

H

The Higgins
BEDFORD



Supported using public funding by
**ARTS COUNCIL
ENGLAND**

WHAT'S ON

April to September 2023



Edward Bawden (1903-1989), *To Winnipeg*, 1950 © 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

EXHIBITIONS

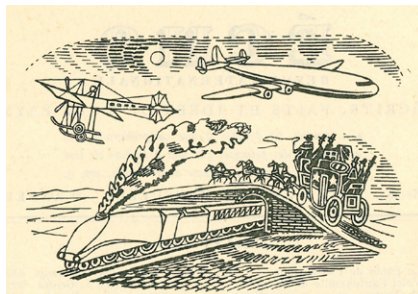
Edward Bawden - Trains, Planes and Automobiles

11 March – 3 March 2024

Edward Bawden Gallery –
Free Entry

Let Edward Bawden transport you in this exhibition celebrating all things travel. Drawn

exclusively from the Edward Bawden archive, see large linocuts of London's iconic stations and an array of wonderful vehicles from hot air balloons to jumbo jets and tall ships to cruise liners.



Edward Bawden (1903-1989), Illustrations for *Echo: Revue Internationale*, 1949 © The Edward Bawden Estate

Teasing Out Contingencies

17 June – January 2024

Sir William Harpur Gallery

Experience new large-scale painting installations and sculptural costumes by interdisciplinary artist Quilla Constance (aka QC). QC's paintings feature opulent interiors from Buckingham Palace alongside carnivalesque interactions with people from London, Bedford and overseas.

This project began with a series of 'QC Open Studio'

performance workshops at Tate Modern in 2019. Artworks for this show also reference QC's collaboration with presenter-comedians Rob Beckett and Romesh Ranganathan for the TV docuseries 'Rob & Romesh vs Art', Sky Max, which aired during Covid19 lockdown. This project is supported by Arts Council England, Tate Modern and Bedford Creative Arts.



© Quilla Constance



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We Are Ten

Wixamtree, Connections Galleries

Free Entry – 27 May – 28 January 2024

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 artworks from the collection to exhibit in the Wixamtree Gallery. The Connections Gallery will showcase the changing landscape of Bedford by local artists including Stanley Orchard and Clifford Knight. The artworks were collected by one of the town's best-known historians, the late Richard Wildman and generously donated to The Higgins in 2021 by his brother Stephen.



We Are Ten Celebratory Events on 21 June All Free, Booking Essential

Teasing Out Contingencies Artist's Talk: 11.30am – 12pm

Join guest artist Quilla Constance for a tour of her artwork.

We Are Ten Exhibition tour: 12.30pm – 1pm

Join Keeper of Fine and Decorative Art, Victoria Partridge, for a tour of some of the highlights of the community exhibition in Wixamtree Gallery.

We are Ten Exhibition tour:

2pm – 2.30pm

Join Keeper of Social History, Lydia Saul, for a tour of the Richard Wildman collection of local scenes in the Connections Gallery.



Rob Maddams, *St Cuthbert's*
© The Maddams Family

To book a place call the Box Office on [01234 718044](tel:01234718044) (open Mon – Fri 10am – 4pm) or go to the website www.thehigginsbedford.org.uk/Book_Online

DISPLAYS

Aragon Lacemakers: Keeping Lacemaking Alive

4 April 2023 – April 2024

Bobbin Lace is integral to the history of Bedford as it was a major local cottage industry.

The method of making lace hasn't changed but the style has, bringing lace up to date with modern trends. Aragon Lacemakers have just celebrated their 45th anniversary and are delighted to display a variety of contemporary lace made by members; from bracelets to gloves and coloured pictures to garters. There will also be plenty of opportunities to have a go at this fascinating heritage craft - it's easier than it looks!



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

Continues until 1 October

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 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. Afterwards, 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.



Texas Instruments, c.1957

EVENTS

Come In, St. George

22 April 11am -3pm. Free Entry

A celebration of English morris dancing tradition to mark St George's Day. See website for further details.

Knitting and Crochet Group

Tuesdays: 18 April, 16 May,
20 June, 18 July, 15 August,
19 September; 11am – 1pm

Free Entry, Booking Essential

Get creative and join like-minded crafters to create items for

charities and events. Sessions will

be running both at The Higgins Bedford and online.

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 to share photos and talk all things
knitting and crocheting: www.bit.ly/HigginsKnittingGroup



Volunteers Week

1 – 7 June

Volunteers' Week is a national event and a chance for all organisations supported by volunteers to say thank you. During a

challenging few years, volunteers have made an invaluable contribution – sharing their time, energy and skills to help The Higgins recover from the pandemic. Volunteers support every aspect of The Higgins' work - meeting and greeting visitors, looking after gardens, helping with research and oral history projects and much more.



To find out more about volunteers' week and volunteering at The Higgins email gemma.hutton@bedford.gov.uk

The Great Big Green Week

10 – 18 June

The Great Big Green Week is the UK's biggest ever celebration of community action to tackle the climate crisis and protect nature. The Higgins Bedford will be supporting the event with a range of activities, stalls and information. Keep an eye on the website for more details. If you are part of a community group that would like to get involved – email gemma.hutton@bedford.gov.uk

Refugee Week

19 – 25 June

The theme for Refugee Week 2023 is compassion. It is the 25th anniversary for Refugee Week in the UK and this year the aim is to create a shared understanding of compassion, to highlight acts of compassion in action and to ensure we are extending compassion

widely to all. *“Our task must be to free ourselves – by widening our circles of compassion to embrace all living creatures and the whole of nature in its beauty.”*

- Albert Einstein



Keep an eye on the website for more details of Refugee Week events closer to the time. If you're a community group or individual that would like to get involved with Refugee Week at The Higgins Bedford email gemma.hutton@bedford.gov.uk

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.

Yoga Every Monday (except Bank Holidays)

10.30am – 11.30am, £5

Enquiries and to book a place: junehannigan@outlook.com

Table Tennis Every Monday (except Bank Holidays)

12:30pm – 1:30pm, £3

All levels welcome.

Pilates Every Tuesday,

10am – 10:45am, £3

All levels welcome.

Bring your own mat.



Mindful Walking

Every Friday, 11am – 12pm, with optional coffee stop after, Free

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, self-led, no tuition.

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

REMINISCENCE SESSIONS

Remember When...?

Reminiscence Mornings

11am - 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.

20 April – Bourns in Bedford, 75 years of Technological Innovation

Come and share memories of Texas Instruments, now Bourns Ltd, from the 1960s to their contribution to worldwide technology today.

11 May – Coronation Celebrations

Join us to share in memories of Coronation celebrations as we mark the Coronation of King Charles III and remember other Kings and Queens who have shaped the United Kingdom over the centuries.

15 June – Valuable Volunteering

Come and share your stories of volunteering in various roles or volunteers who you have encountered through local charities or organisations that you would like to pay tribute to.

13 July – The Higgins Bedford is Ten!

Come and celebrate with us with our new exhibition and memories of enjoying The Higgins Bedford over the decades for our tenth anniversary since our refurbishment and opening as a joint art gallery and museum.

Break for August

14 Sept – Musical Melodies

Come and share your favourite musicians, songs, performances and soundtracks with the group.

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 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 online talks. Membership of the Friends is £35 for an individual, £50 for joint membership or £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 - Free to members

The lectures will be held on Tuesday evenings at St Andrews Church Hall, Kimbolton Road at 7.30pm.

4 April	Sculptor John Evan Thomas – William Gibbs
25 April	The Uneasy Head – Christopher Joll
23 May	The Few who Flew – Lord Naseby
5 September	Altarpiece in Renaissance Art – Professor David Ekserdjian
24 October	Artists' Rifles in wartime – Patrick Baty
7 November	Work and films of Powell and Pressburger – Professor David Ekserdjian
28 November	Jacob Epstein, artist and sculptor – Dr Evelyn Silber

Further information about all of the lectures visit
www.friendsofthehiggins.org

GROUP TOURS

Discover the history of outstanding collections, stop for lunch at The Higgins Pantry café, shop for cards and gifts and enjoy the surrounding attractions of Bedford's Cultural Quarter. If your group is interested in booking a group tour, please email thehiggins@bedford.gov.uk or telephone **01234 718618** to discuss details. Please allow a minimum of four weeks' notice for group bookings. Tours are subject to availability during opening hours.

SHOP AT THE HIGGINS BEDFORD

Our shop has 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 exhibitions. Every purchase supports The Higgins Bedford. National Art Pass members can receive a 10% discount in the shop on stationery and gifts.

VOLUNTEERS WANTED: COULD YOU HELP TO SUPPORT SCHOOL VISITS?

We are looking for volunteers that would like to lead and support our formal learning sessions and school visits. The sessions are fun, creative and hands-on. You'd 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 at gemma.hutton@bedford.gov.uk or on **01234 726365**.

FAMILY ACTIVITIES



Easter Holidays – Amazing Art!

April: Tuesdays 4 and 11, Wednesday 5 and 12,
Thursday 6 and 13

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

Booking Essential

Creative activities inspired by all the amazing art on display at The Higgins.

May Half Term – Bedford Under the Sea

Tuesday 30, Wednesday 31 May,
Thursday 1 and Friday 2 June

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

Booking Essential

Did you know that millions of years ago Bedford was under the sea? Join us for creative activities inspired by the ancient creatures that lived here then.



**All workshops last for an hour and are aimed at
4 to 12 year olds.**

Summer Holidays – We Are 10!

Dates to be confirmed

Come along and join in with a variety of fun and creative activities for the family celebrating ten years of The Higgins. **Check our website and social media for up to date details on all Family 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)

Sunday Crafternoons

23 April, 21 May, 25 June, 24 September, 22 October
2pm – 4pm, Free Entry, No Need to Book

Creative activities for families to have a go at together and enjoy. Please be aware that space is limited and there may be a wait to start. Suitable for under 12s. Children must be accompanied by an adult.



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. There are many themes to choose from.



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.

History 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. Hands-on sessions focus on local history and cover topics from Prehistory to World War 2.

Art Workshops for Schools from less than £3.50 per pupil

Explore the diverse and world famous art in our collections. Be inspired by the work on display and create your own art. Standard art workshops include portraits and printing. Have a go at different skills and media through hands on workshops inspired by art and objects on display. 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

Easter Opening hours 7 – 10 April

Good Friday: 11am–5pm Easter Saturday: 11am–5pm
Easter Sunday: Closed Easter Monday: 2pm–5pm

Bank holiday opening times

The Higgins will be open 2–5pm on Bank Holiday Mondays:

10 April; 1, 8 and 29 May; 28 August

Please check the website before your visit for any changes.

Floor Repairs

Some galleries will need to close for repairs to wooden floors following recent flooding. Dates for the works are not confirmed at the time of going to press. Before making your journey please check our website www.thehigginsbedford.org.uk, social media, email thehiggins@bedford.gov.uk or tel: 01234 718618 to ensure that all galleries will be fully open on the day of your visit.

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 on 01234 718044 between 10am and 4pm Tuesday to Saturday.

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 eat@thehigginspantry.co.uk

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 two 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 in the galleries. 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.

NTACT US

Entrance is free
Donations are welcome

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

Visit the website at

www.thehigginsbedford.org.uk

Email thehiggins@bedford.gov.uk

or call us on 01234 718618

Stay in touch...



On Facebook

[thehigginsbedford](https://www.facebook.com/thehigginsbedford)



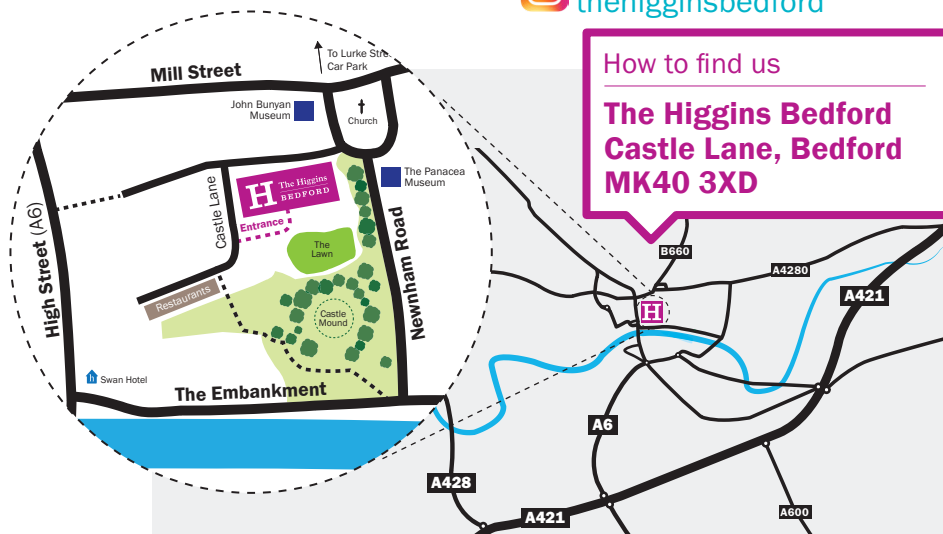
On Twitter

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



On Instagram

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



How to find us

The Higgins Bedford
Castle Lane, Bedford
MK40 3XD

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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design@bedford.gov.uk