

February 2024



## **Borough Cllr Update To Brickhill Parish Council**



**Brickhill Borough Councillors  
Charles Royden & Wendy Rider**



### **Replacement Road Signs**

We have reported many of these street name plates recently which have been damaged or have become worn out. Please let us know if you see any or report them yourself online to Bedford Borough Council. The locations for reporting are not always obvious and so we have included a page on our website with the links for the most common issues

[Click here](#)

If there is a highways emergency call 01234 718003



### **Parking of Commercial Vehicles**

We have been contacted by residents concerning the parking of commercial vehicles on Brickhill roads, such as Avon Drive. We have spoken with the police and the vehicles have had tax, MOT and insurance. In such cases there is no police action which can be taken, albeit they are sometimes unsightly! If you have any concerns about parking issues you can always contact the Bedford Borough Council Enforcement Team by email at [enforcement.team@bedford.gov.uk](mailto:enforcement.team@bedford.gov.uk) or 01234 718359. Or text only enforcement requests to 07553895403.

### **Ashmead Road Flooding**

Following our complaints to the council the debris left in the ditches by contractors cutting back has now been effectively cleared. We are however concerned that the continued building on land which has always been prone to flooding will only make matters worse. The building of balancing ponds is necessary but as one resident pointed out there is only one brook which serves as the drainage for all of the additional housing.

## Woodlands Park Adoption

We are considerably frustrated by the slow progress of adoption which is so important to enable proper maintenance to be carried out. We are in regular contact with the council who provide updates on the individual areas for which different developers are responsible. If you would like information on any specific area do get in touch with us and we will be pleased to try and help.

## East West Rail

We have been concerned that Mayor Wootton has commissioned a report on numerous different routes for East West Rail which have not been made available to the public. At a council meeting and in an interview with the BBC, Charles expressed concerns and demanded that a map of the routes being considered was published. The Mayor has used taxpayers' money to pay consultants to examine routes but refused to make the routes available to the public. The Mayor has now agreed to release the report next week at a meeting but the general public will not be invited. We have called for the Mayor to lift the veil of secrecy and publish the alternate routes he is considering ahead of the meeting.



## NHS Doctors and Surgeries

We are deeply concerned about the lack of provision of surgeries with another local GP announcing closure this week. Despite conservative promises to cut waiting lists the NHS waiting lists in Bedfordshire has hit 94,979, up by 10,163 from November 2022. Wendy and Charles have joined other Liberal Democrat councillors in calling on the government to reverse the NHS spending cuts and invest in fixing local hospitals, hiring more staff and ensuring patients get the treatment they deserve. People deserve a local health service that delivers the care they have paid for throughout their lives when they need it.

## Council Tax Announcement

After many years of really careful controls on expenditure it is sad to report that the conservative Mayor and his Executive, which now consists only of conservative councillors, has put forward a huge increase in council tax which is quite cynically just below 5% at 4.99%. It gets even worse because there are huge increases in borrowing which will put even more pressure on council tax in future years. The conservative county council made Bedford one of the highest places for council tax in the country and they are at it again. After 14 years in which we got the budget under control and reduced debt - it is all going wrong again. The high tax is not even helping protect services with school meals up 20% and cuts to important services such as food bank referrals and the Schools Careers Service. On top of this, an extra £56 million in borrowing will mean £5 million more in debt payments every year – this means more cuts or increases in Council Tax in the future. This is all in stark contrast to the approach of the previous Mayor, Liberal Democrat Dave Hodgson, where services were protected and council tax rises kept to some of the lowest seen in the country. This didn't happen by accident but came from years of hard work on behalf of local residents – putting people first. Now we face the prospect of this hard work being undone in such a short time.



## Community Speedwatch Van saved!

There was a small bit of good news in the budget though: We were delighted that after our campaigning Mayor Wootton's proposal to cut funding for the Community Speedwatch Van has been cancelled. Speeding is such an important issue and reducing it can save lives so we welcome this U-turn which we called for last year. We will always oppose the Mayor and his Conservative Executive when they try and cut vital public services.



## Cuts to our Buses

It is sometimes forgotten that a considerable number of Brickhill households do not possess a car and therefore the ongoing cuts which we have seen to our bus services places real strain on families. The decreasing frequency of the Stagecoach Number 6 and the cancellation of the Grant Palmer service to Woodlands Park is a real concern. We have complained to the council who are supposed to support this service and we have been told that council officers are in discussions/negotiation with Stagecoach, who are exploring the option of extending the service 6 into Woodlands Park. We have asked for

frequent updates and asked that residents are kept informed of these meetings.

## Help us keep in touch

It is always helpful to be able to inform residents with updates via our email list and if you have not yet signed up for this yet then please do so as this is the best way for us to keep in touch with local news. We won't bombard you and you can unsubscribe at any time. Sign up here

[www.bedfordlibdems.org.uk/sign-up](http://www.bedfordlibdems.org.uk/sign-up)

Please remember we always try and respond to residents the same day or within 24hrs.

If you haven't had a reply to an email please call us because they can go astray



**Wendy Rider**



**Charles Royden**



## ***Surgery at Woodlands Park***

**We would be pleased to meet you at our surgeries**

*Brickhill Drive Shops 3 February 10.00am*

*Avon Drive Shops 17 February 10.00am*

*Brickhill Drive Shops 2 March 10.00am*

*Avon Drive Shops 16 March 10.00am*

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

*Sign up to get our regular local email updates*

**[www.bedfordlibdems.org.uk/sign-up](http://www.bedfordlibdems.org.uk/sign-up)**

**Wendy Rider**

Brickhill Borough Councillor  
23 Orwell Close, Brickhill, Bedford.  
MK41 7BQ 01234 303254  
wendyrider41@gmail.com

**Charles Royden**

Brickhill Borough Councillor  
The Vicarage, Calder Rise, Brickhill,  
Bedford. MK41 7UY 01234 309175  
07973113861  
charlesroyden@gmail.com

**Working all year round not just at election time !**