectedly, we were nominated for and won the Spirit of Luton award along with Luton Irish Forum and Big Farley Local, quite humbling, considering all the other organisations involved.

We are now in the final phase of the CCLORS funded Better Futures Programme, giving food and support to the community. Over 300 families have been supported with food and care parcels, packed lunches and our befriending service during the pandemic.

I hope you enjoy the features in this edition, let us know.

Stay safe and keep well.

Mohammed Rafi

Welcome message from CEO
PAGE 01

Better Futures Programme
PAGES 02 - 03

Community Focus: Dave Heywood,
Heywood House
PAGE 04

Fraud and Scam Alerts
PAGE 05

Sight Concern
PAGE 06

Office Space
PAGE 07

Support and advice
PAGE 08

Gallery
PAGE 09



BETTER FUTURES PROGRAMME

The Better Futures Programme has been made possible with funding from the COVID-19 Community Led Organisations Recovery Scheme, delivered by Power to Change, Locality, the Ubele Initiative and Social Investment business in partnership with the National Lottery Community Fund.

The Better Futures Programme has so far supported over 300 families in Marsh Farm and the surrounding areas.

Care and Food Parcels

The delivery of these parcels continues to be very much needed. We deliver between 5 & 6 a week on average but there's been a marked increase recently with new families needing help. **Kris and Kerry**, food parcel recipients said: "There is so much in there and it helps us and other families in need in this pandemic"

The Better Futures half term lunches were once again very well received by the community. The aim of the project was to give out as many packed lunches as possible during the half term period to children in receipt of free school meals. Fresh sandwiches were bought each morning and packed along with a drink, fruit and crisps.

Employability Programme

Due to the current lockdown, we have not been able to deliver face to face training but we are hopeful that this will take place once Covid 19 guidelines allow. We hope to offer training opportunities that will help people get back into work and are currently looking at SIA training but there may be other options available. If you are interested in taking part in our Employability Training Programme please email your expressions of interest.

Children & Families

As part of our support to families affected by Covid 19 we had hoped to give children and their parents a free fun day outing but this has also been delayed due to the lockdown rules. We are looking forward to making this happen as soon as we can.

If you are interested in any of the above, please email [Cathy](#) or [Selina](#) or call us 01582 512 555.



" I urge anyone who needs help, even if it's just someone to talk to and check on you or if you or /and your family need help with food to call either myself or Selina on 01582 512 555 or email us."

Cathy McShane



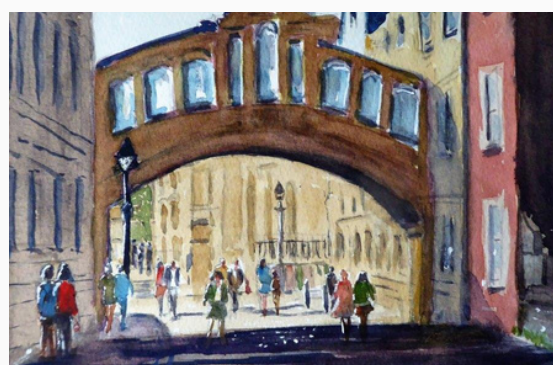


BETTER FUTURES PROGRAMME

COMMUNITY BEFRIENDING SERVICE

Our Wednesday morning zoom chats with the Sundon Art Group continue and over the last few weeks there has been a significant increase in numbers. This has proved to be a much-needed resource that not only gives the group a chance to see and chat to each other but also, we are able to signpost them to relevant agencies if required and give them updates on what Marsh Farm Futures is doing. The weekly Wednesday Zoom quiz night also continues to be very successful, with between 26 – 30 people taking part each week.

We have also started a weekly chat session with the organisers of the Limbury 50+ Group and are hoping to encourage more of their members to take part. Our regular one to one phone chats with a few people who for various reasons have needed support and someone to speak to over the lockdown period have continued and it is a pleasure to catch up on their lives, have a general chitchat and help with any issues.



The Sundon Arts group have been enjoying taking part in painting challenges producing beautiful paintings that will be displayed in Futures House at a later date.



COMMUNITY FOCUS: DAVE HEYWOOD, BUSINESS MANAGER, HEYWOOD HOUSE DAY CARE

Tell us about your background and how Heywood House came about: I started working in IT in 1985, yes they had computers even then! Over the years I moved through various roles in the industry until 2014 when I joined Heywood House. My wife Clare had set up Heywood House in 2012 to provide day care for disabled young adults. Our son Jack has profound learning difficulties and left his special school in 2010. We found it difficult to find somewhere for him to go so if in doubt "do it yourself" that's how Heywood House was born. Over the years it has been a steep learning curve but very rewarding. In 2012 we started with 5 clients and 5 staff. We have steadily grown in numbers and now we have 63 clients and 79 staff.

What does Heywood House offer to the community? We provide day care for young adults with profound and multiple learning difficulties and additional complex needs. Our clients are with us for education, social care and/or continuing health care. We try to make Heywood House a lively place for our clients to learn, grow and have fun.

How has the Covid 19 pandemic affected the business and your clients and what have been the challenges?

Heywood House like other providers has had to cope with a lot of changes as a result of the pandemic and lockdowns. We stayed open throughout the year but had to reduce the number of clients and staff. We continued to provide care for 10 clients who were children of key workers or particularly vulnerable. There is now an even stricter cleaning regime and we are all having to get used to using more PPE. Staff have found constantly wearing face masks a challenge and keeping to social distancing has meant being even more creative when it comes to planning activities.

What is the best part of your job?

That's easy. I am based in the Heywood House reception so I get to say hello and have a joke with clients as they come in.

How're things now that we are slowly getting back to 'normal'?

We now have more clients coming back which is good but we still have to maintain safe levels of care. Everyone is getting used to the new way of working and clients are getting used to staff wearing PPE. I'm sure we will get back to "normal" but things are never really just "normal" at Heywood House.

Last words for our readers?

The pandemic has been difficult for everyone but as the vaccine is rolled out we can look forward to better times.



"Nothing at Heywood House is set in stone!"

"If something needs changing to meet your needs we will do our utmost to do it."

DAVE HEYWOOD





FRAUD AND SCAM ALERTS

Fraudsters don't care who their victims are

It pays to be aware of the different scams currently making the rounds and what to do if you are a victim. Age UK have put together detailed information on the latest scams targeting older people in particular. Click [HERE](#) to find out more.

REMEMBER

- **PERSONAL INFORMATION** - Always question uninvited approaches in case it's a scam. Instead, contact the company directly using a known email or phone number. Try using a different phone line if possible or wait for a period of time as scammers have a way to stay on the line.
- **STAY IN CONTROL** - Have the confidence to refuse unusual requests for personal or financial information. It's easy to feel embarrassed when faced with unexpected or complex conversations. It's always okay to stop the discussion if you do not feel in control of it.
- **REMOTE ACCESS** - Never install any software or visit a website as a result of a cold call. Unsolicited requests for remote access to your computer should always raise a red flag.
- **SOFTWARE** - Keep operating system and virus protection software up-to-date
- **RESEARCH** - Don't make any advanced payments until you are sure the company you're dealing with is legitimate.

Every year, the British public loses billions of pounds to fraudsters. With scams ranging from the simplest confidence trick to the most sophisticated high-tech online fraud, it pays to keep up to date with the latest news and advice



SIGHT CONCERN MOVES TO NEW OFFICES

Sight Concern Bedfordshire is delighted to announce that it has moved its Luton offices to Futures House, LU3 3QB, and, later in the year, will be running their Low Vision Clinic and Visual Impairment Advisory service from this new location.

Sight Concern Bedfordshire is a local independent charity, with offices in both Luton and Bedford, which has been supporting people with sight loss in Bedfordshire for over 90 years.

Speaking about their move to a new location in Luton, CEO, Carol O'Brien said that "We have all had a tough year with the pandemic but we are very much looking forward to being at Futures House and meeting people face to face again". George Hogman, the charity's visual impairment champion, said "I think it is a great thing that Sight Concern is moving into a new set of offices and I am really looking forward to being part of the Marsh Farm community for Sight Concern."



If you would like support, or know someone who would benefit from our services please do get in touch with us. You can phone our telephone support which is available Mon-Fri from 10am-2.30pm by dialling 01234 311555.

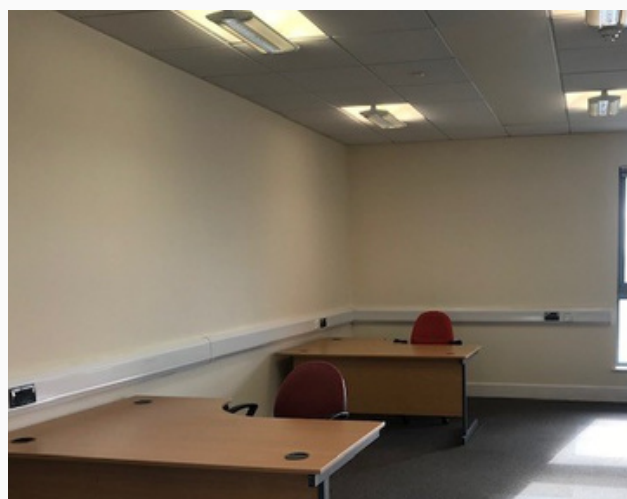
Please click [HERE](#) to start listening to the LATEST Luton News and Dunstable Gazette talking Newspapers



Office space in Futures House

Futures House is a modern architectural building with natural light and a stunning atrium. We offer quality office space to rent with sizes from 10sq m up to 300 sq m on either short term 12 month licenses or long term leases, at very competitive prices.

Tenants can enjoy allocated parking bays as well as free visitors parking. There is an onsite café and seating area for visitors as well as a tenant's lounge and kitchen area. We also have conference and meeting spaces which tenants can hire for their meetings and events. **Click on the images to view the rooms.**



To view more offices click [here](#) or go to our website at www.marshfarmfutures.co.uk or call us on 01582 512 555



Help and Advice

Food and care parcels

During these difficult times, Marsh Farm Futures offer a free food and care parcel delivery service * conditions apply, please call Cathy or Selina on 01582 512 555.

Luton Foodbank are here, at the entrance of Futures House, every Monday from 11am – 1pm. Call 01582 725838 for more information on eligibility and other locations

Joseph's Storebasket distribute free food parcels, including culturally specific food and fresh vegetables, every Friday at the entrance to Futures House from 10am – 1pm. They also offer a free delivery service . To register email: [Marjorie Robinson](mailto:Marjorie.Robinson@josephsstorebasket.co.uk)

Befriending Service – Marsh Farm Futures is here for you if you need someone to talk to or need signposting to another organisation. Call Cathy or Selina on 01582 512 555.

Domestic Abuse

You are not alone – In an emergency, dial 999

National Domestic Abuse 24 hour helpline Tel.0808 2000247

[Chat online](#) to someone who can help and support you

[Help](#) for victims of domestic violence

LGBTQ Support

All Ages from [MindOut](#)

Young People aged 13 – 19 years from [TOKKO](#)

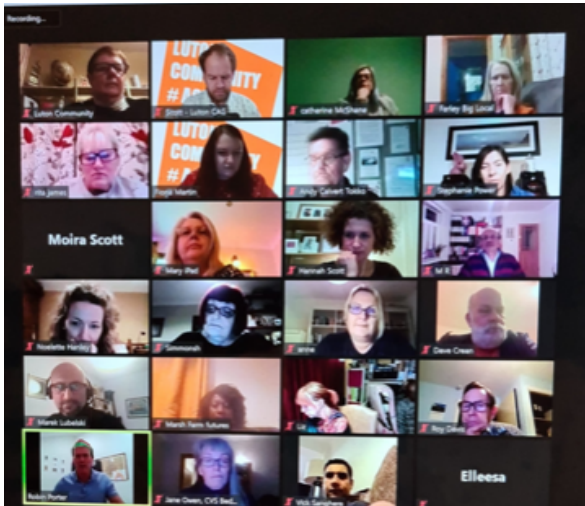
Luton Borough Council

Housing/Benefit Advice - They are no longer at the front desk of Futures House but can be contacted on 0300 7900 345

Council tax enquiries - 0300 7900 340

Futures Fun Factory remains closed but we look forward to welcoming you back towards the end of the year.

Gallery



Spirit of Luton online celebration 2021



Covid testing bus outside Futures House 2021



Packed lunches Project 2020/21



Joseph's Basket Foodbank Service 2020/21



Packed lunches Project 2021



Community Fun Day 2019



Football project 2019



MFF Community Fun day 2019



Covid 19 Vaccination bus outside Futures House 2021