



Brickhill Borough Councillor Report

June 2013

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After our comprehensive report for April there are just a few updates which may be of interest.

Bedford Bypass

After decades of waiting there is hope in sight for those who have longed for the building of the western bypass. Today (31.May 2013) we learned that our application for funding to government had been successful and we now have a further 4.5 million pounds towards the bypass. This means that all funding required from the Borough Council is now in place. There is still a wrangle over land issues which the council is dealing with using compulsory purchase. Unfortunately this process has exposed a dispute between the Highways Agency and a private company going back to 2002. This matter has to be resolved and we are working with all involved to reach a resolution. The new funding is required to be spent by March 2015 on the bypass construction. The planning permission is in place and pre-construction surveys completed or underway. We have had to move mountains already to get to where we are, the Mayor has been pushing this since the day he was elected and I know that he won't rest until this bypass is completed.

Verge Parking in Brickhill

We are receiving increasing requests for this to be extended to other roads. We will be conducting a residents survey over the summer. Implementation would follow with the cost paid for out of our ward funds.

Speeding

We have received a mixed response to the 20mph speed limit in Tyne Crescent. This is mostly very supportive however not everybody wants the reduced speed limit and some see Tyne Crescent as a main road which should have a 30mph limit. We have always made it clear that 20mph is increasingly seen as the default position for residential areas and this is national policy which is in force in many places across the country. We believe that Tyne Crescent needs special attention since it has seen a large increase in traffic since the building of the Woodlands Estate. It will take time but eventually people will recognise that we all need to lower our speeds in residential roads and soon speeding will be as anti-social as drink driving. Not everybody will obey the 20mph speed limit but we have already seen a reduction and every 1mph speed reduction will help save lives. More signs will be in place before the end of the month.

Roads Programme

Cleat Hill has just been resurfaced and Clyde Crescent and Falcon Avenue will have the

surfaces completed this summer. Across the town you will see more activity with Goldington Road being one of many resurfaced main roads. As well as 6 Million being invested in the Black Cat roundabout you will see new roundabouts built at Union Street and Rope Walk/London Road.

Pot Holes

We are on our way to Brickhill being pot hole free after the winter, but please do continue to report potholes on 01234 718003. Anything over 2 inches deep will be filled within 24hrs even if it is temporary repair to make safe.

Real Time Bus Information

Our ward funds have been used to purchase the new display which has been fitted at the bus stop in Brickhill Drive. We have requested a new unit for the bus stop at Waveney Avenue opposite Avon Drive Shops. We have also asked that the bus stop inbound outside St Philip and St James receives hard standing without further delay.

Parking Restrictions

The new parking restrictions for Kestrel Road, Hawk Drive, Tyne Crescent and Falcon Avenue are all in place. Residents have identified some additional measures which may improve the enforcement in Hawk Drive and Dove Road. These will be brought forward before September.

Resurfacing Footpath, Brickhill Drive to Bedford Park

We have asked for resurfacing of some paths and driveways around Brickhill especially off Tyne Crescent. We are pleased with progress on the footpaths adjoining the Woodlands Estate.

Littering

We were encouraged by the support received for the Mayor's zero tolerance approach to littering, with fines being handed out in Brickhill for littering. We are now pushing for more prosecutions for dog fouling. Four cases of littering were heard by Bedford Magistrates on Wednesday 8 May 2013. Three cases attracted fines of over £500 because the offenders failed to appear in court. Littering is anti-social behaviour and blights the local environment for everyone. We are now prosecuting more offenders than ever before and we will maintain a zero-tolerance approach towards the minority of people who believe it is acceptable to drop litter in the borough.

The Higgins Bedford will Re-Open from Dawn to Dusk on 21 June 2013

Please remember the opening and go and take a look at this 5.8 million project

Talking Down Bedford

There continues to be a tendency by some to talk down Bedford and make the town centre especially sound unpleasant. Recently this has included attacks on the closure of town centre toilets. It is important to set the record straight on the facts surrounding our public toilet provision in Bedford. Bedford Borough Council continues to invest £365,000 a year on public conveniences located across our town and additional investment is currently being made to provide brand new toilet facilities to replace the toilets in the bus station at Allhallows. Through the Community Toilet Scheme we also now have a comprehensive network of clean, safe and accessible toilets. Special thanks to the six town centre businesses that have already signed up including Beales, McDonalds, Café Portioli, Casbah, The Fountain and Number 13. Few Councils across the country could boast such provision.

The toilets at Silver Street were closed, and it was agreed by all at that time that there was no way to make these hygienic without an unfeasible cost. The Council is looking at installing a 24 hour, 7 days a week Automatic Public Convenience at Lurke Street. The Council has also invested in specialised public conveniences in the River Street car park. There have been suggestions that the council should re-open the Lurke Street conveniences at a huge public cost to run, when they were only used by just 8 or 9 people at day, and are soon to be replaced by a 24/7 facility. Our public convenience network is now broader and more comprehensive than before.



It is worth pointing out that many councils have simply closed down all their public toilets, Milton Keynes did this and no longer spends a penny on public toilets. A copy of a leaflet is attached which shows the number of public toilets available in Bedford town centre and their location

Bus Station Redevelopment

Planning permission has now been submitted for a brand new bus station, new toilets and refurbished car park at Allhallows. For too long this area has let our town down and it is great that at long last something has been done.



If you read the local papers you might have seen criticism of the scheme for costing 8million pounds for a 'lick of paint.' It is important to get the facts right, this is much more than a lick of paint! The entire bus station will be

demolished and rebuilt . The toilets also will be gutted and rebuilt. The car park itself will cost over 2 million to refurbish and this is entirely necessary as the concrete is in a state of decay and the car park would simply fall down. Expect to see the car park looking really good once this work is completed with a fantastic new appearance and also new ticket machines, barrierless parking etc. The new bus station, toilets and car park will be completed before spring 2015.

Grass Cutting

There have been issues with extensive growth of Dandelions and wet weather causing the contractors to fall behind with cuts. We have introduced extra council mowers and there has been a blitz across Brickhill and we should be back to normal in most places. Please tell us if you notice any uncut areas.

Wendy Rider & Charles Royden