

## **Cllr Wendy Rider and Cllr Charles Royden Borough Councillors Report to Brickhill Parish Council 1 September 2011**

Despite the usual relative tranquillity of the summer period, there have been some considerable changes and challenges affecting our community over the past months. As usual we seek to keep residents informed through regular updates in Focus and on our website [www.puttingbrickhillfirst.com](http://www.puttingbrickhillfirst.com)

### **Policing Issues**

**Brickhill Police Post.** Despite our offer of funding assistance, the Police have decided to close their police post in Brickhill. The loss of a local visible presence and the local knowledge of an officer based in Brickhill, we believe will have an adverse impact upon crime. The change was introduced without consultation and brings to an end a period of extremely close co-operation between the parish and police due to proximity of the officers. Surgeries have not been taking place and residents turning up to speak to an officer have been disappointed. Bedfordshire Police Authority is keen to know your views on the new policing changes. They now have a survey which you can use, the survey will only take 10-15 minutes to complete. Please follow the link below to complete the survey. <https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/65XL2Y7> The survey closing date is Monday 26th September 2011

**Speeding.** We believe that the speeding problem has become worse around Brickhill and we receive many complaints. The lack of visible enforcement by the Police has no doubt contributed towards this situation. Roads with particular problems include Avon Drive, Waveney Avenue, Tyne Crescent, Kimbolton Road and Windrush Avenue. We would ask the Parish Council to include this matter as a regular item on Parish Council agendas and to write to the police asking for enforcement to take place and seeking figures of enforcement conducted over the previous 12 months with locations. This will be more important now that there will be no local Police Constable at the Community Safety Forum.

**Crime and Anti-social behaviour.** We are aware of some crime issues and also anti-social behaviour around Dearne Walk. We purchased with our ward funds a wireless CCTV camera for Brickhill last year and will seek to deploy that in the Dearne Walk if the problem persists.

Please remember that there will soon be one number to call in a non-emergency situation. The telephone number will change to 101 if you wish to contact the police in Bedfordshire to coincide with the changes. The 999 emergency number is unchanged.

**Riots** We were pleased that Bedford did not experience difficulties with rioting. The Borough Council CCTV control room was used throughout to monitor and provide coverage throughout the town. We believe that the visible presence of extra officers on duty served as a preventative and reassurance measure.

### **Westrope Way**

We are aware that Westrope Way is now being used as a through route by vehicles. The bus bollard will be operative soon. We are minded to allocate ward funding to providing a gate in addition to the bollard. This is because we believe that bollards often fall into disrepair and they do not deter motor cycles. We are also requesting the Borough Council to change the street sign at the entrance to Westrope Way to show that the road is a cul-de-sac. The views of Parish Councillors would be appreciated.

### **Tesco plans for Brickhill**

Tesco has announced that it plans a Tesco Express at the Bird in Hand Pub. A letter has been sent to properties in the vicinity by Tesco. We are totally opposed to the manner in which Tesco has announced these plans and we support our local shopkeepers in the existing shopping parade who have faithfully served our community over many years. The proposal for a Tesco Express, which usually charges higher prices than their supermarkets, does not offer a diversity of trading from the shopping parade, but is in direct commercial competition with existing local shops, threatening their viability. Tesco can use the existing premises to open without any additional planning permission and do not require any consent from the Council as this was a freehold property, and is believed to still be owned by Charles Wells. We would like to hear your views about the possibility of this development. We will do our best to serve the interests of our community and support our existing shop keepers, working with them to protect the future of all the shops in Brickhill Drive. There was a huge response from Brickhill residents who turned out to a packed meeting at St Mark's Church Community Centre on Wednesday 17 August to discuss the Tesco plans. Residents expressed their concerns over the proposals and Cllrs Wendy Rider and Charles Royden agreed to ask for a meeting with Tesco and Charles Wells to discuss their concerns. The main points raised included fears for the viability of the existing shops and the appearance of unfair competition. Increased traffic problems, deliveries and parking were also key issues.

Residents complained that their emails to Tesco had not been answered and Tesco appeared unwilling to

communicate with the local community. Residents asked for the police to be made aware of the strong local concerns about additional traffic. They also asked for the council to consider any measures which might be used to make Tesco aware of local opposition to the store opening. Local residents, shopkeepers and Cllr Mark Fitzpatrick, Chair of Brickhill Parish Council all spoke passionately against the plans and there was no support from any resident. Discussion included the fact that Tesco may require a new licence to sell alcohol and the use of the living accommodation in the premises. There was also a likelihood that Tesco would need to make planning applications for some structural changes to the outside of the building, including doors, signage, plant equipment and an ATM cash machine. It was noted that these planning matters would be brought for decision by the planning committee of the Borough Council but could only be considered in terms of planning details. They could not be refused on the grounds of not wanting Tesco to trade. We will keep you updated on [www.puttingbrickhillfirst.com](http://www.puttingbrickhillfirst.com)

## **Buses**

**Number 6** We are delighted by the changes to the local bus service which will mean the Number 6 bus will now provide a proper link to the railway station and operate until 11.00pm. This service will operate with departures from the bus station approximately every 12 minutes from 0530 to 1811. It will then operate every 20 minutes between 1811 and 1911 and then extend to operate hourly from 1941 until 2241. The final journey in to the bus station will arrive at 2251. Service 6 will operate via the Rail Station at peak times. This Service 6 will now serve the Woodlands development, replacing the existing service 10. As a result, it will operate in both directions on Tyne Crescent but will no longer serve the section of Tyne Crescent between Ashmead Road and Avon Drive.

We have been asked for help trying to have bus shelters relocated. Our feeling is that any action should wait until the service has settled down and a meeting will be held in six weeks time to discuss this.

**Number 10 and 28** Thank you to all of those people who assisted us by completing our survey of bus users who will miss the Number 10 bus which will no longer come through Brickhill. It is clear that this was a very valuable service especially to some elderly residents for whom it was a real lifeline. We have been working with Bedford Borough Council and Grant Palmer Ltd and there is agreement to route the number 28 bus into Larkway to assist Brickhill residents. The bus will come down Kimbolton Road and enter Larkway via Dove Road. The bus will then rejoin Brickhill Drive and return to Kimbolton Road. The service into Bedford will operate Monday to Friday at 8.45am, 10.30am, 11.45am, 12.30pm, 1.45pm, 2.30pm, 4.45pm, 6.20pm and 6.45pm. The Service from the Bus Station to Larkway will operate Monday to Friday at 9.00am, 10.15am, 11.00am, 12.15pm, 1.00pm, 3.15pm, 4.15pm and 5.45pm. There will be a Saturday service with the first bus starting at 10.30am into Bedford and the last bus back to Larkway leaving Bedford at 4.15pm. There will be no Sunday service.

We are also discussing with Bedford Borough Council how Brickhill can access community transport for those who would benefit from increased services. More information will be available as soon as we have more details and we expect to be able to make an announcement in the very near future.

## **Brickhill Green Spaces**

We are extremely pleased about the council's proposed new planning policies in the "Allocations and Designations Plan" that will give stronger planning protection to 300 green spaces. Many of these green areas are in Brickhill, such as the land off Tyne Crescent and Cleet Hill. Mayor Dave Hodgson has kept his promise and supported our 'No More Bricks in Brickhill' campaign. It is crucial that we use the right planning policies to protect our green spaces for the future.

## **Street Clutter**

We believe that we have tackled the street signs which were out of date across Brickhill as part of the 'Mayor Dave Street Clutter Campaign'. These have all now been removed, please tell us if you do spot any more which you think may have been overlooked.

## **Proposal for Telecomms Mast in Avon Drive / Kimbolton Road**

We have been approached about this, as have the parish council. We agree that we do not wish to see another mast at this location and will actively campaign against the plans.

## **BPHA Garages Brickhill Drive**

These are once again a health and safety risk and we have asked the Borough Council to take action to compel BPHA to behave as a responsible land owner and make the necessary repairs.

**Verge Parking**

We have received a request to have no verge parking signs fitted along the full length of Tyne Crescent. Currently the restrictions do not operate on the section close to The Pheasant, which is now a bus route in both directions. We are aware that some residents have been issued with tickets for obstruction by the police in this area. However the Borough Council CCTV vehicle can only enforce when plates are erected. The view of the Parish Council is significant in determining whether we as Borough Councillors will ask for this to be taken forward. We would be grateful for your views.

**Lune Walk**

We have allocated ward fund to allow landscaping in Lune Walk. This work is now underway, although we have requested better results than were first apparent. When the work is completed we have agreed to allocate the same funding priority to Dearne Walk.

**Verge Damage**

Linnett Way and Falcon Avenue have received verge damage from vehicles parking and driving over them. Now that the verge parking is enforced in Linnett Way and the Number 10 bus no longer uses Falcon Avenue, we are seeking for these verges to be reinstated.

**Recycling Litter Bin Provision and enforcement**

New recycling litter bins have been introduced at the shops in Brickhill. Mayor Dave Hodgson has introduced the 'Why Would You?' Campaign, a zero tolerance approach to littering, dog fouling and fly tipping with prosecutions now taking place in court.

**Hamble Road Green - ball games**

Residents approached us with ongoing concerns about ball games being played by teenagers in Hamble Road. We held a public meeting at which about a dozen residents attended and asked for help. The meeting unanimously agreed that allowing the grass to grow in parts and erecting a low rail fence would solve the problems. We agreed to allocate ward funding to provide for this to take place.

**Thank you**

We would like to especially thank Francesca and Alison for their hard work in making the event on the green such a fantastic community activity. We are aware of how much work went on behind the scene and it was a memorable event.

We note that Bedford is now to be consulted on urban parishes across the Borough. Where Brickhill leads others will follow. We are asking for the Woodlands Estate to be brought into Brickhill Parish.

**Wendy Rider**  
Borough Councillor

**Charles Royden**  
Borough Councillor

**Please help us keep Brickhill a great place to live. Tell us about things like broken street lights, graffiti, damaged street signs. Or call the Council direct on 01234 267422**