



Wendy Rider



Charles Royden

Dave Hodgson Launches Skills Led Recovery Plan

Mayor Dave Hodgson has launched a new Skills Led Recovery Plan to ensure that residents have the skills and opportunities needed for Bedford Borough to build back better following the COVID pandemic.

Mayor Dave said, "Our recovery must be focussed on helping residents gain more skills to take advantage of opportunities for themselves and their businesses.

"This plan is our proposal to deal with the most obvious economic impact of the pandemic: unemployment, and the lost opportunities for people of all ages to grow their skills and talents, whether they are an employee or a business owner."

The plan will be underpinned by a Partnership of employers, education and skills providers and the council. They will identify new trends so that training is relevant to local opportunities.

The four priority areas identified are:

- ◆ Young people (16-24)
- ◆ Retraining & improved employment for adults
- ◆ Entrepreneurship & self-employment
- ◆ Future skills.

You can read the full plan at www.BedfordLibDems.org.uk/recoveryplan



Elstow Solar Farm on Track



Mayor Dave Hodgson and Leader of the Liberal Democrats Sir Ed Davey recently visited the new Bedford Green Technology & Innovation Park.

The project will deliver low carbon, clean energy generation technologies on the old landfill site near Elstow.

It will have 8,004 solar

panels with a capacity of up to 4.2MW which can be fed into the national grid and will be operational in the spring.

Dave Hodgson said, "It was great to see the progress at the Bedford Green Technology & Innovation Park. This project will not just deliver green electricity but also encourage others to reduce carbon emissions and adopt innovative technologies."

Sir Ed Davey added, "I was delighted to be shown around the Park. I would like to congratulate Mayor Dave Hodgson and Bedford Borough on this hugely innovative project to deliver cheap, green, energy. The £2.3million from the Council along with £1.8million from the South East Midlands Local Enterprise Partnership (SEMLEP) show real investment in our future energy supply."

£150 Council Tax Rebate - Don't Miss Out

Households living in a property valued in Council Tax bands A to D as their main home will be eligible for a £150 Council Tax rebate.

If you are currently paying your Council Tax by Direct Debit and meet the eligibility criteria, the council will pay the £150 automatically into your bank account.

If you don't pay by Direct Debit you will need to complete an online form to apply for the £150 payment. You can find out more details at www.Bedford.gov.uk/counciltax

Supporting Ukraine

Thank you to residents who provided a mountain of clothing, sleeping bags, medical supplies and other essentials for Ukraine following our appeal on social media. We were overwhelmed by the generosity and the chapel at St Mark's Church was filled with humanitarian aid which was driven direct to Ukraine. We have received kind offers of help to provide accommodation but as yet there is little information from government as soon as we know more we will update our website



www.puttingbrickhillfirst.com

We recommend the following information

- ◆ To donate money to the Association of Ukrainians in Great Britain visit <https://www.gofundme.com/f/helpukraine>
- ◆ To sign the petition on Parliament's website calling on the Government to waive visas requirement for Ukrainian refugees visit <https://petition.parliament.uk/petitions/609530>
- ◆ To offer your home to a named Ukrainian visit <https://homesforukraine.campaign.gov.uk/>

Ukrainian Support - Latest Updates

Local residents have been very generous in their support for Ukraine. As things can change very quickly please check for the latest information on Mayor Dave's website, facebook or twitter. Please see www.mayordave.org.uk

Town Centre Rejuvenated



Pop Into Town, Shop Local!



The old arcade is almost completely full



Old buildings are being restored

Cllr Charles Royden said, "Key workers, council staff, shops, market traders, all our local businesses, have been working hard to ensure our town centres in Bedford and Kempston are safe and clean environments for people to shop, visit, meet friends and have fun."

Despite chains struggling across the UK, in Bedford we have welcomed many new businesses, from b&m in the centre, through to a Cat Café on the High Street and a Retro Arcade in the Old Arcade.

The council has also widened pavements on the High Street, improving access and safety for pedestrians, improved Silver Street Square and Allhallows, and has started delivery of the "High Street Heritage Action Zone" with historic buildings being restored.

Cllr Wendy Rider said, "We are backing our local shops. We have made our town centre more accessible, however you get there, with new dropped kerbs, cycling infrastructure, deep cleaning of the bus station and new loading bays for shoppers. We have also frozen parking charges and are continuing the free 2-hours parking in all town centre car parks on a Saturday, all day Sunday and offer 2 hours free every day at Queen's Street."

FOCUS Team Advice Surgeries

- Saturday 2nd April 10am Avon Drive shops
- Saturday 16th April 10am Brickhill Drive shops
- Saturday 30th April 10am Avon Drive shops
- Saturday 14th May 10am Brickhill Drive shops



- ◆ Mayor Dave Hodgson's Surgeries - Second Tuesday of every month 4 - 6pm - for an appointment ring (01234) 718620

www.BedfordLibDems.org.uk/surgeries

Brickhill News

Waveney Avenue Crossings

Wendy and Charles are using their ward fund to provide plans for safe pedestrian crossings on Waveney Avenue. These are especially important for children crossing to Brickhill Schools by Avon Drive roundabout and Falcon Avenue .



Average Speed Cameras

Residents have asked what is happening to the average speed cameras on Brickhill Drive which

we have part funded from our ward fund. The delay is caused by a mixture of Covid and Brexit with parts coming from Germany. We will give an update on www.puttingbrickhillfirst.com as soon as we know more.

Brickhill Drive Shops We have been asked to remind residents that all the shops are still open on Brickhill Drive despite the presence of scaffolding to make roof repairs after storm damage.

Covid Boosters With Covid rates going up in Bedford it is important that you have your next booster and this is now available in Bedford for people over 75. There is a walk in facility for vaccinations at Pure Gym on Manton Lane or you can go online and book.

Brickhill FOCUS Team

Brickhill Borough Councillor Wendy Rider

- 23 Orwell Close, Bedford, MK41 7BQ
☎ 303254 ✉ wendyrider41@gmail.com

Brickhill Borough Councillor Charles Royden

- St Mark's Vicarage, Calder Rise, Bedford, MK41 7UY
☎ 309175 ✉ charlesroyden@gmail.com

Mayor Dave Hodgson

Mayor of Bedford Borough
37 Kathie Road, Bedford, MK42 0QJ
✉ dave@MayorDave.org.uk



www.facebook.com/BrickhillFocus

If you have a grumble please get in touch

Name
Address
Phone
Email

Can you help us?

Yes I would like to help by:-

- ☐ Delivering FOCUS in my street
- ☐ Displaying a poster at election time
- ☐ Making a donation
(Payable to North Beds Liberal Democrats)
- ☐ Joining the Liberal Democrats

Please return to Wendy Rider at the addresses above

Can we keep you updated about our activities including campaigns, events, fundraising and details about how to get involved?

Yes please ☐ No thanks ☐

The Liberal Democrats will use your contact details to send you information on the topics you have requested. Any data we gather will be used in accordance with our privacy policy at libdems.org.uk/privacy. To exercise your legal data rights, email: data.protection@libdems.org.uk. Published and promoted by C Royden on behalf of N Beds Lib Dems all at St Mark's Vicarage, Calder Rise, Bedford, MK41 7UY. Printed by Election Workshop, 3 Sheffield Street, Manchester M1 2ND