

**Brickhill Borough Councillors  
Update  
March 2023  
From Wendy Rider and  
Charles Royden**



**Anglian Water**

We continue to be less than impressed by the standard of service given by Anglian Water since we highlighted the blocked sewers which flooded across Brickhill. We have met with their senior management and expressed concerns shared with us by residents of poor service. This work on Avon Drive was completed to fix a leak but equipment was left behind by the contractor without properly completing the job.



**Sweeping Pavements**

We have asked the council to sweep areas of pavement where leaves have remained over winter including this area in Torridge Rise. They have now carried out the cleaning work and we would welcome residents advising us if they have any further causes of concern.

**BPHA Rents to rise**

We have written to BPHA to express our concerns at the announcement of high rent increases. Obviously we are at a time of great worry for families who are struggling in a cost of living crisis. Many of our residents are facing difficulty feeding their families and trying to keep them warm. It is therefore a hammer blow to receive an increase of 7% on top of what is already the largest monthly payment they have to make. Undoubtedly this will place a severe financial burden on some of those least able to afford it in our community. We have pointed out that BPHA has a core operating margin comfortably above 40% and the underlying surplus from operations after interest costs was £15.7m (September 2021: £18.2m). We have asked BPHA to reconsider this and offer a lower increase at this time of national emergency.

Sadly we have had a disappointing response from BPHA who have said that they are going ahead with the increase. They have advised us that they are extremely aware that customers face huge financial challenges at this time and they have a team of people available to offer help. They advise their customers to click the 'Refer to Money Advice' button on the website ([bpha.org.uk](http://bpha.org.uk)) where there is advice and contact details to talk to someone confidentially. They have stated that If people talk and engage, they will do everything they can to help and work with people who are struggling.



**Tree Planting** Thanks to those residents who have contacted us to request tree planting in verges outside their homes. The are all being assessed by the council and will be planted where possible, avoiding utilities etc. We will respond directly to residents when we have confirmation



**Putnoe Surgery** We have not been encouraged by some of the latest meetings around GP health services for Bedford. We thanks residents who supported our campaign to which saved Putnoe Walk-In-Centre, we are watching carefully to ensure that it is future protected.

### **Brunel Road Depot to hold Open Day**

Bedford Borough Council is holding an Open Day event at Brunel Road Depot on Saturday 11 March from 11am to 2pm. The event offers a unique opportunity to learn about Council services and see its vehicles in action. During the Open Day, the Depot will be providing access to a range of vehicles, including Refuse Collection, Recycling, Winter Maintenance, Pothole Repairs, and Street Cleansing vehicles, which will be parked in a dedicated area for the public to view, walk around and even get inside. There will be a demo area where visitors can witness the vehicles in action, showcasing the work the Council does in maintaining the local area. The event will be an excellent opportunity for the public to gain a greater understanding of the work the Council undertakes and its commitment to sustainability.

Mayor of Bedford Borough, Dave Hodgson, said, "We're delighted to be able to open the Brunel Road Depot to the public for our Open Day event. The event is an opportunity for the Council to connect with the community and show the work we do to keep the Borough clean and safe for all its residents. We're looking forward to welcoming everyone to the event."

The event is free to attend and open to all.

Brickhill Drive Shops Saturday 4 March at 10.00am

Avon Drive Shops Saturday 18 March at 10.00am

You can also speak with us or another Lib Dem Councillor every Saturday morning 11.00am - 12 noon at Bedford Central Library

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](http://www.puttingbrickhillfirst.com)

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