

Brickhill Borough Councillors Update February 2019 From Wendy Rider and Charles Royden



Transporting Bedford 2020

Work continues with projects at Manton Lane and the roundabout from the Clapham bypass. Work is subject to delays caused by Network Rail, who need to use the route to divert traffic when Bromham Bridge is replaced. Bedford Borough Council has announced three significant changes to road junctions across Bedford.

1. On Goldington Green, mini roundabouts will be installed to make it easier and safer for traffic to enter and leave Goldington Road
2. Traffic will be able to enter River Street car park from Greyfriars, so people will no longer have to drive around St Paul's Square to use this popular town centre car park
3. At Rope Walk, traffic lights will be installed which will improve entry and exit at St John's shopping centre

These improvements will help to tackle congestion at these well-known hotspots across our town, help cut down on unnecessary traffic movements on St Paul's Square and Rope Walk, and get traffic moving.

Road Re-surfacing

This will take place as soon as the weather improves and residents have been informed. This has been made possible by the allocation by the Council of additional funds to tackle this priority. Mayor Dave Hodgson has also allocated additional funding to the Pot Hole Hit Squad and new machinery has been purchased to help tackle potholes across the Borough. We have also ensured that the speed humps on Tyne Crescent have been repaired.

Footpath Repairs

Residents have been delighted with the action taken to improve footpaths, resurfacing and edging has been carried out and Mowsbury Walk is looking very good.

Gritting

We have been pleased that the council gritting vehicles have been in action delivering an excellent service across Brickhill and the rest of the Borough throughout the winter.

The Pond on Brickhill Drive

Additional rainfall has enabled the fountain to be activated and we have had appreciative comments.

Speeding Vehicles

The Borough Council Speedwatch Vehicle which the Mayor introduced has been welcomed by residents. We have requested operation of the vehicle in additional roads including Tyne Crescent and Windrush Avenue.

School crossing patrol

School children have been using the school crossing patrol in Kimbolton Road and a new pedestrian crossing will be introduced soon. The Borough is also actively seeking a new school crossing patrol person for Waveney Avenue, at the junction with Falcon Avenue.

Safety cameras at schools

All schools across the Borough are to be allocated safety cameras to enforce against parking on zig zag lines. Scott Primary will benefit from this, cameras are already in place at Brickhill Primary and St Thomas More.

Orange bags

Please can we advise residents that these are for additional recycling, they are not to be used as bin liners !

Bus performance

The Mayor has met again with Stagecoach regarding the No 6 bus and complaints have reduced. If there are further problems, please tell us.

Rooksmead Grasscrete

We are informed that since Rooksmead Green is now a designated area we will need planning permission before Grasscrete can be installed. This will mean a delay over winter which is very disappointing but it will happen soon.

New school development for Rushmore School

Plans for the new school buildings were refused planning permission by the Borough Council. The school has made an appeal and this will go before the planning inspector in February for the final decision.

Around the Borough

There has been consternation about national plans for M&S which see the business being reduced in high streets across the country. The Mayor has been involved in meetings with M&S management and it is important that if M&S do leave Bedford town centre a new occupant is encouraged. The good news is that Bedford town centre continues to attract investment with places such as the Harpur Centre, The Swan Hotel and Beales all making major investments and upgrades of their premises. Employment across the Borough is showing strong growth at more than double the regional and national rate with 16,000 more people in work in Bedford Borough.

Homelessness

Latest figures have shown that there are a third fewer people sleeping rough in Bedford Borough than there were one year ago. Bedford Borough has also been recognised in the top ten of local authorities with the largest decreases in number of people sleeping rough. The Mayor has targeted this area as a priority with investment in services including the new centre offering accommodation for over 30 people with complex needs. There was also provision of an extra 20 beds open every single night through winter in addition to the severe weather beds available to all rough sleepers during cold weather. In addition there are more outreach and support staff to help rough sleepers off the street and into accommodation with 12 people already supported. The Council has been working with partner organisations and their staff and volunteers. If you are aware of someone sleeping rough we urge you to report their location and any details to Bedford's Rough Sleeper Street Outreach Partnership through the national rough sleeping report line at www.streetlink.org.uk, and we encourage anyone sleeping rough to go to the Prebend Day Centre and speak to the staff there to get support.

Littering and Fly-tipping

Over 2,000 fines have been issued for environmental offences such as littering, dog fouling, urinating in the street and fly-tipping. The council already issues fines to those who commit the offence of fly-tipping. However it is estimated that two-thirds of fly-tipped waste is household waste which is often fly-tipped because a householder has allowed an unauthorised person to take it away, rather than fly-tipping it themselves. To crack down on this, a new Fixed Penalty Notice has been introduced which will see a £300 fine issued to people who are responsible for fly-tipping because they allowed an unauthorised individual to get rid of their household waste.

East West Rail Consultation Begins

A railway is being built between Oxford and Cambridge and Bedford is in the middle. However they are not sure whether to use the existing Bedford railway station or send the line south of Bedford to a new station. You can go online and see the options and then have your say. This is a once in a lifetime opportunity which will affect generations to come: www.eastwestrail.co.uk/haveyoursay

Libraries

Unlike councils across the country Bedford is committed to libraries and the Mayor has said that he will not close a single library and some have seen increased hours. As well as books libraries are used for different types of education and enjoyment. Bedford Central and the four branch libraries are all holding arts and crafts sessions for kids throughout half-term, with each library having a different theme. At Putnoe Library it's all happening with music crafts, create your own carnival mask, and royal court crafts.

The Higgins

There is also plenty happening at The Higgins Bedford this half-term with workshops, portrait collage making, creating abstract art, and pop-art printing. On Tuesday 12, Wednesday 13 and Friday 15 February, there will be creative art and science workshops inspired by the current 'We Are Five' exhibition, which celebrates five years since The Higgins Bedford was redeveloped. Local artist Kemi Onabule will be running a 'Collage Conversations' workshop on Tuesday 12 February, inviting children to imagine that portraits could talk and what they could talk about together, while creating a portrait collage with a difference. Little Science Labs will host 'Abstract Chromatography' on Wednesday 13 February, where children can experiment with chromatography and create an abstract art work. Then on Friday 15 February, local artist Katie Allen will be running a 'Pop-Art Printing' workshop, taking inspiration from Andy Warhol and creating pop-art prints. All workshops start at 11am, 12.30pm and 2pm, cost £3 per child and aimed at 5 to 13 year olds. They can be booked by visiting The Higgins Bedford. Find out more at www.thehigginsbedford.org.uk

As your local councillors we will continue to work hard and keep you informed through regular deliveries of FOCUS, surgeries and our website where you can sign up for our Brickhill newsletter.

www.puttingbrickhillfirst.com

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