



Unitary Councillors Report to Little Brickhill – December 2024

Update from your Unitary Councillor – Cllr David Hopkins

Pass it on: waste collections w/c 30 Dec

Because the amount of recycling put out over the festive period typically goes up by around a third (whereas green bins are generally lighter in winter) on w/c 30 December MKCC will be pausing food and garden waste collections to give crews enough time to collect both red AND blue bins. This apparently was a popular decision when we they did it last year. MKCC has also published its temporary Christmas and New Year collection schedule online. LB impacts below.

Normal collections will resume from Monday 13 January 2025.

Original collection date	Revised collection date	Bin/sack collection
Wednesday 25 December	Friday 27 December	Black, blue and green
Wednesday 1 January	Friday 3 January	Black, red and blue.
Wednesday 8 January	Thursday 9 January	Black, blue and green

Woburn Road - Fly Tipping

Both the clerk and I have chased up Pete Roberts on these issues. There is a related news item later in my report.

The contact is Pete Roberts - Environmental Crime Manager (Environmental Crime Unit)

I will keep the village updated.

Watling Street overhanging trees causing concern on land owned by Woburn Estates

I can confirm that the works to the tree at the Court House is being undertaken on Monday 18th November. This will require a road closure. I do not have any details for the tenant. Are you happy to contact them to advise? Many thanks

Karen Rance - Estates Administration Manager

Woburn Property Department

Email: Karen.Rance@bedfordstates.com

Telephone: 01525 292175

www.woburn.co.uk

Bedford Office, Woburn, Bedfordshire MK17 9PQ

For the latest information updates go to www.woburn.co.uk

Email: Karen.Rance@bedfordstates.com



Road Closure

Vattenfall will be closing part of Bletcham Way to undertake trial holes for a 33kv network. The road closure will be in effect as per the details below:

2nd December 4th December 2024 (overnight 22:00 – 05:00)

Bletcham Way – the westbound carriageway at Caldecotte Roundabout.

Whilst the emergency closure is in effect the alternative route will be southbound on A5, Kellys Roundabout and northbound on A5.

The closure can also be found using the following link Causeway one.network

<https://one.network/?tm=GB141296637>



Croudace Homes will be undertaking works to service the new development off Station Road, Bow Brickhill. As part of their works a convoy system will be used and for this a temporary 10mph speed reduction is to be enforced on Station Road, Bow Brickhill with two-way traffic lights. The temporary speed restriction and convoy system will be in effect as per the details below:

2nd December – 6th December 2024 (09:30 – 16:30)

Station Road, Bow Brickhill – between the two junctions of Greenways.

The restrictions can also be found using the following link Causeway one.network

<https://one.network/?tm=GB141318989>



(Proposed draft) New Ward Boundaries – after 2026

My colleagues at MKCC from the Lib Dem group have sourced this map from the Boundary Commission web site showing the proposed ward boundaries the Boundary Commission is recommending for the all-out elections in 2026. I stress these would still be draft subject to further consultation. The Commission had already decided that the number of councillors should be 60 from May 2026, which means they have proposed 20 wards. The draft recommendations will be open for consultation from 3 December till 24 February 2025.

The Commission will contact stakeholders informing them of the consultation and advise any parish and town councils who are directly affected by draft proposals. **There will be a brief update at next week's Parish Forum on 5 December at 18.00 with the Head of Democratic Services, Pete Brown,** who will explain how MKCC will manage any consequential changes to electoral arrangements for affected parish and town councils.





Street Name Programme

The Street Name Plate programme for 2024/25 is now available to view on the MKCC website (link below) and on the attached sheet.

<https://www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/highways/signs-and-structures/directional-signs-and-street-name-plates>

We prioritise any street name plate repairs as follows:

1. Completely missing or unreadable due to fading
2. Partially faded
3. Damaged but still readable.

Any new name plates repairs should be reported through the Report It section on the MKCC website and a site assessment will be carried out to determine what repairs need to be done.

For efficiency and accessibility, all MK street name plate replacements or rewraps will be black font on a white background.

Rachel Munday

Community and Engagement Manager

Milton Keynes City Council

Contact me on Teams www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/highways

The Civic, Milton Keynes City Council, 1 Saxon Gate East, Milton Keynes, MK9 3EJ

Local Plan – MK2050 (Local Futures Group Meeting)

The next meeting of the local Futures Group is on Wednesday 8 January at 5.00 in the Memorial Hall in Woburn Sands.

The A5 slip road



You may have seen this, which is as close to an admission of guilt as we are likely to get from a tech company!

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/c1dp40kpvzdo#:~:text=Google%20and%20Apple%20have%20agreed,the%20A5%20near%20Milton%20Keynes.>

Google and Apple have agreed to amend their audio prompts after a double fatal crash appeared to have been caused by incorrect directions from a sat-nav.

A coroner warned tech companies, external, including TomTom, to a risk of future deaths after a woman drove the wrong way onto the A5 near Milton Keynes.

Sean Cummings, assistant coroner, said Tracey Haybittle, 58, and Amal Mohamed Ahmed, 38, both died in a head-on collision after Ms Ahmed appeared to have followed "audio directions from her sat-nav application".

TomTom said recent changes had been made to its verbal instructions. Apple and Google hoped changes to their audio prompts would provide clearer guidance.

In November 2023, Ms Ahmed was "following audio directions" when she drove down the slip road near the Little Brickhill junction.

In a Prevention of Future Deaths report for Ms Ahmed, the coroner noted police attending the crash saw three other vehicles "perform exactly the same manoeuvre as Ms Ahmed and attempt to travel down the slip road in the wrong direction".

National Highways has since erected signs to prevent motorists from accessing the slip road.

Responding to the report, a spokesperson from Apple , external said the company would add special voice guidance for drivers heading past the A5 offramp toward the A5 onramp.

They said: "We trust that the steps we are taking will be helpful to try to avoid any future such tragic events."

Motorists will be instructed to "continue straight at the overpass" as they travel west. While on the overpass, drivers will be instructed to "turn right onto A5 toward Milton Keynes, Bletchley".

Google, external said while it was not clear whether Google Maps was involved in the incident, it had also made improvements so similar incidents did not occur in future.

It said its teams were working on improvements to the timing of audio to provide enhanced guidance in situations such as those in this case.

A spokesperson said: "This will involve an amended audio prompt as a driver approaches a junction where they would cross an overpass - 'after the overpass, turn right'.

"We hope that this will provide clearer guidance for drivers and help reduce the risk that they make an incorrect turn."

TomTom recommended users updated their systems after it recently implemented additional safeguards to "limit drivers' confusion where possible".

It said this had been done by timing the verbal commands closer to the actual exit, and after passing the off-slip road.


BBC News Report

Street Lighting Repairs


Whilst I am always happy to report a faulty or broken streetlight the quickest way to report the fault is to use the Report It option on the MK Council website homepage <https://www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/faulty-or-damaged-street-lights> to report any issue to us. You can also call 01908 252353.

Remember to include the reference number from the lamppost so we can find it easily to inspect it.

Also include a description of the fault such as light flickering, light on during the day, damaged street light column, wires exposed, column door missing or damaged. It helps the MK City Council inspectors to find and log the repairs.



UK Government



Help for Households

HOUSEHOLD SUPPORT FUND

As you know the Government have announced the extension of the Household Support Fund. The additional funds over winter will help with continued support for food and fuel, whilst the team also continue to work on proactive benefit take up, including pension credit. There is not a specific funding route for pensioners facing hardship, they can use the 'Local Welfare application form' that can be found here: Household support fund | Milton Keynes City Council

<https://www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/benefits/household-support-fund>

Proactive benefit take-up campaigns continue. Working with Policy in Practice, the MKCC team are working on a database script that will help us to identify those that missed out on the Winter Fuel Allowance due to earning 1p to £1,000 over the threshold to qualify. This report will assist the council to contact customers to support them with energy vouchers that can be paid direct to their supplier.



Litter Wardens

I've received this email from MK Environmental Crime Unit asking if there are local areas that are particularly bad for litter and dog mess so they can send out their wardens. Woburn Road and Watling Street come to mind but any thoughts about other areas we might report?

From: Local Councils Liaison <Local.Councils.Liaison@Milton-keynes.gov.uk>

Sent: 29 November 2024 11:20

To: .All Parish Councils <AllParishCouncils@Milton-keynes.gov.uk>

Cc: Kay Pettit <Kay.Pettit@milton-keynes.gov.uk>; Shaun Greig <Shaun.Greig@milton-keynes.gov.uk>; Local Councils Liaison <Local.Councils.Liaison@milton-keynes.gov.uk>

Subject: Litter Wardens

Good morning

For the last few years, MKCC has contracted WISE to deploy uniformed litter wardens to take action against those who drop litter and fail to pick up after their dog has fouled on land, in the open air, that the public has access to. They have the power to issue Fixed Penalty Notices to offenders and provide a visible presence to make people think twice about offending.

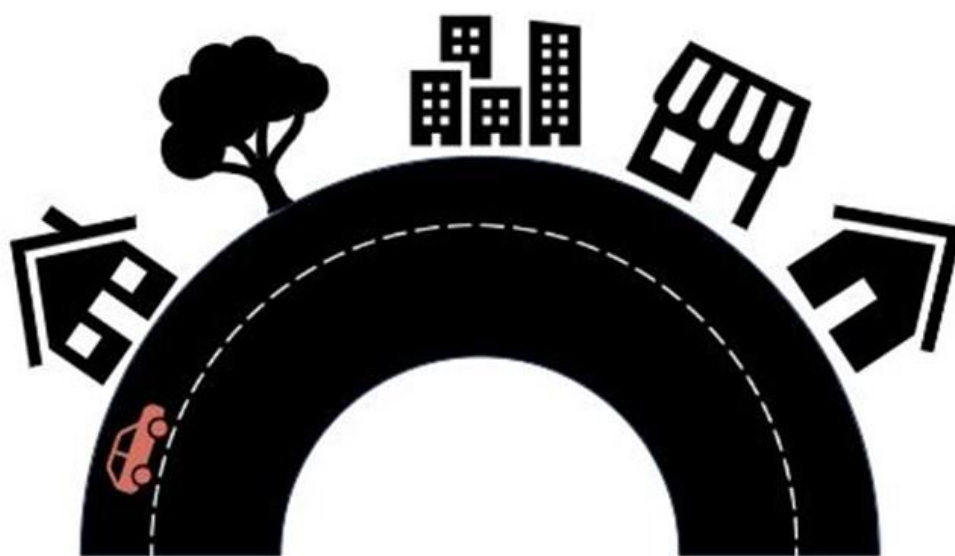
Currently, they focus on high footfall areas, but we are aware that other areas around the City would benefit from this service.

If you have certain areas within your Parish that you feel would benefit from their attention, please contact the Environmental Crime Unit at SCU.enforcement@milton-keynes.gov.uk with details of the problem and the location.

Shaun Greig - Team Leader (Environmental Crime Unit)

To speak with me use Microsoft Teams or 01908 254566

SEMK Planning Applications – 7th November 2024		
Application Reference	Address	Decision
22/00524/OUTEIS	Land forming part of the South East Milton Keynes Strategic Urban Extension, South of Milton Keynes, North of Bow Brickhill, North of Bow Brickhill Road and Woburn Sands Road, Milton Keynes.	Granted
22/02528/OUT	Land west of Woburn Sands and South of Wavendon, Newport Road, Wavendon, Milton Keynes	Granted



Community Safety Survey 2024/25.

Your thoughts about crime in Milton Keynes

The Safer MK Community Safety survey allows residents, employees, and visitors to provide feedback on anti-social behaviour and crime concerns.

To take part in the survey, visit
<https://forms.office.com/e/RSQ1Qp1Hev> or
scan the QR code.



The survey closes on 17 January 2025. To request a paper copy of the survey for completion, please contact the Community Safety Team on safermk@milton-keynes.gov.uk or 01908 691 691.





PCC seeks resident's views on local policing budget

Matthew Barber, Police and Crime Commissioner for Thames Valley, is asking Thames Valley residents to share their views on priority areas for the local policing budget in 2025/26. Matthew Barber is asking residents to share their views on which areas they would like the policing element of council tax to be focused in the 2025/26 budget by completing his ongoing local crime survey.

The Police and Crime Commissioner is due to set the 2025/26 policing budget by the end of January 2025.

The allocation of central government funding for police forces is expected to be received in December. Alongside this, the funding settlement allows Police and Crime Commissioners to increase council tax in order to make additional investments in local policing. Last year, increases of up to £13 (for a Band D property) were permitted.

Matthew Barber said: "As Police and Crime Commissioner, it is my responsibility to ensure that Thames Valley Police has sufficient resources to effectively prevent and investigate crime, support victims and protect communities.

"Setting the policing budget remains a complex process of balancing priorities and I am acutely aware of financial pressures households are under. This year, I will be setting the budget, including determining the policing element of council tax, following central Government funding decisions that are set to affect employers up and down the country.

"I have already written to Government about reviewing the police funding formula. As a result of Government changes to the rate and threshold of Employers National Insurance Contributions and the police officer pay rise over the summer, tax payers will already see an additional financial pressure of £3.6m due to a shortfall in funding.

"This is before the usual pressures of inflation, the need to invest in new technology and respond to changes in crime trends.

"Regardless, residents rightly expect an exceptional service from their police force and I want to develop greater capacity and capability to further cut crime. I want to ensure that the policing budget can support this, deliver value for money and address the concerns and priorities of our communities.

"By sharing your views, you will help shape important decisions about police funding and how Thames Valley Police can continue to work to keep our communities safe."

For the last financial year, the increase in council tax of 25p per week has helped to deliver the following:

- Recruited an additional 150 police officers across the force, including neighbourhood and Rural Crime Taskforce officers
- Implemented a Thames Valley-wide programme to help tackle knife crime
- Continued investment in the forensic improvement programme
- Investment to help tackle retail crime through the PCC's Retail Crime Strategy
- Continued investment in a Thames Valley-wide CCTV partnership
- Road safety initiatives across Thames Valley, including the recent launch of the Road Safety Strategy
- Prevention of reoffending through the Restart programme

Alongside the ongoing local crime survey, residents of Thames Valley are able to attend regular public meetings where the policing budget is discussed and reviewed. Further details on these meetings (including meeting notes) can be found on the PCC website.

The survey can be completed at <https://survey.alchemer.eu/s3/90503915/OPCC-public-consultation> or by visiting the PCC website. If you would like to share your views on the policing budget for 2025/26, please complete the survey by 12pm (noon) on Friday 3rd January 2025.

east west RAIL

Passenger services are due to start running between Oxford and Bletchley in 2025, with track installed and line testing currently underway on this section of the route. Our latest designs, which can be viewed and commented on during this non-statutory consultation, contain revised infrastructure and design plans for the new stretch of railway between Bedford and Cambridge, plus essential railway improvement works to upgrade the existing line between Oxford and Bedford.

What's included as part of this consultation?

Our plans have been updated following feedback from our previous non-statutory consultation and further technical design work. The consultation comes after the Government committed to delivering EWR in full in last month's Budget.

EWR would unlock access to jobs and open up space for businesses to grow. It would regenerate town centres, improve connectivity across the region and the rest of the UK, and support new affordable housing for people living and working in the area.

The EWR updated proposals include:

Our preference for green traction power in the form of discontinuous electrification with hybrid battery-electric trains – as well as the environmental benefits such as reducing carbon emissions, discontinuous electrification would mean overhead lines would only need to be installed along some sections of the route, which would reduce disruption during construction and potentially decrease

visual impacts in more sensitive locations along the new railway. This option would also cost less than full electrification, reducing the need to alter current structures.

Station upgrades - this includes relocating Bedford St Johns station to the west to better serve Bedford Hospital and providing alternative car parking for staff, patients and visitors. We would also improve Bedford station by building a new station plaza, extra platforms, footbridges and providing replacement car parking, all to give passengers the best possible experience. We are also planning upgrades to Cambridge station and facilities to accommodate four passenger trains per hour, including two new railway tracks next to the West Anglia Main Line from Shepreth Junction to Cambridge station, a new platform, platform extensions, footbridges and building upgrades. Potential further station enhancements are earmarked for Oxford, Oxford Parkway, Bicester Village and Bletchley stations, including parking facilities to meet future demand.

Two options for station options/service patterns for retaining/consolidating stations on the Marston Vale Line – to provide a three-fold increase in services and reduce journey times, options include retaining existing stations in their current locations or consolidating and delivering new stations.

A new station at Tempsford – we have designed two options for a new station at Tempsford

A new station at Cambourne – we are planning a new station at Cambourne to make it easier and quicker for people to travel into Cambridge. It would also help to bring more people within commuting distance of new jobs in the region, reduce congestion and support the future growth of the town

A tunnel beneath the A428 and Bourn Airfield development – following public feedback and to reduce the environmental impact of the railway, we plan to build a ‘cut and cover’ tunnel beneath the A428, the proposed Bourn Airfield development and Highfields Road, with associated temporary diversion of the A428 and other local roads

A tunnel through Chapel Hill, near Haslingfield - this would avoid having to construct a very large cutting, which would require significant construction works and could affect the flight paths of Barbastelle bats which live in the area

Work to reduce the environmental and construction impacts of our route design – this includes plans to improve the environment in line with our commitment to delivering 10% biodiversity net gain across the whole route

Train service hours of operation - we anticipate that passenger services would run between 6am and midnight from Monday to Thursday, between 6am to 1am on Friday and Saturday, and between 7am to 11pm on Sunday.

About this non-statutory consultation

This non-statutory consultation aims to obtain feedback on the early designs, including areas where we are still considering options. Feedback from the consultation will be taken into account as the designs are further developed and preferred options chosen.

The consultation will run for 10 weeks from 14 November 2024 to 24 January 2025. A series of public drop-in and online events are being held across the route to provide opportunities to meet the EWR Co team and find out more about the updated proposals.

For more information about the consultation and how to get involved, please visit our consultation page or contact our helpdesk at contact@eastwestrail.co.uk.

Drone mapping begins in Milton Keynes



Drone trials begin in Milton Keynes Milton Keynes City Council, in partnership with Cranfield University's Drone Innovation Hub and Satellite Applications Catapult Westcott DronePort, is set to launch an 18-month trial to test the use of drones in transforming essential and emergency services.

Drone flights over central Milton Keynes will create a digital twin of the area, enhancing smart traffic monitoring, secure parcel deliveries, remote building inspections, and emergency response. This real-time data integration supports faster incident response and aligns with our climate change commitments by reducing carbon emissions.

Funded by the UK Government, this initiative aims to test the safety and reliability of drones, setting the stage for future policy directions and cementing Milton Keynes' status as a leader in smart city technology. This trial is also a step towards creating high-tech jobs for the local community.

Read more here:

<https://www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/news/2024/drone-mapping-begin-milton-keynes>



Parking tariff increases

In March 2025, parking tariff charges in Milton Keynes city centre are due to change.

Milton Keynes City Council plans to align the cost of parking closer to that of bus travel as part of wider work to encourage more passengers onto public transport, and for bus operators to invest in popular services. The city council will also consider bus franchising to improve service sustainability.

Read more here: <https://www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/news/2024/first-parking-tariff-change-decade>

Planning Pathways

https://mycouncil.milton-keynes.gov.uk/service/Planning_Pathways

A reminder that Planning Pathways has now replaced the generic planning enquiries mailbox. This is a positive step, and it will help customers access the information they need quickly and consistently. For example, Planning Pathways can present relevant information to help customers understand whether they need planning permission for an extension.

Many of the enquires we receive are looking for informal planning advice, but as the Local Planning Authority we are not able to do this. The MKCC pre-Application service is available for those applicants who want more formal advice.



Highways Gully Cleaning

Since the start of September, MKCC tankers have been busy cleaning and clearing road drains in many areas to make sure they are working as efficiently as possible. Any fully blocked or slow draining gullies will be logged for further investigation.

Each month MKCC will include the next list of areas that tankers will be visiting in Councillors' News. You can also find out more about road gullies and flooding on the MKCC website.

<https://www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/highways/road-gullies-and-flooding/gullies-and-flooding-highway>

Reporting Issues Direct to MKCC

Enquiries need to be logged through the Customer Service Centre (Helpdesk) by using one of the following methods: the online system, <https://www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/pay-report-and-apply/report-it>

email: customerservices@milton-keynes.gov.uk or phone (01908 252398/252353).

By doing this your report will be passed to the correct service by the quickest route, it ensures that there is an audit trail and that we can measure demand for each service.

step 1. Report to Customer Service Centre by using one of the above methods

step 2. Allow 10 working days for a response by the service, other than in the case of emergencies.

step 3. If after 10 working days you have not received an update, please go back to the Customer Service Centre, quoting your reference number.

Please note contacting/emailing/phoning the Heads of Service, managers or any other individual officers in the first instance, may cause delays in the enquiry being investigated and resolved.

There are several reasons for this; officers could be on leave, in meetings, or working off site where they may not always have full access to email. Individual officers emails are not monitored by other staff.

Following the above process ensures that there is an audit trail of the enquiry that has been raised as you will be allocated a unique reference number for each enquiry.

Cllr David Hopkins – Ward Councillor

December 2024

East West Rail Consultation

EWR - In-person events

We are holding a series of in-person consultation events across the route. At each event you can review the updated proposals, talk to members of our team, ask questions and submit your feedback.

We are holding 16 events during our consultation period which are outlined below.

- Cambourne, Cambridge Belfry, 3 December 2024, 2pm - 7pm
- Lidlington, Lidlington Village Hall, 6 December 2024, 2pm - 7pm
- Bedford, Bedford Swan Hotel and Thermal Spa, 9 December 2024, 2pm - 7pm
- Wilden, Wilden Village Hall, 11 December 2024, 2pm - 7pm
- Tempsford, Stuart Memorial Hall, 13 December 2024, 2pm - 7pm
- St Neots, St Neots Town Football Club, 7 January 2025, 2pm - 7pm
- Comberton, Comberton Village Hall, 10 January 2025, 2pm - 7pm
- **Bletchley, Bletchley Masonic Centre, 15 January 2025, 2pm - 7pm**
- **Woburn Sands, The Summerlin Centre, 17 January 2025, 2pm - 7pm**
- Cambridge, The Clayton Hotel, 18 January 2025, 12pm - 5pm
- Cherry Hinton, St Andrews, 21 January 2025, 2pm - 7pm

How to respond to the consultation

A feedback form, which contains questions about the proposals, is available in both paper and online versions for you to share your views.

You can respond to the consultation by:

- Completing the consultation feedback form online using the button below. (Available from 14 November 2024)
- Emailing a copy of the feedback form to consultation@eastwestrail.co.uk.
- Sending a copy of the feedback form to Freepost EAST WEST RAIL.
- Handing in a copy of the feedback form at a consultation event.

For further information on materials in accessible formats or alternative languages, or to request a paper copy of the feedback form, please call us on 0330 134 0067, or email us at contact@eastwestrail.co.uk.

Please make sure you share your views with EWR before the closing date of 24 January 2025.

Contact EWR

EWR want to make sure everyone can take part in this consultation. If you have any queries or additional requirements, please email us at contact@eastwestrail.co.uk or call 0330 134 0067. If you prefer to return your feedback form by post send it to Freepost EAST WEST RAIL.