

Monthly Borough Report April 2024

- **Kerbside Glass collection**

The Council will be conducting a 9-month trial collecting glass directly from residents' orange lidded bins, being more convenient for residents. A decision will be made in early May in selected areas to begin the trial which aims to capture an estimated 1,500 additional tonnes of glass that ends up in domestic black bins. Areas will be chosen in early April.

What can you recycle?

- Glass bottles (any colour or size)
- Glass jars (e.g., for sauces, jam, baby food)
- Non-food glass bottles (e.g., perfume, aftershave, face cream)

What can't be recycled?

The following glass items are not accepted in the trial and should continue to be placed in the black bin or taken to the Household Waste Recycling Centre:

- Drinking glasses
- Glass cookware (e.g., Pyrex, microwave oven plates)
- Vases
- Window or greenhouse panes

- **Bus service**

For the last 13 years the whole of the Borough's bus service operations and routes have not been reviewed. Despite the financial pressure and historic lack of management, the Council will now be conducting a long overdue review of the whole bus service operations and routes. They are also looking at some new models of operation to see if smaller buses in the rural areas might be able to feed into more main routes.

As this is currently at an early stage further updates will be given upon completion of the process.

- **Bedford Borough Council provides £242,800 Funding Boost for Kempston Pool**

A £242,800 grant has been secured by Bedford Borough Council as extra funding for Kempston Pool.

The funding will provide rooftop solar panels as well as improved metering and controls, giving long-term cost and energy efficiency savings. This will enable the site to become 36% self-sufficient from the grid, providing the council with the opportunity to invest in further energy efficiency technology and potentially battery storage to further decarbonise the site.

- **Freedom of the Borough for RAK Chicksands**

Bedford Borough Council agreed at a special Full Council meeting to confer the prestigious Freedom of the Borough upon the United Kingdom Strategic Command - Chicksands. It will grant the Command the esteemed right of Freedom of Entry to the Borough, allowing its personnel to march through the streets of the town centre on ceremonial occasions with colours flying, bands playing, drums beating, and bayonets fixed.

- **£24million works to create Community Diagnostic Centre and Primary Care Facilities at North Wing**

Patients and staff will be benefitting from a £24m project that will improve access to healthcare and vital diagnostic tests at Bedford North Wing, on Kimbolton Road.

Gilbert Hitchcock House into a community diagnostic centre (CDC) will begin later this month, offering a “one-stop shop” for diagnostic tests, checks and scans - it is expected to be completed in 2026.

It will significantly increase testing capacity in Bedford by around 50%, making it quicker and easier for patients to access potentially life-saving tests for a wide range of conditions, including cancer, heart and lung disease.

- **Household support grant**

The Government announced an extension of the Household Support Fund as part of the 2024 Budget and has enabled Council to support hard-pressed families during economically difficult times. A majority of Councils, including Bedford, most councils have used these funds to extend free meals for children through the school holidays.

Bedford Borough Council have not had any specific news on the funding it will receive from the Government however, it anticipates that the Council will receive c.£1.2m based on previous allocations. Allowing the Council to continue with the school holiday meals vouchers.

- **New community infrastructure and cultural grants available in Bedford Borough**

Two new grants have been made available as part of the UK Shared Prosperity Fund. The funding, worth £565,000, is split into two key areas:

- Community Infrastructure projects
- Cultural projects within the Bedford Borough area

Which are designed to improve pride in place and increase life chances.

The Community Infrastructure Grant Fund is designated for capital investment only for new or improvements to existing community and neighbourhood infrastructure projects. The grants available range from £1,000 to a maximum of £20,000.

Similarly, the Cultural Grant Fund, aimed at revenue investment, provides a generous funding pot of £110,000 to support local arts, cultural, heritage, and creative activities. Grants under this fund range from £1,000 to £20,000.

Applications are welcomed from a range of local organisations, such as registered charities, voluntary, community groups, Parish Councils and not-for-profit organisations with a constitution.

- **Approval been given for employment riverside goldington road**

Outline plans for an employment site to the east of Bedford have been approved by the borough council south of Goldington Road.

This will be a mix of ‘light industrial’, ‘general industrial’ and ‘storage and distribution’ uses, along with parking provision and landscaping, alterations to existing access, creation of landscaped areas and associated works.