

## About The Community We Live In

# Black Friday Chaos, Boxing Day Chaos, and the next Bank Holiday?

### The Bicester Village Horror Story

BV brings some benefits in terms of jobs, and that's great BUT for Bicester residents the traffic impact is a nightmare – and it happens a lot – what **we** get is

- Gridlock into the middle of the night
- Local journeys taking hours
- Ambulances blocked – and if we had a fire?
- Illegal parking – anywhere will do + police costs
- Abuse of locals by BV shoppers

### And It's Getting Worse!

Through traffic is a big problem as we said in the last issue of Bicester Voice. What Black Friday and Boxing Day showed is that it



**Boxed in on Boxing Day?**

### BV should *help* the Town Centre!

In the last issue we asked where local people were going to shop? If BV and the councils have their way it won't be our town centre – Banbury will be the only option! **BV needs to pay for the privilege of siting a major visitor attraction here.** The price for their next expansion including moving Tesco could be for example

1. Build/pay for a park and ride **next** to the M40
2. Provide shuttle buses to/from the Town Centre
3. Charge for parking at BV and give 50% of the revenue to the Council
4. And, with Tesco, pay for road improvements at Pingle Drive/A41

**Sarah Haydon (Labour candidate for Bicester Town in Cherwell District Council elections next May) is a local, town centre business owner, she says**

*"Bicester Village traffic is killing the Town Centre - free parking and the sheer number of cars clogging up our roads means that local people find it difficult to get around, and visitors don't even consider coming into Bicester Town Centre. BV visitors should be charged to park and the town centre council-run car parks should have 2 hours free parking, like Pioneer Square. And why can't the BV shuttle buses include the Town Centre?"*



**And please, don't tell us BV generates Business Rates income for Bicester, Cherwell Council only sees half of that, the rest goes to the Government! If you have ideas for how BV can help the town rather than become a blot on the landscape, please let us know, email Steve Sargeant at [sargie56@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:sargie56@hotmail.co.uk)**

### Mobile Parking on the A41



will happen again and again if we don't plan properly for through traffic as well as visitors to BV. Is this our future? We need a proper roads plan so that all Bicester residents – adults and children - can move around within the town easily and safely.

Let's start by **finishing the western ring road properly** and complete the last link in the chain - Howes Lane - with a 50mph speed limit to match the rest of the ring road. Get the through traffic out! And we can afford it. The Government has given £40M for our roads now we're a Garden City, let's use it the benefit of all residents.

**If you agree we need to 'Complete the Ring Road Properly!' Please sign our petition on-line at <https://you.38degrees.org.uk/p/howeslane>**

## Commuters Railroaded

Like it or not, Bicester is a commuter town but the rise in fares for peak period travellers is becoming ridiculous. Up by 20% since 2010 and 3.5% more in 2015. It doesn't make sense that Chiltern Rail profits – our money – go towards keeping rail fares low on German State Railways while ours go on soaring - or that they line the pockets of multi-millionaires like Richard Branson (Virgin) and Brian Souter (Stagecoach).

Our Parliamentary Candidate, Sean Woodcock, is campaigning to let public sector companies like the profitable ECML bid for rail franchises as they are renewed and bring the railways back into public ownership over time. If there is profit to be made, let's re-invest it ourselves rather than give it away!



On commuter rail fares he says:

*"The increases in rail fares for commuters from Bicester are crazy at a time when the cost of living has risen while real wages and salaries have been falling. I will campaign both up to and after next May's General Election to freeze commuter fares from both Bicester and Banbury until standards of living have been restored to pre-2008 values."*

**Sean Woodcock, Labour Parliamentary Candidate and Opposition Leader on Cherwell District Council**



## And last but not least - Our Local NHS – Bicester Community Hospital

In our September newsletter, we asked if the new Community Hospital was big enough. At 12 beds, it's the same size as when Bicester was a small town of 4,000 people. Bicester 'Garden City' will have a population well above 55,000. Surely we need a much bigger facility? The old building is scheduled to be demolished to make way for housing! We need a full time facility with 5 times the number of beds, and at least a Walk In Centre and Minor Injuries Unit like Abingdon, let alone one like Witney. Let's make sure our NHS meets Bicester's needs for the future!

Bicester Labour Party is actively campaigning on issues raised in this newsletter and more! Please get in touch if you'd like to get involved, become a Registered Supporter (it's free!) or a full Labour Party member. You can get information on our constituency website <http://banburylabour.org/> or by contacting Branch Secretary Steve Sargeant - 33 Overstrand Close, Bicester, OX26 4YP, Tel 07838373063; email [sargie56@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:sargie56@hotmail.co.uk)