

Bicester Voice

About the Community We Live In

Summer 2015

Development in Bicester East

Cherwell District Council has given permission for 41 houses on open space off Tangmere Close and Scampton Close in spite of objections from local residents. With the business/industrial development likely on the other side of Skimmingdish Lane this will reduce the green space and environmental quality of the area and as residents point out, runs contrary to the Council's previous commitment to a 'green lane' all around Bicester.

This comes on top of proposals to develop on part of Gavray Meadows, an acknowledged site of major ecological significance in Bicester. Perhaps this is what Councillor Sibley meant by saying "...let's just get on with it (the Garden Town)." If Bicester is a Garden Town, the quality of existing residents' environment must be taken into account. We're not against development but we need a plan for Bicester designed by Bicester people. We live here already!



Bicester East Green Lane but for how much longer?

The Bedroom Tax

Bedroom Tax was supposed to reduce public spending on social housing and make better use of the housing stock but

- 160,000 have been wrongly assessed and benefit reinstated
- 59% are in rent arrears
- **Just 5%** rehoused in smaller properties (there are very few)
- 66% of those paying it are disabled or living with someone who is

We know from our members' own experience in Bicester, that both care and equipment have to be provided and that disabled people have a unique social network. Disabled people should be exempt, but bedroom tax should be abolished anyway, even Tory MPs are coming round to our point of view!

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Is Bicester being 'railroaded'?

Chiltern Railways and Bicester Village have already decided to rename the Town station after a shopping outlet. Surely 'Bicester Garden Town' is better & more accurate?

The Oxford—Marylebone link is welcome but the impact on London Road and the Town Centre will be catastrophic. Level crossing closed for 45 mins in every hour? This will kill access to the Town Centre from the East and divert traffic back to the A41 and through the town.



Bicester Town Councillors Allowances

Labour candidates in the recent election pledged not to take the allowances which Town Councillors award themselves for serving on the Town Council.; one of very few Town or Parish Councils to do so. Instead, we wanted that money to be spent for the good of the Town and its residents. One successful candidate called this an 'empty gesture' since none of our candidates was elected. True, but he then went on to claim he needed the money to fund his re-election campaign anyway! Unbelievable—we are paying for his election expenses?



What could the Councillors Allowances be spent on?

Talking to residents on the doorstep, it's clear there's no shortage of valuable projects to spend the money on, for example

- Cutting the grass to keep the town tidy and give kids somewhere to play
- Building decent public toilets in Garth Park
- Grants to volunteer groups working with young people

Stop Press!!

It's good to see that some Town Councillors are catching up with our suggestion last year that Bicester Town Centre parking should be free for the first 2 hours. Why didn't they support us then? Jumping on the bandwagon?

Contact Us

Bicester Labour has doubled membership since May! To get involved in issues in this newsletter or any more of our campaigns and help develop ideas for our Town, or if you want to become a member or registered supporter, get in touch with **Steve Sargeant**,



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