

Borough Councillor's Report for October November 2021

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Flood Investigation Report

The long awaited flood report regarding the Christmas floods has now been published. The Council has identified 141 specific actions. Those for Harrold are set out below. You can read the full report below via the following link:

<https://bbcdevwebfiles.blob.core.windows.net/webfiles/Environmental%20Issues/Flood%20risk%20management/Appendix-1-Section-19-Flood-Event-Dec-2020.pdf>

One of the main points to arise from the report is the unhappiness felt by residents with the actions or lack of action by the Environmental Agency action during the Christmas 2020 flood. In total 65 buildings suffered internal flooding, along with roads and bridges also being blocked. A number of these were in Harrold. In Harrold flooding was caused not only by the high water levels in the Great Ouse but by water run-off from the saturated fields after a sustained period of heavy rain.

It was the second wettest December across East Anglia since records began in 1981, with the Great Ouse catchment seeing 20-30mm of rainfall from 6am on 23rd December- 6am 24th December, some areas even recorded 50mm falling within a 24hr period.

The report also identifies that some drainage ditches were in need of maintenance and this exacerbated the flooding experienced in Harrold. However due to the heavy rainfall it is believed there would have still been some flooding. Harrold residents have set up a very proactive Flood Group in preparation for any such future events.

The Council has identified 141 specific actions for the whole borough including, 7 in Harrold North and 7 in Harrold South which you can read below.

11	Harrold North	Complete	Investigate the highway drainage in the area and clear any blockages. This was completed around Orchard Lane in January 2021.	Bedford Highways	
12		Complete	Set up a community flood group. The flood kit has now been issued and a flood plan has been written.	Lead Local Flood Authority	
13		Ongoing	Continued engagement with and support of the community flood group. The flood group should enable access to the flood kits, flood action plans, and information about flood warnings/alerts and Property Flood Resilience (PFR).	Lead Local Flood Authority	
14		Short-term (1-6 months)	Investigate who is responsible for the watercourse to the north of Wood Road and undertake maintenance to maximise its capacity.	Lead Local Flood Authority/ Riparian owner	
15		Short-term (1-6 months)	Investigate who is responsible for the maintenance of the flood channel and establish an appropriate maintenance regime to ensure it retains its capacity.	Lead Local Flood Authority	
16		Long term (2-4 years)	Assess the potential for a capital scheme and the benefit/implications of: - adding a second pipe beneath the road to the north of Wood Road to increase the capacity of the watercourse crossing; - works to the diverter at Wood Road to encourage flood flows eastwards into the flood channel rather than overtopping onto Wood Road; and - constructing an outflow from the flood channel into Tustings Lake	Lead Local Flood Authority	
17		Long-term (2-4 years)	Investigate the potential benefits of a flood warning system for the watercourse to the north of Harrold.	Lead Local Flood Authority	

57	Harrold South	Complete	Investigate highway drainage in the area and clear any blockages. This was completed around Odell Road/Carlton Road in February 2021 and around Dove Lane in June 2021.	Bedford Highways	
58		Complete	Set up a community flood group. A flood kit has now been issued and a flood plan has been written.	Lead Local Flood Authority	
59		Ongoing	Continued engagement with and support of the community flood group. The flood group should enable access to the flood kits, flood action plans, and information about flood warnings/alerts and Property Flood Resilience (PFR).	Lead Local Flood Authority	
60		Inspections short term (1-6 months) Remedial works as required	Inspect Main River assets (sluices, weirs, gates, locks and river banks) and identify the requirement for remedial works. Over 5,000 checks are already complete across East Anglia (95% of relevant assets), with 22 assets identified as being in need of remedial works in the wider area.	Environment Agency	
61		Medium term (6-12 months)	Undertake a capacity assessment of the culvert at The Green watercourse to identify the requirement for improvement works.	Lead Local Flood Authority	
62		Medium term (6-12 months)	Investigate the suitability of flood protection measures for the affected properties (e.g. flood barriers, etc.)	Homeowner	
63		Medium term (6-12 months)	Investigate improvements to the Flood Warning system as no flood warning was issued. This warning is already included as high priority in the Environment Agency's Flood Warning Improvement Plan.	Environment Agency	

Fly tipping in Harrold Ward

During lockdown and after there has been an increase in fly tipping in the rural areas. Set out below are the details for Harrold Ward. Borough officers have been quick to remove a lot of the incidents and I would encourage residents to continue to report these to the Borough.

Count of Fly Tipping Removal O Column Labels	2019		2020				2021				Grand Total
	Qtr4	Qtr1	Qtr2	Qtr3	Qtr4	Qtr1	Qtr2	Qtr3	Qtr4		
Harrold Ward	10	16	16	20	7	7	21	8	5	110	
Car boot load or less	3	3	1	1			1	3	3	2	
Significant/Multiple Loads					1					1	
Single Black Bag		1		1	1					3	
Small van load	4	9	8	5	4	4	11	2	1	48	
Tipper lorry load		1					1			2	
Transit van load	3	2	7	13	1	2	6	3	2	39	

Third dose of COVID-19 Vaccine for Those with Weakened Immune Systems

The Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation (JCVI) have advised that people with severely weakened immune systems should have a third vaccine dose as part of their primary Covid-19 vaccination schedule. This is not the same as the booster jab which you can read about below.

Those within this cohort will receive a letter from their Consultant or GP letting them know they are eligible. They can go to any large vaccination centre without an appointment but they must bring the letter with them.

Third doses can only be dispensed at least eight weeks after the second dose, so residents may not receive a letter immediately. However, if they have not received a letter 8 weeks after their second dose it is recommended they contact their Consultant to discuss.

Covid-19 Booster Programme for 'Most at Risk'

'Booster' vaccine doses will be available on the NHS for people most at risk from Covid-19 who have had the 2nd dose at least 6 months ago. The cohorts below will be contacted directly by the NHS – residents have no need to contact their surgery.

Cohorts:

- People aged 50 and over
- People who live and work in care homes
- Frontline health and social care workers
- People aged 16 and over with a health condition that puts them at high risk of getting seriously ill from Covid-19
- Carers aged 16 and over
- People aged 16 and over who live with someone who is more likely to get infections (such as someone who has HIV, has had a transplant or is having certain treatments for cancer, lupus or rheumatoid arthritis)

Bedford providing free taxis to and from Vaccination centres

Bedford Borough Council is providing free taxis for anyone in the Borough getting a vaccine.

To get your free taxi ride, you just need to call one of the taxi operators from the list available at www.bedford.gov.uk/VaxiTaxi, give them the reference BBC VACCINE, and let them know where you need to be picked up and dropped off.

Borough COVID-19 Update

It was reported at Local Outbreak Engagement Board on Thursday 30th September there has been a spike in cases in school-age children. Since 1st September cases have doubled in 0-10 year olds and increased four-fold in 11-18 year olds.

As of the 24th October in Bedford there have been 25,451 cases since the start of the pandemic and there have been 799 registered cases in Bedford in the last 7 days.

Last week there were 34 cases in Harrold Ward.

If you would like the latest COVID snapshot (as of 24th October) please find it through the following link:

<https://bbcdevwebfiles.blob.core.windows.net/webfiles/Social%20Care%20Health%20and%20Community/Covid19/Covid19-weekly-statistics-27Oct.pdf>

More information available at: <https://www.bedford.gov.uk/social-care-health-and-community/public-health/coronavirus/>

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/covid-19-coronavirus-restrictions-what-you-can-and-cannot-do>

Conservative Response to Local Plan 2040 Consultation

The Borough Conservative Councillors have responded to the draft Local Plan 2040 consultation. In their response they raise many concerns and have made the following recommendations including the need for genuine sustainability to be at its core.

The Group have also written to the Minister asking for the submission of Local Plan 2040 to be delayed so that Ox-Cam Arc Strategic Framework, which is due to set by National Government in 2023, can be considered in any plans the borough makes.

You can read more about the Conservative's response here:

<https://www.bedfordconservatives.org.uk/news/put-sustainability-core-local-plan>

Bedford Borough Ends Appointment System at Barkers Lane Recycling Centre

The online booking system for the Household Waste Recycling Centre on Barkers Lane has been stopped. Residents will now be able to visit the site during the normal opening hours without an appointment.

However, residents will need to bring proof of their address in order to be allowed in. Those who are using a trailer, a van or are looking to dispose of DIY waste will need to acquire a permit before attending the site. You can request a permit here: [Household Waste Recycling Centre \(HWRC\) - Bedford Borough Council](#)

Planning Scheme of Delegation Update

At Full Council on Wednesday 13th October an updated Planning Scheme of Delegation was voted for with an amendment to review the issue of 'reserved matters' following concerns raised by Conservative councillors prior to the meeting.

Bedford Borough Council Customer Services Launches Appointment Service

Bedford Borough Council's Customer Services Centre is introducing an appointment service, for residents who may need that extra digital assistance or face-to-face support.

Customer Services first point of contact is still through their telephone line 01234 267422, which will now be open Monday-Friday 9am-5pm except for Thursdays which is 10am-5pm, however if they are unable your query over the phone they are now available for digital or face-to-face support.

Consultation on Council Strategy to Reduce Domestic Abuse

Bedford Borough Council has now published its 'Strategy to Address and Reduce Domestic Abuse 2021-2026' and wants to know what you think.

The Strategy sets out to define domestic abuse, the five key areas of priority in Bedford and how the Council plans to address these over the next five years.

This consultation is now open, and you can send your ideas, comments or expressions of interest in the following ways:

Website: www.bedford.gov.uk/DASConsultation

Email us: DASupport@bedford.gov.uk

Write to: Consulting Bedford, Borough Hall, Cauldwell Street, Bedford MK42 9AP

Relaunch of 'Cygnet' Bus ticket

On 1st October, Stagecoach, Grant Palmer, Uno and Bedford Borough Council are relaunching the 'Cygnet' pass.

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.

The 'Cygnet' pass is a paper ticket which costs £6 for a day ticket and £18 for a weekly ticket. You can buy the ticket on all three companies' buses.