

Bradford on Avon FOCUS

From your **Liberal Democrat team**
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Town supports local services

Town councillors have set a budget to protect valued town council services such as the youth service, parks, play areas and public toilets. A rise in the precept (the town's share of the council tax) of 38p per week for a Band D property is necessary to do this, following no rise last year. Pressures on the town council budget include inflation and the fact that the town is now taking ownership, from Wiltshire Council, of assets such as Barton Country Park, Poulton Field (pictured) and additional play areas. Taking on these assets brings opportunities but they come with no funding. Mayor, Cllr Sarah Gibson said: *"We were reluctant to increase the precept at a time when the*



Poulton Field

cost of living is going up, but it is important to protect services and facilities that residents benefit from."

Conservative-controlled Wiltshire Council is to raise car parking charges, introduce Sunday car parking charges and charges for Blue Badge holders. At a Wiltshire Council meeting in February to agree the council's budget, an amendment proposed by the Liberal Democrat group opposing the charges was defeated. Prior to the meeting, Bradford on Avon Mayor, Cllr Sarah Gibson wrote to Wiltshire Council on behalf of the town council pointing out that the planned increase in parking charges undermines the efforts of town centre businesses to attract shoppers and recover from the pandemic. She said that market towns already lose out to out-of-town shopping centres, with free parking, populated by larger national retail outlets. She wrote *"Increasing parking charges is a misjudged saving which will keep people away, rather than assist the independent traders"*.



Cllr Sarah Gibson pictured with Cllr Ian Thorn, leader of the 27-strong Liberal Democrat group on Wiltshire Council.

REDUCING ENERGY USE

The cost of heating our homes is going up. For some, this will become a financial burden, and even for those who can manage, heating a leaky box is not good for the planet. The town council is working with Climate Friendly Bradford to help residents by showing easy, cost-effective ways to reduce heating costs and carbon emissions at a series of events being organised by Cllr Alex Kay and Cllr Sarah Gibson. This project plans to illustrate

where to insulate or draught-proof various local house types and give advice from invited experts on what to do first. Some cheap remedies are very effective. If you think you're using a lot of energy to heat your home, look out for further information on the town council website and for a questionnaire from Climate Friendly Bradford designed to gain a picture of household energy use in our town.



NEXT STEPS ON TRAFFIC

CHANGES TO THE HIGHWAY CODE

Did you know that significant changes to the Highway Code have come into force in order to improve road safety and protect vulnerable road users such as pedestrians and cyclists?

The changes are well illustrated in the Cycling UK video;- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MhWi-9NrJeU>

And more details of the changes can be found here;- <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/the-highway-code-8-changes-you-need-to-know-from-29-january-2022>

The town council's consultation on traffic issues received well over 2000 responses which are now being collated into a report for Wiltshire Council, the highways authority. The report will be discussed at a meeting of the Town Council Sustainable Travel Committee on Tuesday 29th March at 7pm in St

Margaret's Hall. For more details see the Town Council website <https://bradfordonavontowncouncil.gov.uk/> Chair of the Committee, Cllr Tim Trimble said: "There was a huge response to the consultation which gives us a great mandate on which to base our discussions with Wiltshire Council."

Improvements to paths and footways

Cllr Jennie Parker with local residents at Widbrook View where pavements are to be resurfaced.



Getting Involved

QUIZ NIGHT - Local Lib Dems are holding a Quiz Night on Saturday 19th March. For more details and to enter a team, contact hello@boalibdems.org.uk

We also hold regular political discussions 'Pint Sized Politics' and other events. To receive details, you can join our mailing list. Email hello@boalibdems.org.uk

And we always need more helpers to get this regular Focus newsletter delivered. *Let us know if you can help.*

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Please feel welcome to contact us with any concerns.

Pavements in Lodden Way and Widbrook View are due to be resurfaced in the summer, following an assessment by Cllr Jennie Parker who then reported the poor state of them to Wiltshire Council.

Jennie also reported on the state of other pavements in the locality and Wiltshire Council says that footways in Southville Road are included on the footway scheme list awaiting funding. For this reason, Wiltshire Council cannot yet say when this work might be carried out.

Jennie comments: "Many people living in this area are elderly and use mobility scooters or walk with sticks or frames. The state of the pavements makes many vulnerable when moving around the area. Sometimes people have to take a longer route to navigate themselves safely from one place to another. I am pleased to have worked with local residents to raise this issue with Wiltshire Council."



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