

**Brickhill Borough Councillors Update
October 2021
From Wendy Rider and
Charles Royden**



Fly Tipping Ashmead Road

Additional bollard protection has now been fitted to help unauthorised fly tipping.

Great news for bus passengers

Stagecoach, Grant Palmer, Uno and Bedford Borough Council have ReLaunched the 'Cygnet' Bus Pass. On 1 October, Stagecoach, Grant Palmer, Uno and Bedford Borough Council relaunched the 'Cygnet' pass. This enables bus users to switch freely between the three local bus operators without the need to buy multiple tickets. The pass will operate as a paper ticket, which will be sold and accepted on Bedford Borough's three largest bus operators- Stagecoach, Grant Palmer and Uno. This ticket will allow for unlimited travel on any Stagecoach, Grant Palmer and Uno bus in the Stagecoach Megarider zone, across a day or a week and you can mix and match bus providers. It is four years to the day since we originally launched the Cygnet pass, and it is great to welcome another bus operator on-board. The Cygnet pass makes local bus travel easier and more convenient, allowing people to switch between bus operators

The 'Cygnet' pass is £6 for a day ticket, with the weekly ticket priced at £18. You can buy the ticket on Stagecoach, Grant Palmer and Uno buses.

Street Trading in Falcon Avenue

Bedford Borough Council is in receipt of an application to vary a Street Trading Consent outside the Town Centre. The applicant's current consent covers multiple locations throughout the borough at which they may stop for a maximum of 20 minutes before moving on, as well as 7 longer stay locations at which the applicant may stay on specific dates and times. This application includes multiple long stay locations throughout the Borough and includes Falcon Avenue from 1st Wednesday from 17:00 to 21:00, 2nd Saturday from 18:00 to 22:00, 5th Saturday from 18:00 to 22:00 Articles to be sold/trade : ice-cream, desserts, drinks (soft), chocolate. Time span: 12 months. Please do tell us if you have any concerns.

Supporting Afghan refugees

If you would like to help Afghani nationals, then please visit <https://www.bedford.gov.uk/council-and-democracy/about-the-council/supporting-afghan-refugees/>

Our thoughts go out to the families and individuals in Afghanistan affected by the current humanitarian crisis that is unfolding in the country. Bedford Borough Council is fully supportive of the Government's commitment to resettle Afghan refugees in the UK and we stand ready to welcome them and support them. Bedford Borough is a place that welcomes refugees, and we are ready to support Afghans in their time of need, providing shelter and safety, and helping them to rebuild their lives.

What you can do to help. If you want to help, you can do so by donating or volunteering through the following charities You can also help by making any families that are relocated in your neighbourhood feel welcome and supported.

Make a donation Cash donations are the fastest, most efficient way to get help to vulnerable people. Cash donations enable relief agencies to cater to the specific needs of the affected population as quickly as possible. They also allow relief agencies to buy goods in the affected region, helping to regenerate the local economy.

[British Red Cross](#) [Refugees at Home](#) [UN Refugee Agency](#) [Unicef](#)
[Save the Children](#) [Refugee Council](#)

Donating clothes, books and toys Clothes, books, toys etc can be donated to [British Red Cross charity shops](#), [Save the Children charity shops](#) and [Oxfam charity shops](#).

The items won't go directly to child refugees, but the money raised helps charities to support them.

Volunteer Several charities and organisations are working with refugees across the UK. Visit the [National Council for Voluntary Organisations](#) to find out more about volunteering opportunities. We will add more information about ways people can support to this page as it becomes available.

Offer accommodation In recognition of the challenges around sourcing accommodation, the Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) has launched a [portal for pledges of offers of homes to accommodate refugees](#). This enables property owners, organisations, companies and individuals to register support via the website so no offers are missed.

To contribute something other than entire homes, for example, fostering or donations, visit the [Help refugees who have come to the UK](#) page.

Bedford Borough Council is also asking [local landlords to get in touch directly if they have any empty properties available to let in the coming weeks](#).

The properties will need to be in good condition, ready for people to move in within the next few weeks, and landlords can expect to receive market rent.

Please email operationwelcome@bedford.gov.uk if you have a property to let that is sitting empty.

St Thomas More - School Streets.

Kennet Rise is currently closed to school traffic at peak times to prevent parents from driving into Kennet Rise to collect their children. They are encouraged to consider sustainable alternatives or to park more safely away from the school gates. Thomas More School has serious issues concerning the safety of children and we hope that permanent change can be made to the manner in which students are dropped off and collected from school to keep them safe.

Tidy Tip no longer subject to booking

Next week, Household Waste Recycling Centre (HWRC) on Barkers Lane will no longer be subject to a booking system, so we will all be able to visit the site during normal opening hours without an appointment. The online booking system will stop taking new bookings at 11.59pm on Saturday 9 October, with everyone able to attend the site without an appointment from 9am on Monday 11 October. With limited space for vehicles to wait on site, please be aware the site can get busy. It is expected that Fridays and weekends will be the busiest times, particularly 9am to 1pm and 3.30pm to 5pm, so the Council is asking residents to plan ahead and try and to avoid these peak times, if possible. To ensure the site is only used by Bedford Borough residents, visitors to the HWRC will need to provide a current council tax bill, utility bill or a photo ID that shows proof of address to site staff on arrival. If the photo ID does not show an address, visitors must provide an additional form of proof of address in their name.

The Council will also be reinstating the previous permit scheme, which requires those who are using a trailer or van or looking to dispose of DIY waste to obtain a permit before attending the site. Residents can get a permit by using the Council's online request system. To request a permit and get more information about visiting the HWRC, please visit www.bedford.gov.uk/HWRC.

Coronavirus

We have seen an increase in cases with 684 new cases across Bedford Borough in the week to 3rd October. Sadly we have had another two deaths in the week ending 24th September.

As of 26th September 126,398 of those aged 16 and over have had at least one dose of the vaccine and 116,379 have had their second dose. We encourage anyone over 16 who has not yet got their vaccination to do so at one of the free walk-in sites. You can find out information about the various drop-in vaccinations sessions locally at www.blmkccg.nhs.uk/drop-in.

Facing Financial Difficulties

With the impact of COVID-19, recent gas price increases, and the removal of the £20 uplift to Universal Credit, Bedford Borough Council is encouraging local residents to check what support they are eligible for. On the website at www.bedford.gov.uk/FinancialSupport, the Council has pulled together the various forms of local and national support that are available to people facing financial pressure at this time. This information will be promoted through a social media campaign and council communications. The help available includes Council Tax support where residents on the lowest incomes in Bedford Borough can get support to reduce their council tax bills.

If your circumstances have changed and you think you may be eligible for Council Tax support there is information available on this webpage. This webpage also has information about how to apply for Universal Credit, and the eligibility criteria for free school meals. The Council also provides more immediate financial support through hardship support and crisis grants, to help people manage through an emergency or crisis if they have low income and are in receipt of a qualifying benefit. These are difficult times for people with the impact of COVID-19, rising gas prices as we head into winter, and the removal of the £20 uplift for those on Universal Credit. We want to make sure that everyone can find out about the help and support that is available and would encourage people to take a look at the webpage at www.bedford.gov.uk/FinancialSupport."

Come and see us at our surgeries

9 October 10.00am at Avon Drive shops

23 October 10.00am at Brickhill Drive shops

As your local councillors we will continue to work hard and keep you informed through regular deliveries of FOCUS, surgeries and our website where you can sign up for our Brickhill newsletter.

www.puttingbrickhillfirst.com

Wendy Rider, 23 Orwell Close, 01234 303254 wendyrider41@gmail.com

Charles Royden, The Vicarage, Calder Rise, 01234 309175 charlesroyden@gmail.com