



We hope that you will find this guide both interesting and informative. We also hope that it will inspire you to find out more about aspects of the different Asian cultures in the town... festivals... heritage... music... food...

This publication was compiled by Bedford Borough and Central Bedfordshire Libraries and any comments or additional information would be happily received.

If you would like to comment on something in this guide please do not hesitate to contact us on the web at [www.bedford.gov.uk](http://www.bedford.gov.uk) click on Libraries, click on Contact Us or telephone us at Bedford Central Library 01234 718178.

Asian Bedford is available to download from the Virtual Library website at [www.bedford.gov.uk](http://www.bedford.gov.uk) click on Libraries, click on Local Information.

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### Where to find out about the art of Asian countries:

- In Bedford Library, Harpur Street you can find books on the history of Asian art as well as books about oriental ceramics, origami, calligraphy, book illustration, sculpture and textiles.
- The library also has an excellent reference collection of dictionaries and encyclopedias of art and artists of the world.
- Oxford Art Online offers a vast amount of information about Western and non-Western visual art. Explore it on the Virtual Library. [www.bedford.gov.uk](http://www.bedford.gov.uk) click on Libraries and scroll to click on Online Resources.
- Check the library catalogue on the Virtual Library for books on Asian art. [www.bedford.gov.uk](http://www.bedford.gov.uk), click on Libraries, click on Search, Request, Renew.

### Where to buy Asian art:

- Decor is a company based in Park Road West, Bedford which specialises in supplying Asian art, greetings cards and calendars to Indian restaurants and businesses <http://www.decoruk.com/>

### Where to buy art materials:

- The Art Centre & Gallery in Howard Street, Bedford has a wide selection of art materials and accessories including those for Chinese painting and calligraphy.



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*'A book holds a house of gold'* - Chinese saying

## Asian Connections in Bedfordshire

- Born in India in 1870, Sir Alexander Stanhope Cobbe is Bedfordshire's only Victoria Cross holder; he came to Bedfordshire when he married the daughter of the Mond family of Colworth House. He was awarded the honour after a battle in Somalia in 1902. After the First World War he was appointed Military Secretary at the India Office. He was promoted to full General in 1924 and given charge of the Northern Command of India from 1926-30. He is buried in St. Peter's churchyard, Bedford.
- Poet and scholar Edward Fitzgerald was a frequent visitor to Bedfordshire, regularly staying at Goldington Hall. He also spent a lot of time in Bletsoe and it is rumoured that he translated the Persian poem The Rubaiyat of Omar Khayyam at Bletsoe's Falcon Inn. A mathematician and astronomer of considerable note, Khayyam's fame as a scientist has been greatly eclipsed in the West by the popularity of the Rubaiyat. These epigrammatic verse quatrains often contain serious reflections on metaphysical issues masked by a satirical style.
- Between 1871 and 1914 over 5,000 houses were built in Bedford to accommodate an influx of Anglo-Indians who had served in the Raj; Bedford was chosen because it offered a cheap public school education for their children. Interestingly, these same houses were later used to accommodate many Indian, Pakistani and Bangladeshi immigrants to the town in the 1950s, 1960s and 1970s.
- The R101 airship was constructed in Cardington and met disaster over Beauvais in 1931 on her way to Karachi, India. The route that she was to fly had been carefully surveyed and all the stations at which she might stop were prepared. Mooring masts were built at Ishmalia in Egypt and Karachi, India. A huge shed was also built at Drigh Road, Karachi (now the International Airport) to house the airship. At the time it was the largest building in the British Empire. The shed was later pulled down and used to repair bridges on the Indian railways.
- Mudhsuden Singh Panesar ("Monty") a popular cricketer and a left-arm spinner of great talent was born in Luton and educated at Bedford Modern School. He started his playing career with Luton Indians and Dunstable Town and played his first match for Bedfordshire at 17.

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*'My friend, let's not think of tomorrow, but let's enjoy this fleeting moment of life' – Omar Khayyam*

### Where to find books in Asian languages:

- Bedford Library in Harpur Street, Bedford has books to borrow in Bengali, Gujarati, Hindi, Punjabi, Tamil and Urdu. For a full list of these, have a look at the catalogue on the Virtual Library. [www.bedford.gov.uk](http://www.bedford.gov.uk) click on Libraries, click on Search, Request, Renew.

And if you fancy learning an Asian language, there are courses in Bengali, Chinese, Gujarati, Hindi, Marathi, Punjabi, Pushto, Tamil, Urdu and more... to borrow.

- The library also has a good range of Asian language dictionaries.

### Where to find books and maps about Asian countries and novels by Asian authors in English:

- If you want to borrow or consult guides, maps and books about the Asian continent or novels by Asian writers, visit Bedford Library.

### Where to find Asian films:

- For devotees of Asian films there's an excellent DVD selection at Bedford Library - films from Bollywood and the Chinese, Japanese, Korean and Punjabi cinema.



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*'Be like a bee, taking only the nectar from your experiences'* - Tamil proverb

## Other avenues to explore:

Have a look at Wikipedia for articles on Bollywood and the Hindi cinema and for links to further information about the South Asian cinema.

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bollywood>

Try these websites for more about films from specific countries:

### China

- Chinese Movie Database  
<http://dianying.com/en>

### India

- Upperstall – Indian cinema (search for films or people) and reviews  
<http://www.upperstall.com/home.html>

### Japan

- Cinema of Japan  
[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Japanese\\_cinema](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Japanese_cinema)

### Korea

- Koreanfilm.org  
<http://koreanfilm.org>

## Buying books in Asian languages

For bookshops which stock books in Asian languages, London is often your best option.

### Grant & Cutler at Foyles

for dictionaries, grammars, textbooks and courses in Asian languages.

113-119 Charing Cross Road

London WC2H 0EB

Tel. 020 77342012 Customer accounts and web queries

020 7440 3248 Shop floor at Foyles

[grantandcutler@foyles.co.uk](mailto:grantandcutler@foyles.co.uk)

[www.grantandcutler.com](http://www.grantandcutler.com)

### The Guanghai Company

for books and magazines in Chinese, books about China and Chinese art materials.

7 Newport Place

London WC2H 7JR

Tel. 020 7437 3737

[info@guanghai.com](mailto:info@guanghai.com)

<http://www.guanghai.com/about.php>

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*'A turtle travels only when it sticks its neck out'* – Korean proverb

For an extensive list of suppliers of Asian and other language material visit The Network at <http://www.seapn.org.uk> select 'Resources' and 'Suppliers List'.

### **Asian book reviews**

For reviews on books by Asian authors and books about Asia have a look at the Asian Review of Books  
<http://www.asianreviewofbooks.com>



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*'A smile will gain you ten more years of life' - Indian proverb*

### **Where to find out about the history of the Asian communities in Bedfordshire:**

Would you like to find out more about the history of the Asian communities in Bedfordshire? If so you may like to visit:

- **Bedford Central Library** – the Local Studies Library has newspaper cuttings, books and other information about the history of the Asian community in Bedfordshire.
- **Bedfordshire and Luton Archives & Records Service (BLARS)** – The Archives Service has many different sources of information about the Asian communities in Bedfordshire including original manuscript materials.

### **Where to find out about contacting an Asian cultural group or organisation:**

Would you be interested in contacting an Asian group or cultural organisation? If so, visit your local library for a list or visit the Virtual Library [www.bedford.gov.uk](http://www.bedford.gov.uk) click on Libraries and click on Local Information to find the Local Information Database (a list of Bedfordshire clubs, societies and organisations online).

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*'A book is like a garden carried in the pocket'* – Chinese proverb

## Finding out more....

### Books and articles

There are many books and articles published on the history of the communities in Bedford. But you might like to start with John Brown's classic study 'The Un-melting Pot: an English town and its immigrants'. Another useful introduction is 'Bedford: portrait of a multi-ethnic town' by the Open University. These and many other published materials can be found in Bedford Central Library's Local Studies Collection.

### Research Guides

An excellent starting point for research on the communities of Bedfordshire is the Bedfordshire and Luton Archives and Records Service (BLARS) 'Ethnic Sources' on [www.bedford.gov.uk](http://www.bedford.gov.uk) click on Archives and Records, then Ethnic Sources. This covers general articles as well as information about a wide variety of communities and individuals from India, Pakistan, Japan etc.

### Oral History

You may also find it useful to consult the Marston Vale Oral History Archive 'Changing Landscapes: Changing Lives'. Many of the individuals worked in the Bedfordshire brickfields and a number came as immigrant workers. These tape-recordings and transcriptions, with written summaries of each interview, plus associated photographs, are available to the public, by prior arrangement with the Forest Centre, Marston Moretaine. <http://www.marstonvale.org/index.html>

Full transcripts are also available at BLARS and Bedford Central Library in the Heritage Library.

## The London Brick Company

After the Second World War, the London Brick Company found it very difficult to recruit labour in a time of high employment. To meet demands for the post-war reconstruction programme they looked abroad for workers. Two main groups were identified: political exiles from Europe and economic migrants from the New Commonwealth. As a result, during the late 1950s workers began to arrive from both India and Pakistan.

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*'Art is the illusion of spontaneity'* – Japanese proverb

## Dance and music

### **Bhangra**

Bhangra is originally Punjabi dance music which was performed during harvest festivals and weddings. It has now developed into a type of Asian pop music which blends the traditional bhangra drumming with modern Western pop.

### **Bharata Natyam**

Bharata Natyam is one of the oldest dance forms of India and originated from South India.

### **Desi music**

Desi music is bhangra mixed with hip-hop, R & B or garage.

### **Dhol**

A dhol is a two-sided Indian drum played with two sticks.

### **Giddha**

Giddha or gidda is a lively Punjabi folk dance for women.

### **Kathak**

Kathak is a classical Indian dance which originated in North India.

### **Odissi**

Odissi is an Indian classical dance style from Orissa in North East India.

### **Mela**

Mela comes from the Sanskrit meaning to meet and is a celebration of the culture including the music and dance of Southern Asia. A Mela is held in Wardown Park, Luton in September each year.

### **Qawwali**

This is the devotional music of Sufi Muslims.

### **Sitar**

A sitar is an Indian stringed instrument with a long neck and a rounded body.

### **Tabla**

Tabla is a pair of small hand drums which originated in Northern India.

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*'Those who can't dance blame it on the flute and drum' – Thai saying*

## Where to learn about Asian dance and music

- **Asian Dance Classes**  
The 21<sup>st</sup> century Education Trust runs classical Indian dance classes in Bedford. Telephone 01234 856673 for more information.
- **Asian Music Classes**  
The 21<sup>st</sup> century Education Trust run Asian music classes - tabla, sitar, harmonium and vocals - in Bedford. Telephone 01234 856673 for more information.
- **Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan – Institute for Indian Art and Culture in London**  
Find information about short courses in dance and music and listings for events and exhibitions.  
<http://www.bhavan.net/>
- **SADA South Asian Dance**  
The definitive information resource for South Asian dance in the UK. You can find out about dance performances, classes, workshops and job opportunities both in the East of England and the rest of the UK.  
<http://www.southasiandance.org.uk/>



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*'We're fools whether we dance or not, so we might as well dance' –  
Japanese proverb*

## Listening to Asian music and finding listings

- **BBC Asian Network** - listen to Asian music: find listings, information about programmes and listen to music clips.  
<http://www.bbc.co.uk/asiannetwork>
- **Luton Mela**: the annual festival celebrating the arts, music and dance of South Asia. It is held in Wardown Park, Luton during the Summer each year and features many well known Bhangra bands.  
[www.lutonmela.com](http://www.lutonmela.com)



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*'We do not walk on our legs, but on our will'* – Sufi proverb

Asian dress, patterns and design have contributed to the richness and variety of clothing and fashion worldwide. Here are some descriptions of familiar and not so familiar items of clothing and design, which originated in the Asian continent.

### **Al-amira**

A veil, which comes in two pieces. A small close fitting cap covers the hair and the second piece of usually matching material, covers the head and shoulders.

### **Burqa**

An Islamic veil, like a long dark cloak that covers the whole face and body and has veiled eyeholes to see through.

### **Chador**

A large cloak, which covers the head and body completely and is worn by Muslim and Hindu women.

### **Choli**

The traditional short Indian blouse worn with a sari.

### **Cheongsam**

A close fitting high-necked dress with slits at the sides and traditionally worn by Chinese women.

### **Dhoti**

A long cotton loincloth worn by Hindu men.

### **Dupatta**

The Dupatta or Dopatta is the long scarf often worn with the salwar - kameez and used to cover the head or across one or both shoulders.

### **Hijab**

An Arabic word for veil which is used to describe the square headscarves worn by Muslim women that cover the head and hair and neck but leave the face clear.

**Ikat**

This is a process of tie-dying bundles of yarn prior to weaving. It is a Malay-Indonesian term: Java, Sumatra, Indonesia India and Japan are well known for their Ikat designs. The fabric is made into saris, bags, purses and bedspreads as well as other items.

**Kameez**

A long tunic or shirt often worn with trousers such as the salwar or shalwar.

**Khimar**

A long cape-like piece of cloth which wholly covers the hair, neck and shoulders and hangs down to just above the waist and leaves the face clear.

**Kimono**

A wide sleeved robe, which fastens with a broad sash. It was traditionally an outer garment in Japan.

**Lunghi**

A long cloth used as a loincloth, sash or turban and Hindi in origin.

**Madras**

A soft cotton fabric, which originated in India in the late nineteenth century and was exported from Madras (now Chennai) in South East India.

**Mandarin collar**

A stand up collar found on jackets, dresses and blouses.

**Mandarin jacket**

A straight loose jacket, which was traditionally worn by Chinese officials and has a Mandarin collar and fastens either in front or across the shoulder.

**Niquab**

A face veil, worn with a hijab by women that leaves the area around the eyes clear.

**Obi**

The wide sash worn with a kimono.

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*'Ten persons, ten colours'* – Japanese proverb

### **Paisley**

Paisley design is a type of pattern, which includes a teardrop or cone shaped swirl. It was traditionally used on shawls woven in Kashmir from about the eleventh century. The town of Paisley in Scotland produced imitation Kashmir shawls very economically during the nineteenth century and so gave its name to this distinctive pattern.

### **Pashmina**

A shawl that was originally made from pashm or pashmin, which is the underfleece of Himalayan goats.

### **Patka**

A smaller and lighter version of the full Sikh turban. It is often worn by young Sikhs. The young Luton born English cricketer Monty Panesar wears a black patka while training and playing cricket.

### **Sari**

The sari is a length of material often of very brightly coloured silk or cotton, which is worn by Indian women. It is worn over a short blouse called a choli and draped round the body to form a skirt or long trousers and then the long end which remains is slung over the shoulder or draped over the head. There are a number of different draping styles and lengths and the fabric often has rich and intricate designs.

### **Sarong**

A piece of fabric, which is draped round the body and tied at the waist or over the chest. It has become a fashion garment for the summer.

### **Salwar**

Salwar or shalwar are the loose fitting trousers of South Asian origin worn by both men and women

### **Salwar-Kameez**

This is a loose fitting outfit for both men and women consisting of loose-fitting trousers and a long tunic.

### **Shayla**

A long rectangular scarf, which is wrapped around the head and fastened in place at the shoulders.

### **Turban**

A headdress, which consists of a cap round which a long piece of linen, cotton or silk is wound.

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*'A fair face may hide a foul heart'* – Vietnamese proverb

## Finding out more...

Would you like to find out more about the history of Asian dress and fabrics? If so, here are some links you may wish to explore.

- Illustrations of the different veils worn by women  
[http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/shared/spl/hi/pop\\_ups/05/europe\\_muslim\\_veils/html/1.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/shared/spl/hi/pop_ups/05/europe_muslim_veils/html/1.stm)
- The Indian textiles collection at the Victoria & Albert Museum  
<http://www.vam.ac.uk/page/i/indian-textiles/>
- Detailed information about shawls of paisley design  
<http://www.victoriana.com/library/paisley/shawl.html>
- Illustrations of ikat designs from the Victoria & Albert Museum  
<http://www.vam.ac.uk/page/i/ikat>
- Information about traditional dress from East Asia (including kimonos) from the Victoria & Albert Museum.  
<http://www.vam.ac.uk/content/articles/t/traditional-dress-from-east-asia/>



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*'Those who do not study are only cattle dressed up in men's clothes.'* –  
Chinese proverb

### Finding statistics

To find statistics about Asian Bedfordshire from the 2001 census click <http://www.galaxy.bedfordshire.gov.uk/webingres/bedfordshire/census/index.htm> and then 'Area Profiles'. Select 'Ward', 'Parish' or 'Area' to find statistical information about Ethnic Groups.

<b>2001 Census Statistics (numbers of people)</b>	
<b>Bedford</b>  Bangladeshi – 2023 Chinese - 616 Indian - 6335 Pakistani - 2352 Other Asian - 740	<b>South Beds</b>  Bangladeshi – 24 Chinese - 302 Indian - 844 Pakistani - 94 Other Asian - 192
<b>Mid Beds</b>  Bangladeshi – 45 Chinese - 334 Indian – 630 Pakistani - 94 Other Asian - 121	<b>Bedfordshire</b>  Bangladeshi – 2092 Chinese - 1252 Indian - 7809 Pakistani - 2540 Other Asian - 1053

For further information for Bedford Borough see:  
[http://www.bedford.gov.uk/council\\_and\\_democracy/statistics\\_and\\_census.aspx](http://www.bedford.gov.uk/council_and_democracy/statistics_and_census.aspx)

and for further information for Central Bedfordshire see:  
<http://www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/council-and-democracy/statistics/default.aspx>

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*'The wise understand by themselves, fools follow the reports of others' –  
Tibetan proverb*

## Festivals and events

### Religious and cultural festivals

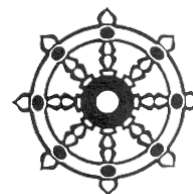
Listed below, with **2012** dates, are some of the major Asian religious and cultural festivals celebrated in the UK.

#### Buddhist

**Asalha Puja** : Turning of the wheel of teaching  
**Vesakha Puja/Wesak/Buddha Day**

July 3rd

May 5th



#### Chinese

**Ch'ing Ming**: Festival of Pure Brightness  
**Chung Yuan**: Festival of hungry ghosts  
**Teng Chieh**: Lantern Festival  
**Yuan Tan**: New Year's Day  
2012 is the Year of the Dragon.

April 4<sup>th</sup>

August 31st

February 6<sup>th</sup>  
January 23<sup>rd</sup>



#### Hindu

**Diwali (Deepavali)**: Festival of Light  
**Holi**: Spring Festival  
**Lohri**  
**Mahashivratri**: Great Shiva Night  
**Navaratri**  
**Raksha Bandhan**  
**Rama Navami**: Birthday of Rama

November 13<sup>th</sup>  
March 8th  
January 14<sup>th</sup>  
February 20th  
October 16th  
August 2nd  
April 1st



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*'Be not afraid of growing slowly, be afraid only of standing still'* – Chinese proverb

## Muslim

**Al-Hijra:** New Year's Day

**Ashura**

**Eid-ul-Adha:** the Festival of Sacrifice

**Eid-ul-Fitr:** the Festival of the breaking of the fast at the end of Ramadan

**Lailat-ul-Qadr:** the Night of Power

**Ramadan:** the month of fasting from dawn to sunset

November 15<sup>th</sup>

November 24<sup>th</sup>

October 26<sup>th</sup>

August 19<sup>th</sup>

August 14<sup>th</sup>

from July 20<sup>th</sup>



## Sikh

**Bandi Chhor Divas (Divali)**

**Birthday of Guru Nanak**

**Birthday of Guru Gobind Singh**

**Martyrdom of Guru Arjan**

**Martyrdom of Guru Tegh Bahadur**

**Vaisakhi (Baisakhi):** New Year Festival

November 13<sup>th</sup>

November 28<sup>th</sup>

January 5<sup>th</sup>

June 16<sup>th</sup>

November 24<sup>th</sup>

April 13<sup>th</sup>



## Other festivals and events

- **The Luton Mela** takes place during the Summer each year at Wardown Park, New Bedford Road, Luton and is one of the UK's major Asian cultural events with local and national performers. For more information nearer the time, visit [www.lutonmela.com](http://www.lutonmela.com). A 'mela' meaning fair or gathering is a festival celebrating Asian music, dance, arts, crafts and cuisine.

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*'Help one another, for we are all in the same boat'* – Chinese quotation

**For more information about Asian festivals have a look at:**

**BBC: Religion and Ethics**

This gives a useful introduction to the world's major religions (including Asian ones) and covers all the essentials - beliefs, customs, holy days, texts and history.

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/religion/religions>



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*'Union is the source of success'* – Mongolian proverb

### Asian food in Bedford:

- Coriander, okra, mango, tamarind, chillies, chutneys, sushi and curry.....the flavours and foods of Asia can be savoured and enjoyed in restaurants, shops and takeaways in many parts of the town. You can find Chinese, Indian and Thai cuisine in Bedford.
- If you are cooking Asian style at home you can find many different ingredients for your recipes in Bedford and the Queens Park area of town – wander down Ford End Road and Iddesleigh Road.

### Where can you learn more about Asian cookery?

- **Bedford Library** has a selection of Asian cookery books which you can borrow. Discover new recipes and foods and see the wide range of books on offer by looking at the online catalogue of the Virtual Library [www.bedford.gov.uk](http://www.bedford.gov.uk) click on Libraries, click on Search, Request, Renew.
- **Asian Cook** offers recipes and techniques.  
<http://www.asiancook.co.uk/>
- **BBC Foods Around the World**  
Select from Chinese, Indian, Japanese, Thai and South East Asian recipes.  
<http://www.bbc.co.uk/food/cuisines>

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*'Different men have different opinions; some like apples, some onions' –  
Indonesian saying*

### **Ayurvedic medicine**

Ayurvedic medicine is the best known form of traditional Indian medicine.

### **Indian head massage**

Indian head massage originated in India over 1,000 years ago; many people find that it helps to relieve stress and tension in their everyday lives.

### **Japanese medicine**

Japanese medicine derives from the religion of Shintoism. Japanese medicine is not well known in the west although many people are now familiar with Japanese therapies such as shiatsu and reiki.

### **Tibetan medicine**

Tibetan medicine is said to have originated from the teachings of Buddha and is some 2,000 years old.

### **Traditional Chinese medicine**

Chinese medicine is based on the principal of the opposing forces of yin and yang. Good health is a result of an effective balance between these two forces.

### **Yoga**

Yoga originated in India some 5,000 years ago. It is a Hindu philosophical system based on the wholeness of mind, body and spirit. It aims to increase physical as well as mental well being.

### **Where to find more information**

- Contact your local library
- Visit [www.bedford.gov.uk](http://www.bedford.gov.uk) and click on Libraries, click on Search, Request, Renew, to find books.
- Visit [www.bedford.gov.uk](http://www.bedford.gov.uk) and click on Libraries, click on Information and Reference, to find links in Weblinks: Health and Care. The 'Complementary Medicine' section lists useful [health web sites](#).

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*'While we consider when to begin it becomes too late'* – Japanese proverb

## Where to find information about practitioners

British Acupuncture Council  
<http://www.acupuncture.org.uk/>

The Reiki Association  
<http://www.reikiassociation.org.uk/>

Register of Chinese Herbal Medicine  
<http://www.rchm.co.uk/>

The Shiatsu Society  
<http://www.shiatsu.org/>



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*'Wealth is both an enemy and a friend' – Nepalese proverb*

### **The Asian languages most widely spoken in Bedford are:**

#### **Bangla**

A language spoken in Bangladesh and West Bengal (India).

#### **Bengali**

Bengali is an Indo-Iranian language of the Indo-European group of languages and the official language of Bangladesh and Bengal.

#### **Chinese (Cantonese)**

Cantonese is a Chinese dialect spoken in the Canton (Guangzhou) province in South-Eastern China and in Hong Kong and Macau.

#### **Chinese (Standard Chinese or Mandarin)**

Standard Chinese or Mandarin is the official spoken language of China.

#### **Gujarati**

Gujarati is an Indo-European language native to the state of Gujarat in North-Western India.

#### **Hindi**

Hindi is the official language of India and spoken widely in the middle and North of the country. It is an Indo-European language and is derived largely from Sanskrit.

#### **Punjabi**

Punjabi is an Indo-European language native to the North-Western regions of India and Pakistan.

#### **Sanskrit**

Is a classical Indian language and the language in which Hindu texts were written.

#### **Tamil**

Part of the Dravidian family of languages, Tamil is mainly spoken in Southern India and Sri Lanka.

#### **Urdu**

An Indo-European language, Urdu is Pakistan's official literary language.

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*'The reputation lost for a betel nut cannot be regained by donating an elephant'* – Indian proverb

## Learning Asian languages:

Language courses (books and CDs) for the most widely-spoken Asian languages can be borrowed from Bedford Library in Harpur Street, Bedford. And Bengali, Chinese, Gujarati, Hindi, Japanese, Punjabi and Urdu dictionaries can be consulted.

Some examples of Asian language scripts

<b>Bengali</b> বাংলা	<b>Tamil</b> தமிழ் எழுத்து
<b>Chinese (Zhongwen)</b> 中文	<b>Punjabi</b> ਗੁਰਮੁਖੀ
<b>Gujarati</b> ગુજરાતી	<b>Urdu</b> اردو

Information in the table from Omniglot  
[www.omniglot.com](http://www.omniglot.com)

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*'There are always ears on the other side of the wall'* – Chinese proverb

**If you want to find out more about Asian languages try these useful links:**

**BBC Voices Multilingual Nation – Languages of the British Isles**

Interesting facts about all the languages spoken in the British Isles today.

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/voices/multilingual/>

**CiLT: The National Centre for Languages**

Statistics on languages spoken in parts of the UK.

[http://www.cilt.org.uk/home/research\\_and\\_statistics/statistics.aspx](http://www.cilt.org.uk/home/research_and_statistics/statistics.aspx)

**Ethnologue.com**

Languages of Asia.

[http://www.ethnologue.com/country\\_index.asp?place=Asia](http://www.ethnologue.com/country_index.asp?place=Asia)

**Omniglot: a Guide to Written Language**

A truly fascinating guide to the world's written languages.

<http://www.omniglot.com/writing/index.htm>



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*'Put off for one day and ten days will pass'* – Korean proverb

### Where to find out about Asian dance, Tai Chi, Indian head massage and much more...

- **Libraries in Bedfordshire** have a wide range of books and DVDs. Visit your local library to find out more or go to the Virtual Library and search the catalogue [www.bedford.gov.uk](http://www.bedford.gov.uk) click on Libraries, click on Search, Request, Renew.



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*'What you know is as big as the size of your palm, what you do not know is as big as the size of the universe' - Tamil proverb*

### Radio

- The BBC Asian Network broadcasts music, sport and news for the Asian community. To find out more visit: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/asiannetwork/>
- The BBC World Service provides news and audio in 32 different languages! These include Bangla, Chinese, Hindi, Indonesian, Tamil and Urdu to name but a few. To find out more about this service, visit their web page at <http://www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/>

### Newspapers and magazines

- At Bedford Central Library you will find the following Asian language newspapers and magazines:
  - Akhbar-E-Jehan (Urdu)
  - the Daily Jang (Urdu)
  - Des Pardes (Punjabi)
  - and Janomot (Bengali)



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*'Words have no wings but they can fly a thousand miles'* - Korean saying

## Names and their meanings

Names are an important part of a person's identity and naming patterns vary in different cultures. In Asian communities names may have a particular significance or meaning but not everybody will necessarily follow the same rules. The following tables offer some guidelines.

### Chinese names

Traditionally the family name is followed by the personal name.

- The family name is first to stress its importance.
- The personal name indicates gender and can be a traditional Chinese name but sometimes a European personal name is used.
- Married women usually keep their maiden name.

Family Name	Personal Name
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Cheung	Lan-Ying
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Some Chinese may use the western way of naming and include an English personal name e.g. Clare Wing.

### Hindu names

Traditionally there are three parts to Hindu names:

- The personal name usually indicates gender and has a meaning.
- The middle name or second name again shows gender.
- The family name which can give information about the original occupation or trade of the family.

Personal Name or First name	Middle name	Family name
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Female Priya - loved one	Kumari	Chopra
Male Vijay - victory	Kumar	Sharma

A child is given a name at the Namakarana or naming ceremony.



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*'Appear as you are, be as you appear'* – Sufi quotation

## Muslim names

Muslims can be from any ethnic or cultural group. Muslim names therefore vary considerably and can have two or three parts:

- Religious name.
- The personal name can be first or second and may be followed by another religious name. It is used by family and friends and can indicate gender. It is always better to ask the individual how they would like to be addressed.
- Family name. Some Muslims may have a last name which may be a family or regional name and may be used like a surname.

### Male

Religious name	Personal name	Family name/last name
Muhammad	Yaqub Abdul Rahman	Khan Habib

### Female

Personal name	Second name	Family name/last name
Amina	Begum (always female meaning an Indian Queen)	Khan
Amina	Bibi (indicates gender)	

Members of the same family may have completely different names.



## Sikh names

There are three distinctive parts to a Sikh name:

- Personal Name: the same name can be given to boys and girls. When the baby is taken to the Gurdwara for the first time, the priest picks the first letter from the Guru Granth Sahib opened at random.
- The religious middle name is either Kaur (female) or Singh (male) and is immediately identifiable. Sikhs believe in the equality of men and women.
- Family name – can be based on occupation profession, or village.

Personal Name	Religious middle name	Family Name
Female: Manjit	Kaur meaning princess	Gill
Male: Manjit	Singh – meaning lion	Gill

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*'Give your ears to words but do not give your words to ears'* – Hindustani proverb

## Are you looking for more information or a list of names?

- Bedford Library has books about choosing names for your child. Take a look at the online catalogue on the Virtual Library to find out which titles are available [www.bedford.gov.uk](http://www.bedford.gov.uk) click on Libraries and then Search, Request, Renew.



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*'All cats are grey in the dark'* – Vietnamese proverb

## Religions and places of worship

### Major Asian religions in Bedford:

Reflecting Bedford's diversity, the major Asian religions are represented in the town: Buddhism, Hinduism, Islam, Jainism, Ravidassia Faith and Sikhism.

### More information:

#### **Bedford Council of Faiths**

Contact the Bedford Council of Faiths for more information about local Asian religious groups.

c/o 69 Victoria Road, Bedford MK42 9JR Tel: 079 57972855

[www.bcof.org.uk](http://www.bcof.org.uk)

#### **University of Bedfordshire**

Find local Asian religious groups in the University's 'Spirituality and Faith in the Bedford Community' directory.

<http://publications.beds.ac.uk/faith/directory/>

#### **Virtual Library Local Information Database**

For a details of places of worship and community centres for some of the Asian religious groups in Bedford, search under 'Asian' in the Local Information Database. [www.bedford.gov.uk](http://www.bedford.gov.uk) click on Libraries, click on Local Information, click on Local Information Database.

#### **BBC: Religion and Ethics**

This website gives a useful introduction to the world's major religions (including ones from Asia) and covers all the essentials - beliefs, customs, holy days, texts and history.

See the 'Festivals and Events' section on page 18 for a list of the main Asian religious festivals.

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/religion/religions>

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*'Even a sheet of paper has two sides'* – Japanese proverb

## Places of Worship:

### **Gurdwara**

Where Sikh worship takes place. The literal meaning is 'the Gateway of the Guru'.

### **Mandir**

A Hindu temple. A Sanskrit word meaning temple or dwelling.

### **Masjid**

Arabic word for Mosque: literally, place of prostration.

### **Mosque**

Place of worship for followers of Islam.

### **Temple**

Place of worship for Buddhists, Hindus and Jains.



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*'Unity is strength'* - Gujarati proverb.

## Shopping and services

### **Where to go shopping and what to buy:**

Bedford has a great selection of shops selling Asian jewellery, textiles and clothing, foods and spices, sweets, fruit and vegetables and Halal meat, poultry and fish. Shops selling Asian goods can be found in Ampthill Road and Midland Road also Ford End Road and Iddesleigh Road and elsewhere, in the Queens Park area of Bedford.

If you cannot find what you want and are happy to travel further afield then Southall, Tooting, Brick Lane and Chinatown in London are the places to go.

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*'The journey is the reward'* – Taoist proverb

## Sport

A number of sports of Asian origin are popular in Bedford including the many martial arts which developed in the East.

### **Aikido**

A Japanese form of self defence which includes blows from the hands and feet.

### **Chinese Kickboxing**

A modern combat sport with moves taken from boxing, kung fu and Chinese wrestling.

### **Gatka**

Gatka is a traditional Sikh martial art.

### **Judo**

Judo is a modern form of jujitsu which originated in Japan.

### **Jujitsu**

The Japanese form of self defence and one of the oldest martial arts.

### **Kabaddi**

A seven-a-side team game of Indian origin that involves chasing and trying to touch opponents without being captured by them.

### **Karate**

A Japanese type of unarmed combat using smashes, chops and kicks made with hands, elbows, feet or legs. It has many different styles.

### **Kendo**

Japanese armed martial art in which combatants use bamboo staves instead of samurai swords.

### **Kung Fu**

Kung Fu is a Chinese art of unarmed combat.

### **Shotokan**

A style of karate.

### **Tae Kwon Do**

A Korean martial art.

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*'An accomplishment sticks to a person' – Japanese proverb*

### **Tang Soo Do**

Tang Soo Do is a traditional Korean martial art of self-defence.

### **Tai Chi Chuan**

A Chinese martial art used for health and self-defence and characterised by slow controlled movements.

### **Thai Boxing**

A martial art originally from Thailand.

## **Would you like to join a sports club or try another sport?**

### **To find a sports club**

If you would like to find local sports clubs visit any Bedfordshire library for a printed list or have a look on the Virtual Library [www.bedford.gov.uk](http://www.bedford.gov.uk) click on Libraries, click on Local Information, click on Local Information Database.

## **Where to find more about different sports**

Bedford Library in Harpur Street, has a selection of books about sports records, rules and regulations. You can search for these in the online library catalogue at [www.bedford.gov.uk](http://www.bedford.gov.uk) click on Libraries and then Search, Request, Renew.

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*'When anger comes, wisdom goes'* - Hindi saying

## Useful Information

### Contact details for Organisations:

#### Bedford Central Library

Harpur Street

Bedford

MK40 1PG

Tel: 01234 718178

[www.bedford.gov.uk](http://www.bedford.gov.uk) click on Libraries

#### Bedford Council of Faiths

c/o 69 Victoria Road

Bedford

MK42 9JR

Tel: 079 57972855

[www.bcof.org.uk](http://www.bcof.org.uk)

#### Bedfordshire & Luton Archives & Records Service (BLARS)

Riverside Building

Borough Hall

Bedford

MK42 9AP

Tel: 01234 228833

[www.bedford.gov.uk](http://www.bedford.gov.uk) click on Archives and Records

#### The Forest Centre

Marston Vale Millennium Country Park

Station Road

Marston Moretaine

Bedford

MK43 0PR

Tel: 01234 767037

Fax: 01234 762606

E-mail: [info@marstonvale.org](mailto:info@marstonvale.org)

<http://www.marstonvale.org/index.html>

## Web sites

### Asian Bedfordshire Statistics

- 2001 census for Bedfordshire  
<http://www.galaxy.bedfordshire.gov.uk/webingres/bedfordshire/census/index.htm>
- Bedford Borough  
[http://www.bedford.gov.uk/council\\_and\\_democracy/statistics\\_and\\_census.aspx](http://www.bedford.gov.uk/council_and_democracy/statistics_and_census.aspx)
- Central Bedfordshire  
<http://www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/council-and-democracy/statistics/default.aspx>

### Asian Cook

Asian recipes and techniques.

<http://www.asiancook.co.uk/>

### Asian Review of Books on the Web

[www.asianreviewofbooks.com](http://www.asianreviewofbooks.com)

BBC - Illustrations of the different veils worn by women.

[http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/shared/spl/hi/pop\\_ups/05/europe\\_muslim\\_veils/html/1.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/shared/spl/hi/pop_ups/05/europe_muslim_veils/html/1.stm)

### BBC Asian Network

Broadcasts old and new Asian music and if you go to the website you can find information about programmes, listings and listen to music clips.

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/asiannetwork/music/>

### BBC Foods Around the World

Select from Chinese, Indian, Japanese, Thai and South East Asian recipes.

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/food/cuisines>

### BBC Multilingual Nation

Interesting facts about all the languages spoken in the British Isles today.

[www.bbc.co.uk/voices/multilingual/](http://www.bbc.co.uk/voices/multilingual/)

### BBC Religion and Ethics

This site provides a useful outline of many of the world's religions including ones from Asia and covers all the essentials – beliefs, customs, holy days, texts and history.

[www.bbc.co.uk/religion/religions](http://www.bbc.co.uk/religion/religions)

### BBC World Service

News and audio available in 32 languages.

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/>

Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan: Institute for Indian Art and Culture (in London)

<http://www.bhavan.net/>

Bollywood and Hindi Cinema  
<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bollywood>

British Acupuncture Council  
<http://www.acupuncture.org.uk/>

Chinese Movie Database  
<http://dianying.com/en>

CiLT: The National Centre for Languages  
Statistics on languages spoken in parts of the UK.  
[http://www.cilt.org.uk/home/research\\_and\\_statistics/statistics.aspx](http://www.cilt.org.uk/home/research_and_statistics/statistics.aspx)

Cinema of Japan  
[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Japanese\\_cinema](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Japanese_cinema)

East Asian traditional dress from the Victoria & Albert Museum  
<http://www.vam.ac.uk/content/articles/t/traditional-dress-from-east-asia/>

Ethnologue.com  
Languages of Asia  
[http://www.ethnologue.com/country\\_index.asp?place=Asia](http://www.ethnologue.com/country_index.asp?place=Asia)

Ikat designs from the Victoria & Albert Museum  
<http://www.vam.ac.uk/page/i/ikat>

Indian textiles from the Victoria & Albert Museum  
<http://www.vam.ac.uk/page/i/indian-textiles/>

Koreanfilm.org  
<http://koreanfilm.org>

Local Information Database on the Virtual Library  
For local clubs, societies and organisations, go to [www.bedford.gov.uk](http://www.bedford.gov.uk)  
click on Libraries, click on Local Information and then Local Information  
database.

Luton Mela  
[www.lutonmela.com](http://www.lutonmela.com)  
This takes place over the Summer each year at Wardown Park, New  
Bedford Road, Luton and is one of the UK's major Asian cultural events  
with local and national performers.

The Network  
<http://www.seapn.org.uk> select 'Resources' and 'Suppliers List' for an  
extensive list of suppliers of Asian and other language material.

Omniglot: a Guide to Written Language  
A truly fascinating guide to writing systems from around the world.  
[www.omniglot.com/writing/index.htm](http://www.omniglot.com/writing/index.htm)

**Oxford Art Online** covers Western and non-Western visual art. Explore this comprehensive database on the Virtual Library. [www.bedford.gov.uk](http://www.bedford.gov.uk) click on Libraries and scroll to click on Online Resources.

**Paisley design: Victoriana.com**

Detailed information about shawls of paisley design.  
<http://www.victoriana.com/library/paisley/shawl.html>

**Register of Chinese Herbal Medicine**

<http://www.rchm.co.uk/>

**The Reiki Association**

<http://www.reikiassociation.org.uk/>

**SADA South Asian Dance**

The definitive information resource for South Asian dance in the UK. You can find out about dance performances, classes, workshops and job opportunities both in the East of England and the rest of the UK.  
<http://www.southasiandance.org.uk/>

**The Shiatsu Society**

<http://www.shiatsu.org/>

**University of Bedfordshire 'Spirituality and Faith in the Bedford Community'**

Find local Asian religious groups.  
<http://publications.beds.ac.uk/faith/directory/>

**Upperstall**

Articles and reviews of Indian cinema  
<http://www.upperstall.com>

**The Virtual Library (Bedford Borough and Central Bedfordshire Libraries)**

[www.bedford.gov.uk](http://www.bedford.gov.uk) click on Libraries

**The Virtual Library Local Information Database**

If you would like to find local clubs, societies and organisations, go to [www.bedford.gov.uk](http://www.bedford.gov.uk) click on Libraries, click on Local Information and then Local Information database.

**The Virtual Library Weblinks**

An easy way to find useful websites.  
[www.bedford.gov.uk](http://www.bedford.gov.uk) click on Libraries, click on Information and Reference

## Bibliography

Bedfordshire and Luton Archives and Records Service Ethnic Sources  
[www.bedford.gov.uk](http://www.bedford.gov.uk) click Archives and Records

Bell, Patricia Aspects of Anglo-Indian Bedford Bedfordshire Historical  
Record Society Vol. 57, 1978

Brown, J. The Unmelting Pot, Macmillan, 1970

Jeffcoate, R. and Mayo, B. Bedford: Portrait of a Multi-Ethnic Town, The  
Open University Press, 1982

## Language bookshop addresses

### Grant & Cutler at Foyles

for dictionaries, grammars, textbooks and courses in Asian languages.

113-119 Charing Cross Road

London WC2H 0EB

Tel. 020 77342012 Customer accounts and web queries

020 7440 3248 Shop floor at Foyles

[grantandcutler@foyles.co.uk](mailto:grantandcutler@foyles.co.uk)

[www.grantandcutler.com](http://www.grantandcutler.com)

### The Guanghwa Company

for books and magazines in Chinese, books about China and Chinese art materials.

7 Newport Place

London WC2H 7JR

Tel. 020 7437 3737

[info@guanghwa.com](mailto:info@guanghwa.com)

<http://www.guanghwa.com/about.php>



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