

Churches Together in Luton and Treehouse at the University

The Chaplaincy at the University of Bedfordshire is called Treehouse and has facilities on both the Bedford and Luton campuses with outreach to our study centres as well. As a department we are known as Community and Faith and in recent years we have become part of Student Support under the leadership of Jon Stanley. We work alongside our Mental Health and Wellbeing provision, Student Engagement and Mitigation Team, Student Money Advice Team and Careers and Employability Service. Chaplaincy at the University has a rich heritage which we build on today. Previous chaplains led on the Bedford and Luton campus but since June 2023 we have had a Lead Chaplain for the whole University encouraging a uniform and united approach.



The Treehouse has a team of chaplains including the Lead Chaplain, Helen Burgess and Deputy Lead Chaplain, Antoinette Mutabazi both employed by UBECT University of Bedfordshire Ecumenical Chaplaincy Trust, St Albans Diocese. We also have three Assistant Chaplains, two in Luton, Praisya Samuels and Joyce Olesi and in Bedford Luke Quinlan employed by the University and a team of Treehouse volunteers on both campuses who support Treehouse in the day to day running of the service.



Luke in the treehouse

Treehouse is a Christian led chaplaincy in a multi cultural multi faith provision. We support and work with all students and staff. It is a place of welcome and hospitality and for some of our students a home away from home. Student populations do differ on the Luton and Bedford campuses. A feature of Treehouse on the Bedford campus is a mobile Treehouse and Luke can often be found between 12 and 2pm with his mobile Treehouse trolley, catching up with students and staff and distributing hot chocolate.

The image of the tree is familiar to many faith traditions and frequently used in contemporary society. It resembles a place of sanctuary, shelter, meeting, community and growth. Under the shade of the tree we can encounter individuals different to ourselves, linger and share our stories. The Treehouse at the University of Bedfordshire is all of this and more. On the Luton campus we even have a Treehouse!

Many of our students have travelled from across the world to study at the University and in the Treehouse they find they can rest a while, and make new friends. The Treehouse is a place of respect and peace as well as fun and creativity.

The Treehouse is also a place of accompaniment where the team welcomes students and staff and walks with them along life's journey. It is a place in which to celebrate joyful milestones and seasons of faith. It is also a place for the more difficult days. Life happens in the Treehouse and the team have the privilege to meet with those who enter and to work with the wider Student Support team.

Treehouse is usually open Monday to Friday for Students and staff to drop in. There is always a warm welcome and a hot drink, sometimes other treats as well! The week is punctuated with prayer (both Luton and Bedford campuses have prayer rooms), laughter, music, games, events and activities. Tuesday evenings on the Luton campus have been for more than a decade very special when we host the Globe café in partnership with Stopsley Baptist Church.



Peace Walk

We value most highly our relationship with the community and our local faith leaders. It was also wonderful to share in the recent Luton Peace walk and last week during interfaith week to welcome local faith leaders to the Treehouse Luton for afternoon tea. Also during the week we had opportunities both in Luton and Bedford for interfaith dialogue.

We would love to hear from you if you want to know more about Treehouse or get involved in some way. Thank you Churches Together Luton for all your support!

We warmly invite you to join us at St Mary's Church at 6.30pm on 7th December for our Carols by Candlelight service. Please book on the following Eventbrite link.

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/carols-by-candlelight-tickets-754474873657?aff=oddtcreator>



In the treehouse

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