

Brickhill Borough Councillors Report



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Congratulations to our schools

We are delighted that both Brickhill Primary and Scott Primary have got off to a flying start with their new primary school status. This was a big challenge but our congratulations to the Headteachers Anita Barker and Debbie Wilson all staff, children and parents for such a success. Thanks also to everybody at the council who rose to the challenge to ensure that new classrooms were available on time.

Tree Planting

An old Greek proverb says that *"Society grows great when old men plant trees whose shade they know they shall never sit in."* It is about planting for the future and doing something which doesn't give you immediate approval but is nevertheless great because you consider the needs of future generations. It is with that in mind that that we have committed over £7,000 towards planning and maintaining trees in Brickhill. As well as planting trees, we have for some time asked for work to be carried out on the wildlife corridor in Falcon Avenue to tackle invasive ivy which is choking trees. This work will now be started before the next nesting season.

Brickhill Drive BPHA housing

We have had queries about the BPHA development in the former garage block site at the top of Brickhill Drive. We have asked for an item to be placed on the next parish council agenda to invite BPHA to present plans for the new flats which are being built.

Travellers in Brickhill

Following our work with Bedfordshire Police they have produced a more robust policy for enforcement against unlawful encampments. This has seen reduced activity across the Borough, however meanwhile we are progressing applications for high court injunctions, one of which would cover Waveney Avenue. This would make it much easier to evict anybody on the land as it would make such activity an immediate criminal offence.

Thomas More School - Traffic Issues

Planning permission was granted to Thomas More for replacement of classrooms with two storey new buildings. The improvement to classrooms is to be welcomed but we highlighted the continuing number of complaints which we receive about parking at the school. We are looking at extending the zig zag lines and asking for enforcement cameras to be installed. These have already been deployed at three schools across the Borough as part of Mayor Dave Hodgson's focus on unlawful parking outside schools. The council can only use cameras on zig zag lines outside schools and bus lanes - the government removed all other enforcement by councils using CCTV last year in a moment of complete madness.

No Verge Parking in Moriston Road

There is strong support for no verge parking restrictions at the top of Moriston Road closest to Tyne Crescent and we have therefore asked for this stretch of Moriston Road to be included in a scheme which we will pay for out of our ward fund. At this stage we have asked only for this area to be protected by no verge parking and not the entire length of Moriston Road. However we have asked for the signage to be on small yellow plates which mean that the scheme can be extended easily simply by adding more plates. We will see how the enforcement progresses and if residents wish more no verge parking to be introduced further along Moriston Road then we will ask for the area to be extended. As soon as the no verge parking zone is introduced Council Enforcement Officers will be able to issue fixed penalty tickets. We will continue to work with the school in measures such as encouraging parents to park in Ashmead Road and with the Parish Council and Borough Council who have been working with the school on reducing the number of children who are brought to school in private cars.

Roads and Pavements

The £1m extra funding towards road and pavement will see roads in Brickhill brought forward for resurfacing. Schemes for Plover Way and part of Tyne Crescent are in progress but we have asked for many roads to be added to the list for consideration. Our roads and pavements in Brickhill need this

investment and we fully support the priority given which will help keep drivers and pedestrians safe. We have asked for the roundabout on the junction of Tyne Crescent and Avon Drive to be repaired since March and we are assured this will happen soon.

Dirty Street Signs

We have had dirty street signage along Kimbolton Road washed to remove mould and make the signs easier to read. It is a little thing but dirty signs bring down the pride in our neighbourhood and little things like this make a difference.

Street Lighting

LED lighting is now in place across most of Brickhill, bringing savings on electricity cost and lights which self report faults. Where other councils are switching lights off we have invested over 6m in new LED lights and ensuring they are kept on.

Bedford Hospital

Mayor Dave Hodgson has been leading the fight to keep essential services here in Bedford. The latest announcement has seen proposals for a partnership with Luton which will keep Emergency treatment, paediatrics and maternity in Bedford. Millions have been wasted by the NHS in this meaningless review which thankfully has seen Bedford fight off closure of essential services. Thank you to everybody who signed our petition to save Bedford Hospital.

Local Plan

Some people in Brickhill received an anonymous leaflet which stated that the Mayor was considering proposals for New Towns in Bedford Borough. It is understandable why those responsible wanted to keep their names secret given the fact that the leaflet failed to communicate the facts regarding the Local Plan. It is the government which places house building requirements on councils and Bedford Borough is required to allow anybody who wants to build houses to submit their proposals for consideration. Those writing the leaflet should have the courage to write to the government who set these targets, they should also supply their name and address.

20 MPH in Brickhill

We have used our ward funds to progress a scheme which will cover Brickhill Primary School and surrounding roads to Brickhill Drive, Linnet Way and Kimbolton Road. We expect work to begin in late October.

Mayor Dave Hodgson Speaks Out Against Rail Service Proposals

Mayor Dave Hodgson spoke at a public meeting which attracted over 300 people concerned about proposed changes to the East Midlands train service. Proposals would result in longer travelling times to London and fewer trains to the Midlands and beyond. This would have serious consequences for the many Bedford residents who commute by train, not just to London but other surrounding towns, as well as having a damaging impact on our local economy with the current travel times estimated to bring an annual £3.5m boost to Bedford's economy. Mayor Dave Hodgson slammed the huge downgrade in the service that local people receive which would damage the Borough's economic future. To add insult to injury, there was no consultation event scheduled in Bedford until the Mayor challenged the changes. We will support the Mayor in fighting against any downgrading of our rail services.

For more information on what is happening in and around Brickhill and to keep in touch please visit our website www.puttingbrickhillfirst.com You can also sign up for our newsletter.

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