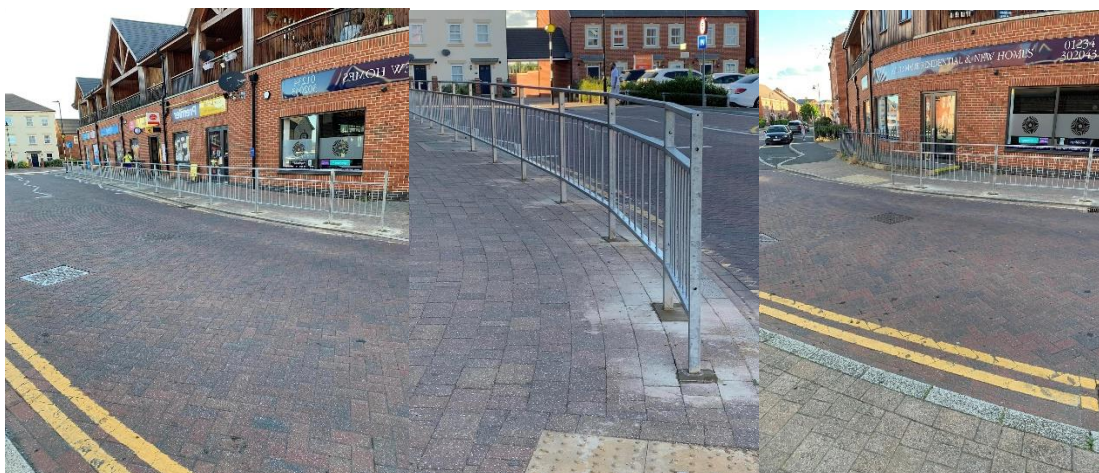


Monthly Borough Report to GDPC Jun/July 2024

- **Safety Barriers on Anglia Way**

Following many months of dangerous parking on the zig-zag lines designed and placed to allow drivers to have a clear view of pedestrians using the crossing we have finally seen the barriers in place. This will stop people parking on the kerb and lines and thus enhance safety for all residents but especially children. As we expected but hoped not to happen some motorists are now parking on the bend on double yellows on the opposite side of the road to avoid the 10-20 metre walk from the car park. I will be asking enforcement Officers to attend regularly.



- **Great Denham Summer Sizzler July 2024**

Once again, the annual summer session is being hosted by Great Denham Community Hall Trustees and staff.



- **Bedford Borough Council Draft 2023/24 statement of accounts**

Bedford Borough Council ended its previous financial year (2022/23) with a £2.27m deficit that occurred prior to the 2023 local elections.

Despite the challenging financial landscape and £2.27m deficit the Council have ended the year showing a £174k surplus at year end while delivering services to residents and managing spiralling costs. However, there is a large funding gap being carried forward over the next three years which the Council is working to reduce.

- **New Customer Hub**

The Council opened its new Customer Hub situated at 2 Horne Lane, Bedford, the town centre hub which will serve as one-stop destination for residents seeking assistance with Council services.

The initiative aims to offer more personalised assistance, digital support, and access to valuable resources that will improve the support the Council provides to residents.

- **River Festival**

The River festival will be taking place on Saturday 20th and Sunday 21st July 2024.

To celebrate the Bedford Borough the Council has launched a new community art project in honour of the River Festival which residents of all ages and abilities can participate in.

The theme of the project is "Favourite places in Bedford." With residents being encouraged to submit works depicting historical landmarks to hidden gems, parks to shops, and artists favourite Bedford spots in a 2D piece of artwork.

The River Festival itself will also be hosting an all-new Family Island at St. Mary's Garden with activities/workshops primarily geared towards young families – workshops are free but will have limited availability.



Activities include:

- Dance workshops: Get your groove on with energetic dance sessions.
- Storytelling and sensory activities: Spark imaginations and ignite curiosity.
- Arts and crafts: Unleash creativity with exciting crafting opportunities.
- Little Science Lab: Explore the wonders of science with hands-on experiments.
- **Financial Boost for Kinship Carers and Special Guardians**

Bedford Borough Council is providing some much-needed extra support to our Foster Carers with an additional 4% increase to their allowances for 2024/25 taking the total increase to 8.6%.

The money will be instrumental in helping carers them meet the challenges of raising their extended families ensuring all children receive the support they need.

The allowances will be backdated to 1st April.

- **Town Centre Vision**

Earlier this month, the Council unveiled its Bedford Borough Town Centre Vision and Capital Delivery Programme for Bedford and Kempston.

This is a collaborative initiative that brings together ideas from the Mayor, Council, residents, and businesses across the Borough in a series of medium- and long-term projects.

The overall vision will aim to modernise the Town Centre by embracing the changing roles they play in our communities today, adding to the small steps already taken by the Council to make a much more compelling Town Centre offering – from free parking, enhanced street cleansing, more shops which have all had a positive impact with increase footfall figures.

- **Armed Forces Day Parade**

The Council held an Armed Forces Day Parade in Bedford Town Centre on Sunday 30th June, 2024, starting from De Parys Avenue at 10.20am to honour past and present serving personnel, reservists, veterans, and military charities.

Following the parade, there was an array of stalls and activities suitable for all ages, providing an opportunity for the community to engage with and support our armed forces. The Council also granted the Freedom of the Borough to a distinguished unit from Chicksands.

- **Tennis**

The National Tennis Association (NTA) will be taking over Bedford Borough's newly (£400,000) refurbished Tennis courts as the new operator, NTA is a non-profit social enterprise who have extensive experience of managing park tennis sites across the UK.

National Tennis Association (NTA) will initially take over the running of courts in Bedford Park, Mowsbury Park, Southfields and Allen Park. Linden Road, Addison Howard Park and Russell Park will follow once works on these courts are complete.

The Courts will cost £6 per hour for pay and play, and £40 for an annual household pass which is the equivalent of just 77p per week.

- **General Election**

There will be a General Election on Thursday 4th July and a by-election in Wyboston ward.

Please remember show photo ID to vote at polling stations, many residents will have an acceptable form of ID however, please see linked here a list of accepted identity documents: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/voter-identification-at-polling-stations-and-the-new-voter-card/protecting-the-integrity-of-our-elections-voter-identification-at-polling-stations-and-the-new-voter-card#annex-a-list-of-identity-documents-that-will-be-accepted>