

Brickhill Borough Councillors Report to Parish Council April 2026

From Charles Royden
and Wendy Rider



No Confidence in the Mayor

In March we reported on the petition by Liberal Democrat, Labour, Green and Independent councillors expressing no confidence in Mayor Tom Wootton and calling for him to resign. We have received overwhelming support from residents who are appalled that

the Mayor has publicly blamed the Chief Executive of the Borough Council for his catalogue of mistakes. We maintain that he should do the honourable thing and resign. This would allow councillors from across the political parties to work together to sort out the mess that he and his Conservative Executive have caused. Residents who wish to join us in [signing the petition may do so here](https://www.bedfordlibdems.org.uk/mayormustresign) (<https://www.bedfordlibdems.org.uk/mayormustresign>)

Telecare Tax

Vulnerable residents have received a letter telling them that Mayor Tom Wootton and his Conservative led Executive have decided to start charging residents who have a personal alarm. These alarms provide peace of mind for older people, those living alone and anyone with health concerns, enabling them to remain safely in their homes. From 1 April everybody will now have to pay £4.00 per week unless they have been assessed by Social Services as needing financial help. Once again, it is the most vulnerable in our community who are having to pay for the waste of this conservative administration.





Story 2 Council Car Parking Extortion

The Mayor has cancelled free evening parking in car parks and Brickhill residents are being hit with a new flat rate fee added on top of the daytime charge. The moment the clock hits 6.00pm or 8.00pm in some car parks an additional charge is made. If someone parks at River Street at 5.45pm and leaves at 8.15pm, they now pay £5 for up to three hours plus an extra £4 overnight fee — £9 in total for an evening that would cost just £5 during the day. Even a few minutes past 8.00pm triggers the full £4 charge, which has shocked and angered many residents. The new parking charges are outrageous. After a 25% increase over the last two years, the Conservatives are now slapping residents with extortionate overnight charges that will strangle our restaurants, venues and evening economy. People are battling rising bills, yet town centre visitors are being milked like a cash cow to paper over the Mayor's financial mismanagement.

Electric Vehicle Charging

Since election nearly three years ago not a single new electric charging point has been installed by the council. We have complained about this failure which is more upsetting as under Mayor Dave Hodgson, funding was applied for under the government council Local Electric Vehicle Infrastructure (LEVI) scheme, which subsequently received £1,010,000. Alongside this capital funding, Bedford Borough Council has also been allocated £346,000 in LEVI



capability funding to support planning, staffing, and procurement for EV infrastructure. There is no excuse for this debacle and the council must get moving. We have asked that locations suggested by the Parish Council be examined more closely. It is particularly important that support is provided for residents to access who do not have off-street parking.

The failure to allocate new charging is particularly upsetting as under Mayor Dave Hodgson, Bedford Borough Council was ahead of other councils in having installed so many public charging points.



Bus Cuts

We have been asked to attend a forum by the council transport team to be advised by Stagecoach on their proposed cuts to services across the Borough. We are aware of proposals to reduce services and cut some routes entirely. Stagecoach claims that bus patronage levels are falling and this affects the commercial viability of some town services. Sadly, since the privatisation of the public transport network our buses are provided by commercial companies and Stagecoach is not a public transport service. However, government and tax payers do make financial contributions towards services and we will campaign against cuts to essential public transport on behalf of our residents.

The Motorised Menace

Please take details and CCTV of any incidents and report the use of quad bikes, motorbikes and electric scooters driven on pavements. We will continue to pass details shared with us to the police

Brickhill Graffiti

Residents are continuing to report to us graffiti in Brickhill. We have asked the council to use CCTV to track down offenders and also ask residents to be vigilant.

We would be delighted to receive information which leads to those responsible being apprehended by the police. If you have any knowledge of those responsible, please contact the police or your Borough Councillors in confidence.

Road and Pavement Repairs

We have reported these potholes on Kimbolton Road and many other potholes across Brickhill. The roads are literally falling apart but what makes matters worse is that we have discovered that the conservative-run council has been sitting on over £2 million allocated for roads and pavement maintenance that has not been spent. This money could have been used for proper resurfacing work instead of just refilling the same potholes over and over again. While we have been dodging potholes, the Mayor has been caught asleep at the wheel yet again.



Food Waste Collections

We are currently working with Bedford Borough Council to tackle the poor provision for food for waste collection. This was highlighted recently with the delivery of food waste containers to residents who had no place to put them. On the first day of collection, many residents complained to us that their collections were missed or containers were returned with lids open strewn across the pavement. Some residents have not yet received their collection caddy and we have advised them to report this to the Council.



Children go hungry - to pay for Council financial crisis

The Conservative administration has decided to end the provision of vouchers for children receiving free school meals in the school holidays, starting this Easter holiday. Over 7000 children in the Borough have previously benefited each holiday period. It is a cruel blow to families made worse by the fact that government funding is still available through the Crisis Resilience Fund. Once again, the vulnerable are made to pay for the incompetence of the Conservatives in Bedford.

Help us keep in touch

It is always helpful to be able to inform residents of Brickhill 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. We won't bombard you and you can unsubscribe at any time. Sign up here

www.bedfordlibdems.org.uk/sign-up

We always aim to 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.

Avon Drive Shops Saturday 11 April 10.00am
Brickhill Drive Shops Saturday 25 April 10.00am
Avon Drive Shops Saturday 9 May 10.00am

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

Wendy Rider - Brickhill Borough Councillor

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Email us at puttingbrickhillfirst@gmail.com

We aim to always respond within 24 hrs

Working all year round, not just at election time !

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