

# Brickhill Borough Councillors Report to Parish Council January 2026

From Charles Royden  
and Wendy Rider



## Sale of land off Ashmead Road

We now have over 500 local residents who have supported our petition to stop the sale of the community planted woodland off Ashmead Road.

This matter will now be debated at Full Council on Wednesday 14 January when we hope that councillors from all parties will send a clear signal to the Mayor that

a fire sale of our green open space in Brickhill is not acceptable.

This sale is a clear 'dash for cash' by the Mayor and his Conservative administration as a consequence of the council bankruptcy. However this kind of fire sale of public property has lasting consequences and once it is gone it is gone forever. A map and full details can be found on our website.

**Please sign our petition  
on our website [www.puttingbrickhillfirst.com](http://www.puttingbrickhillfirst.com)**



## Blink and it Broke

Residents were shocked by the rapid deterioration of the resurfacing of Avon Drive. Charles and Wendy reported this to the council and Charles said 'this is the worst resurfacing I have seen and I was portfolio holder for roads for 14 years.' It should be said that in this case the council is not to blame and they are as dismayed as we are. The council apologised that residents were disturbed again in the night as the council contractor carried out resurfacing which was necessary to prevent further deterioration. Samples have been taken of the materials used to determine the failure of the new resurfacing. Poor material



might have been supplied and possibly the entire surface will have to be done again by the contractor. We are keeping a close watch to ensure it is done properly at no cost to residents.



### **Brickhill Graffiti**

We have been working with Liberal Democrat Colleagues to have the council remove graffiti. These telephone equipment boxes were all recently cleaned of graffiti.

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.

### **Gritting Campaign Success**

Plans were made by the Mayor and his Conservative led Executive to remove 141 roads from the winter road gritting schedule. Liberal Democrat Councillors successfully campaigned to have these routes reinstated. However we have

spotted that some roads previously threatened with being cut from gritting routes had been missed earlier this week, despite the cut being previously rejected. Examples included Arundel Drive in Putnoe, Lovell Road in Kingsbrook, and the Black Tom area of Bedford. Following demands from the Liberal Democrats these routes will now be properly treated. Cllr Henry Vann said, “We have now had



to step in twice to save these roads from being axed from vital gritting routes. It was obvious at the start of this week that roads that should have been gritted were being missed right across Bedford Borough and we challenged this straight away.



We are very grateful for the hard work of the gritting crews at anti-social hours and to officers who quickly responded to our concerns. However, residents have been let down by the routes being wrongly changed and many roads being excluded. The root of this problem was the original plan from the Conservatives to cut the 141 roads and then the bodged reinstatement of the previous routes.

### Street Name Plate Repairs



We frequently report street name plates that are damaged and require replacement. It has been revealed that Bedford Borough Council is underfunding street maintenance to such an extent that staff are now having to use permanent markers to make street signs more legible.

Challenging this, Wendy Rider asked a question at Full Council. She called for highways maintenance to be properly supported, reporting that a street sign in her area had been repaired using permanent marker.



### Mayor abandons latest Vanity Project

On Wednesday 19 November the Conservative Mayor and his Executive agreed to spend £4million pounds on the Kempston Mill Bridges project. This scheme was outlined for the replacement

and improvement of Kempston Mill Bridge. *'The replacement will include lifting the structure to ensure that the waterway underneath can be used in the future as a navigational route by larger watercraft. [\(Extract from Executive Agenda 12 \(5\) 19 November 2025\)](#)*

At a time when the council has been made bankrupt this proposal is beyond contempt. The following evening Charles attended the council Environment

Committee and pointed out to Executive members that £4 million pounds was more than the council would spend on roads and pavements for a whole year. Thankfully following our opposition this outrageous decision has now been cancelled. Cllr Henry Vann said. "When you are told you are going bankrupt, you don't spend money on a vanity project like raising a bridge so canal boats can get to a canal that doesn't even exist yet." Why does the Conservative Mayor always have to be dragged to the right decision for local residents and taxpayers? We welcome the U-turn but regret that it took our opposition to get to this more responsible position.



### Planting of Brickhill Roundabout at Avon Drive

Charles and Wendy have always funded the seasonal roundabout planting which brings a beautiful display of colour through the spring and summer. This year Mayor Tom Wootton cancelled the funding for councillors meaning that the planting would no longer take place. Fortunately following the council bankruptcy we had anticipated this decision and ordered a new planting scheme with perennial planting which will come back every year.

We are disappointed that funding for tree planting has been cut for next year so that no new tree planting will take place across the Borough. This is of concern and means that trees which are removed will not be replaced for future generations.



### Interpretation Board Woodlands Park

Following a request from a resident in Woodlands Park, Charles and Wendy have funded a new Interpretation board for the country park. We were fortunate to secure funding before the Mayor cancelled funding for councillor projects.



## 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](http://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 17 January 10.00am  
Brickhill Drive Shops Saturday 31 January 10.00am  
Avon Drive Shops Saturday 14 February 10.00am  
Brickhill Drive Shops Saturday 28 February 10.00am  
Avon Drive Shops Saturday 14 March 10.00am  
Brickhill Drive Shops Saturday 28 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*

### **Wendy Rider - Brickhill Borough Councillor**

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

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