



BRICKHILL NEWS

Rooksmead Pond

The newsletter of Brickhill Parish Council

Issue No 64

August 2023

From Mark Fitzpatrick, Chair of Brickhill Parish Council.....

At the May elections, a number of parish councillors stood down. I want to thank them all for their contribution to the parish over the years, especially to Charles Royden and Wendy Rider who had been on the parish council since it was created in 2004. There are therefore vacancies which need to be filled. If you are interested in volunteering as a parish councillor, do consider applying (see below). With the May elections, the Borough Council representation for the parish has also changed. The Brickhill Drive area is now part of De Parys Ward, while Woodlands Park has become part of the re-drawn Brickhill Ward. I want to pay tribute to the late Stephen Moon and I also thank Phillippa Martin-Moran-Bryant for their service as Borough Councillors for Great Barford ward, which formerly covered Woodlands Park.

East West Rail announcement

On 26th May, the government announced the choice of Route 1 for East West Rail from Bedford to Cambridge. The route still goes through Brickhill parish, but is further away from the built-up parts of the parish. East West Rail say that they are expecting to carry out the next phase of public consultation in the first half of 2024.

For more information see East West Rail's website <https://eastwestrail.co.uk>.

Vacancies on the Parish Council—We need you!!

We currently have 7 vacancies, 1 in Woodlands Park Ward, 2 in South Ward, 2 in North Ward and 2 in West Ward. Please consider applying. Information can be found on Brickhill Parish Council's website, <https://brickhillparishcouncil.gov.uk>, which contains minutes of meetings, budget information, copies of parish newsletters and much more. To find out more about the role of a parish councillor, the Good Councillors Guide is a useful document, <http://askyourcouncil.uk/the-good-councillors-guide/>. If you have any other questions, please contact any of the existing parish councillors or the Clerk. When you apply for co-option, you will be invited to the next meeting of the council and may be asked questions by councillors. After that your co-option will be voted on by the council. If successful, you will be asked to sign the declaration of acceptance of office after which you are officially a councillor.

Speeding in Brickhill

When asked, one of the top concerns of Brickhill residents is always speeding.

Towards the end of last year Brickhill Parish Council was informed that Hertfordshire Constabulary Traffic Management Unit had carried out in August a 7 day, 24 hour speed check on Avon Drive and that '*compliance with the speed limit was generally fairly good*'. Over the week 16,772 vehicles had travelled eastbound and an average speed of 35mph was calculated. Westbound 16,270 vehicles were checked and an average speed of 37mph calculated. As these averages were on or above the threshold value more detailed information was requested.

This was obtained in February 2023 through the Freedom of Information Act 2000. An analysis of the data disturbingly showed that 29,816 (90.0%) of the vehicles exceeded 31mph (above the 30mph speed limit) and 4,798 (14.5%) over 41mph. Brickhill Parish Council does not consider this level of speeding to be '*generally fairly good*' as concluded by the police. Even more disturbing were the results that one vehicle exceeded 81mph, 3 over 71mph, 35 over 61mph, 275 over 51mph and 4,798 over 41mph.

This level of infringement is unacceptable in a residential area where there are a high number of vulnerable people including the elderly and children at a time when residents are being encouraged to be more active (to walk and cycle) for their health and the climate. We would encourage any resident who may have been an offender to respect Brickhill's vulnerable neighbours and to try to moderate their speed to the limit at all times.

BRICKHILL PARISH COUNCILLORS

EAST WARD

Cllr Mark Fitzpatrick (*Chair*)

☎01234 357259

✉mark.x.fitzpatrick@gmail.com

Cllr Peter Blakeman (*Planning Committee Chair*)

☎01234 343908

✉pj.blakeman@btopenworld.com

Cllr Stuart Green

☎01234 354339

✉stuart.green5938@ntlworld.com

Cllr Alastair Grant

☎01234 342076

✉agrantbpc@gmail.com

NORTH WARD

Cllr Vincent Holloway

☎01234 214533

✉vholloway1975@gmail.com

Cllr Peter Lamswood

✉lamswoodpeterbpc@gmail.com

2 vacancies

WEST WARD

Cllr Cathrine Ward

☎01234 295951

✉mahovoward@yahoo.co.uk

2 vacancies

SOUTH WARD

2 vacancies

WOODLANDS PARK WARD

Cllr Sudesh Rani

☎07891 014007

✉sudesh2021@hotmail.com

1 vacancy

Borough Councillors for Brickhill Ward

Cllr Charles Royden

☎01234 309175

✉charlesroyden@gmail.com

Cllr Wendy Rider

☎01234 303254

✉wendyrider41@gmail.com

Borough Councillors for De Parys Ward (covers Brickhill South Ward)

Cllr Henry Vann

☎07791 138853

✉henry.vann@bedford.gov.uk

Cllr David Sawyer

☎07711 692937

✉david.sawyer@bedford.gov.uk

Mrs Sue Bottoms,

Clerk to the Council

St Marks Church and Community Centre,
Calder Rise, Brickhill, MK41 7UY

☎01234 271708

✉clerk@brickhillparishcouncil.gov.uk

Office Hours: Monday and Thursday 10-12 noon.

Police

Junaid.Ashiq@beds.police.uk

Parish Council meetings: meetings are open to the public and normally take place on the first Thursday of every month at 7:30pm (except August & December) at St Mark's Church Community Centre, Calder Rise, Brickhill MK41 7UY. Councillor surgeries are held at 7pm before each parish council meeting.

Volunteers Required Brickhill News is published 5 times per year and delivered to every household within the parish. We need lots of volunteers - could you help? If you could deliver to a few local streets near to where you live, please contact the parish council office.

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A Neighbourhood Plan for Brickhill

A group of parish councillors and residents started work on creating a Neighbourhood Plan for Brickhill in 2016. Progress has been slow, not helped by COVID, but has re-started. The draft plan is coming together and outlines policies which we believe will help Brickhill and its residents.

The views of residents are critical for Neighbourhood Plans, not least because there will be a referendum which requires a majority of those voting to support the plan.

Initial views were sought in an online survey in the February 2020 'Brickhill News' (the last edition before COVID) and there was also a public meeting in January 2020.

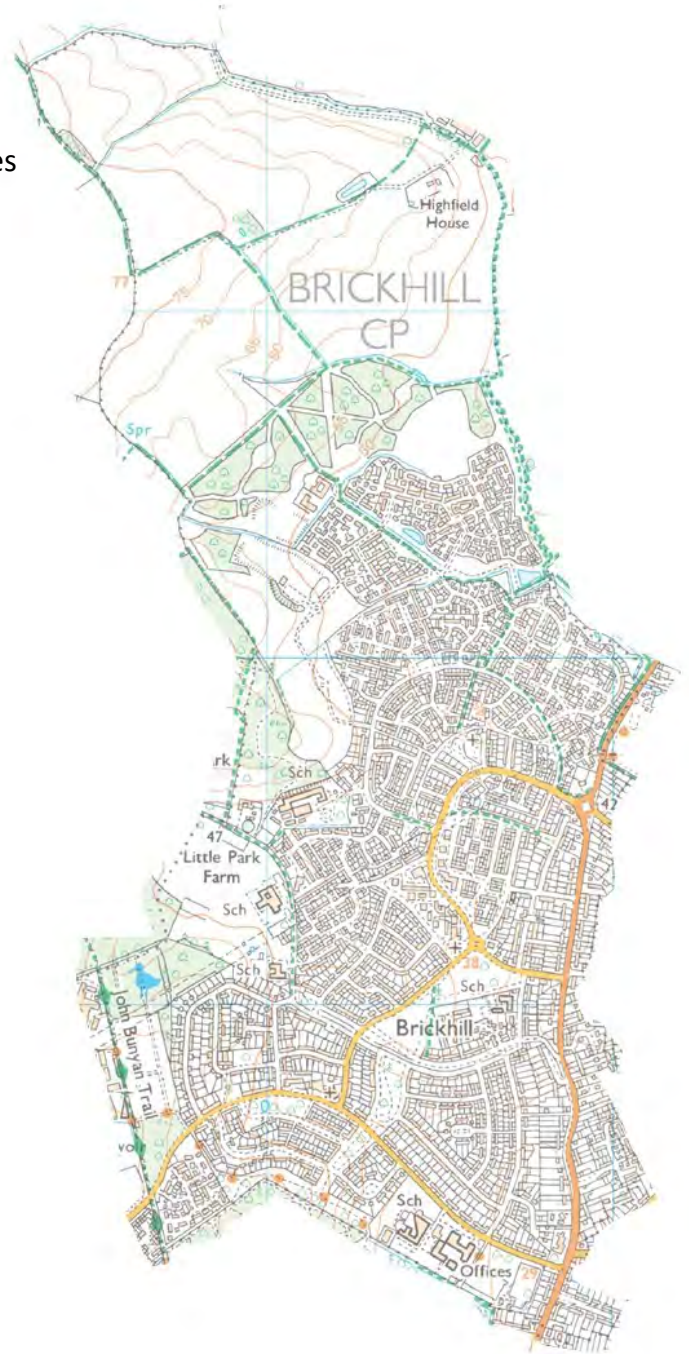
In the online survey, residents said that they liked the green open spaces, the access to the countryside, the community feel and access to the town, local shops, schools and parks.

Concerns were raised about traffic volumes and speed, anti-social behaviour and crime, air and noise pollution, overdevelopment.

The comments received have informed the policies of this plan, which are grouped under the following headings:

- Sustainable Growth
- Local Environment
- Sustainable Design
- Transport and Paths

With the plan coming together, we will be asking for your views on the proposals.



What is a Neighbourhood Plan?

In simple terms, a neighbourhood plan is:

- A document that sets out planning policies for the neighbourhood area – planning policies are used to decide whether to approve planning applications
- Written by the local community, the people who know and love the area, rather than the Local Planning Authority
- A powerful tool to ensure the community gets the right types of development, in the right place.

Many parishes in Bedford Borough have Neighbourhood Plans. In most of these a key part has been the allocation of sites for housing and other development. In the Borough Local Plan there are no sites identified for development in Brickhill parish and none are proposed as part of this plan.

Protecting Brickhill's green open spaces

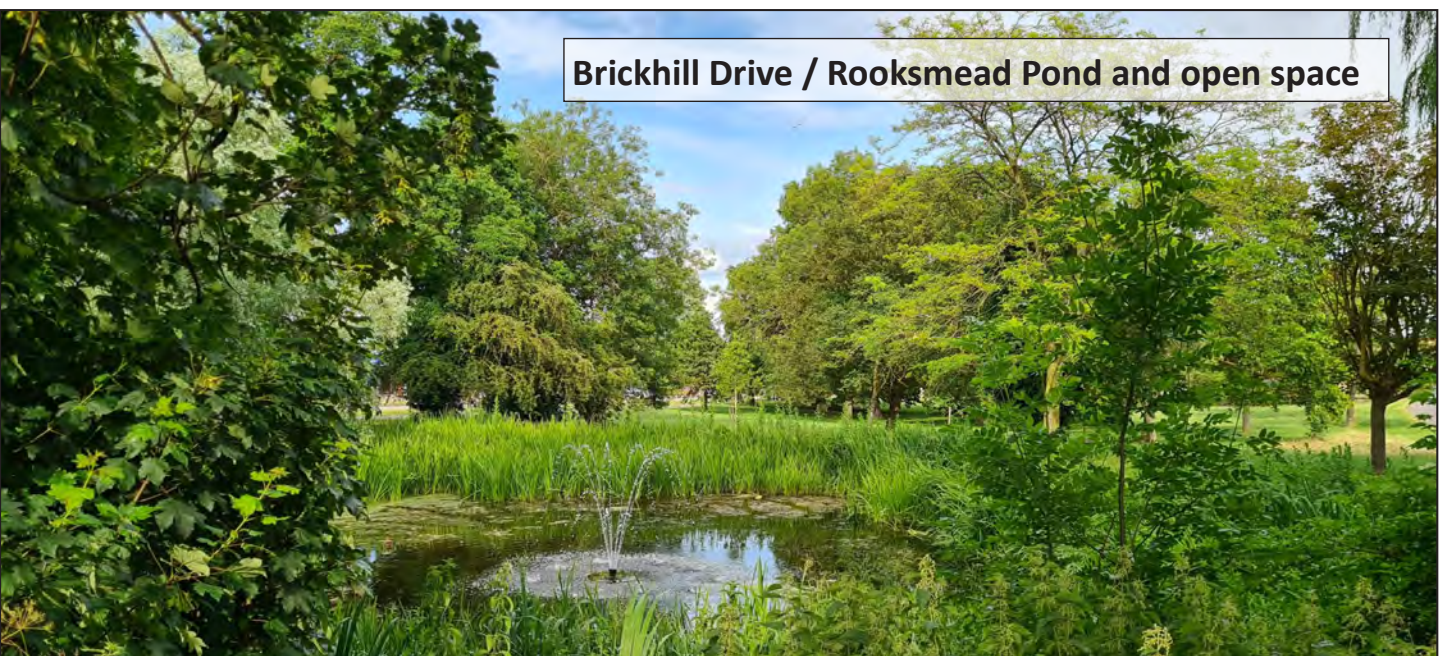
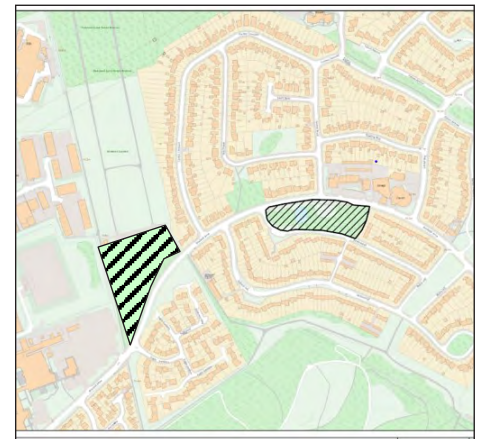
Brickhill has a large number of green open spaces, but only Waveney Green and the North Brickhill Country Park are officially designated as Local Green Spaces. Brickhill Parish Council has previously tried to get other open spaces also designated as Local Green Spaces, but was unsuccessful. The Neighbourhood Plan is another opportunity to increase the protection for key areas. The Neighbourhood Plan working group identified three areas of special value for the Brickhill community.



Why designate an area as Local Green Space?

Local Green Space (LGS) designation is a way to provide special protection against development for green areas of particular importance to local communities. Once designated, the LGS is subject to the same strong development restrictions as Green Belt, and new development here is ruled out other than in special circumstances.

Though there are no proposals to affect these three sites, given their importance to the Brickhill community the Neighbourhood Plan is the best way to protect them for the long term.



Why these three sites?

The Neighbourhood Plan working group believes that there is strong evidence for the importance of these sites for Brickhill.

Brickhill Drive/Rooksmead Pond open space

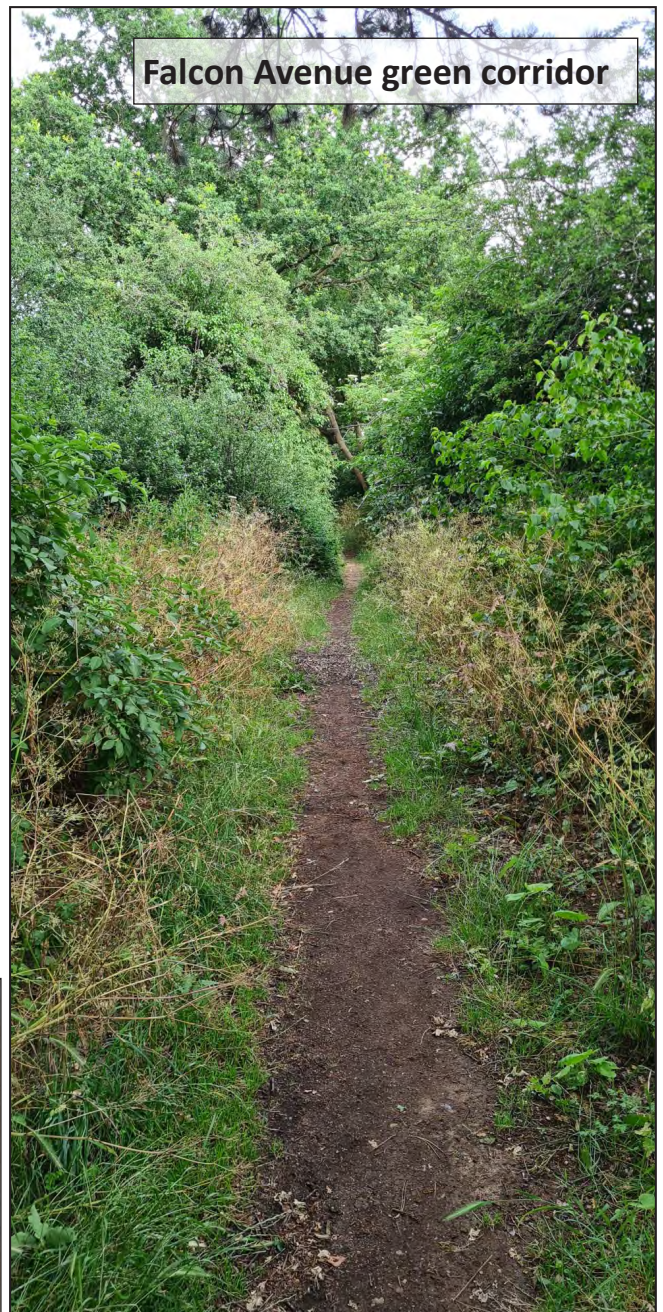
The open aspect of the site, with mature trees and the pond with fountain is not just a beautiful site, but is popular with residents. Children often play on the open space. Residents are often found sitting on the bench overlooking the pond.

Brickhill Drive/Foster's Brow open space

Located at the top of Brickhill Drive, the site provides a visual gap between Brickhill and adjacent development. The space is also used for recreation, including by the Brickhill scout group.

Falcon Avenue green corridor

This forms a link to Brickhill's past. It follows the route of a former carriage driveway to Clapham House, running from Kimbolton Road to Hawk Drive. The tree-lined path between the two carriageways in Falcon Avenue serves as a wildlife corridor as well as a path for the public.



Main themes of the Neighbourhood Plan

The Neighbourhood Plan consists of four themes:

Sustainable Growth: To ensure that any development in Brickhill is sustainable and proportionate, to help create prosperity and meet the needs of the community.

Local Environment: To protect Brickhill's environment and green spaces to support the health and well-being of current and future generations.

Sustainable Design: To ensure that development in Brickhill is well-designed, safe and sustainable.

Transport and Paths: To support more sustainable live/work patterns and movement, including walking and cycling.

There is also a section on sustainable design.

As mentioned above, there are no sites designated for building in Brickhill in the Local Plan 2030. Any development that happens is likely to be small-scale, such as the replacement of dwellings that has taken place in Kimbolton Road or small infill developments such as took place in the former BPHA garage blocks off Mallard Hill and Brickhill Drive. The policies relating to development are there to cover these eventualities.

The draft Neighbourhood Plan contains the following policies:

Policy BR-SG1 Local Employment: supporting office and other workspace (Use Class E) on brownfield sites and the retention of existing employment sites for employment use.

Policy BR-SG2 Local Facilities: supporting new community facilities near the Brickhill Drive and Avon Drive neighbourhood centres and the expansion of existing community facilities.

Policy BR-SG3 Housing Mix and Standards: supporting infill development within existing built frontages. Opposing the loss of single storey housing and other housing suitable for the elderly.

Policy BR-LE1 Green Environment: development should not harm the ecology or trees and should achieve biodiversity gains. Seek opportunities to enhance recreational value of green open spaces.

Policy BR-LE2 Local Green Space: designate three areas as Local Green Space: Falcon Avenue, Brickhill Drive/Foster's Brow, Brickhill Drive/Rooksmead pond.

Policy BR-LE3 Local Heritage: Avoid harm to the historic lane in Falcon Avenue, which led to Clapham Park. Development should have no adverse impact on five non-designated heritage assets.

Policy BR-SD1 Place and Context: Development should complement the local context and create safe environments through provision of active frontages to overload roads and spaces. Landscape design should be integral to any development.

Policy BR-SD2 Green Design: Balance carbon and other environmental impacts by incorporating positive green features in design and landscaping, taking into account the Plan's Green Guidance Note.

Policy BR-TM1 Sustainable Transport: Enhancing pedestrian connectivity, sustainable forms of transport and the inclusion of electric charging points.

Policy BR-TM2 Footpaths and Cycleways: No significant adverse impact on footways and cycleways. Enhancing footpaths and cycleways where opportunities allow.

Brickhill Neighbourhood Plan timetable

Neighbourhood Plans have to follow a specific legal process, step by step. The table below summarises the key steps. The dates may change, but this shows that this is a systematic, methodical, process.

The views of residents and other stakeholders are of great significance.

September 2023 - Community engagement - look out for sessions around Brickhill, advertised on Brickhill Parish Council's website and social media. Come to the Drop-In meeting at St Mark's Church Community Centre on Monday 4th September at any time from 6pm to 8:30pm in the Wren Room.

October 2023 - the Neighbourhood Plan is finalised.

November 2023 - Brickhill Parish Council is asked to approve the Plan for Regulation 14 consultation.

November 2023 to January 2024 - formal 'Regulation 14' consultation, when residents and other stakeholders can comment.

February 2024 - consider representations and amend the Plan as necessary

March 2024 - Brickhill Parish Council to approve the amended plan, and supporting documents.

March - June 2024 - Independent examination.

Summer 2024 - Referendum. When residents will be asked to approve the Plan. A simple majority is required.

Your views, your questions Please use the new online survey to send in your questions or views. <https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/Brickhill2023>

How you can find out more

See Brickhill Parish Council' website for more information

www.brickhillparishcouncil.gov.uk

- about Neighbourhood Planning
- History of Brickhill Neighbourhood Plan
- Draft Brickhill Neighbourhood Plan

Focus on Brickhill Community Centre.....



Brickhill Community Centre
Avon Drive
Brickhill, Bedford MK41 7AF



Sue Stewart has been the Centre Manager for over 17 years and has now retired. Clair Tyrrell has taken over from Sue. We wish Sue all the best for the future and thank her for all her hard work and support.

The Community Centre is used by many regular hirers. If you are looking for a room or hall to hire, whether it is a party, one-off or more frequently, please contact:- The **Community Centre Manager, Clair Tyrrell** on Bedford (01234) 312 332 or email brickhillcommunitycentre@gmail.com. The Community Centre office opening hours:- **Tuesdays and Fridays, 10am-4pm**. Messages can be left on the answer phone and your call will be returned.

The Main Hall

A well-lit hall on the ground floor, with a high ceiling and good quality floor. The hall can accommodate 80 people seated and has easy access for disabled people. There are ladies, gents and disabled toilets located along the corridor outside the hall.



A kitchen area is connected to the main hall by a counter with a roll-down shutter.

The Upstairs Hall

Excellent natural lighting and a sprung floor make this popular for all forms of dance. Also used for martial arts, yoga, bridge and chess. Access to the hall is by stairs, but there is also a lift. The hall can accommodate up to 50 people.



There are ladies and gents toilets located directly outside the hall, on the landing. These have recently been refurbished to a high standard.

News from Scott Primary.....

Children and staff at Scott Primary School were delighted this week to hear that Jessica Borthwick-Meyet is the 2023 Regional Winner of the National Art Bytes competition for the East of England. More than 40 children from Year 5 at Scott Primary took part in the competition, with children from 200 schools nationally. At a celebration event in Cambridge, Jessica was awarded a £50 art voucher and a bag of art supplies from Cass Art. Her winning artwork can be seen in the Art Bytes online gallery at: <https://artbytes.co.uk/#>



YOGA

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Mondays – Chilled Flow - suitable for beginners



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