



Radipole Ward Focus

(Lodmoor/Radipole/Spa/Southill/Goldcroft)

No 8 - Summer 2023

Latest update on Dorset Council and Weymouth Town Council news from Councillors David Gray, Pete Barrow, David Harris, David Northam and Matt Bell

Recent years have been very challenging, but one thing that has become more than evident is how many residents are willing to step up and help in all sorts of ways, many thanks to all of you who do.

Abbreviations used—Weymouth Town Council = WTC, Dorset Council = DC



Local ward news

The Old KidsRUs site

The old pre school site in Southill has been steadily deteriorating over the past 5 years and for that entire time we have been trying to find a way to get it tidied up.

In early May we managed to get DC to grant us permission to go onto the site and, after resolving some difficulties with insurance, it enabled us to organise the site clean up on the King's Coronation voluntary action day. We want to say a massive thank you to the 40 residents who turned up on the day and who worked really hard to clear the site, for much of the time in the pouring rain.

The great work created a huge pile of fencing, branches etc... which Cllr David Harris and Cllr Pete Barrow took to the tip in the week after, making about 15 tip runs. Cllr Pete Barrow then spent two days strimming the site and hey presto it now looks like it does in the second picture..

The next stage is to get DC to lease the site to WTC so we can get the site finished and incorporate it into the rest of the open space. DC have agreed in principle to the lease, we just need to get the details finalised.



Car Park Charges

As you are all no doubt aware the Conservative controlled DC has just increased our long stay car park charges by a considerable amount and this has caused a great deal of anger amongst residents and visitors.

In order to try and get this changed Cllr Ryan Hope and Cllr Matt Bell put a motion to WTC to seek support in opposing the charges. We are delighted that WTC supported the motion.

The next step was to take the issue up with DC at the full council mtg on the 13 July. Cllr Matt Bell made a powerful statement to the mtg pointing out how unfair the charges were to residents and the damaging effect they were having on the town's economy .

This was followed by the submission of a petition with over 7000 signatures objecting to the increased charges. This was submitted by a local business owner who did a great job of organising the petition and who also made a powerful speech to the meeting.

The increased charges were fully debated with many Cllrs opposing the increased charges, the outcome is that the issue will be going back to the next Cabinet mtg in Sept, for a full review. It's good that the charges are going to be fully reviewed and that we might be able to get them reduced. However, it's also very disappointing that nothing will change this summer.



Grass cutting

As we are all aware the grass cutting in Weymouth was way behind what would normally be expected and this has caused a great deal of unhappiness amongst residents and visitors. Cllr Pete Barrow submitted a question at the full DC meeting on 13 July asking why DC had got into this position and what they were going to do about it. A precis of DC's reply is below.

As Cllr Barrow correctly points out the grass cutting is way behind. This is due to the DC Weymouth team having more than the usual number of mower breakdowns this year, together with the lack of spare mowers and parts taking a long time to arrive from Italy.

This situation has exposed a lack of resilience in the Weymouth Grass Cutting Service and despite the Team's best efforts the verge cutting has fallen behind schedule. To recover from this situation DC has made a number of changes, some of which will have a positive effect now, others will take a little longer. These are ~

Staff are working longer days and Saturdays to catch up

An additional mower is being hired in

In future DC will be purchasing new mowers from a different supplier with a much better support network / spare part availability in the UK

An additional mower is on order for the Weymouth team

In addition, the team are working on a business case to add additional resource to the Weymouth area. This will make the team more resilient and shorten the time taken to complete each scheduled cut.

An additional improvement is that the cut and collect mowers collect all the verge clippings making for a much neater finish. This also reduces soil fertility which slows down grass growth in the future.

So as can be seen DC have recognised that the current situation is unsatisfactory and are now doing something



Marchesi

We have managed to get an update from the developer Bournemouth Churches Housing Association.

BCHA still has planning consent for a scheme of 31 new homes with a combination of Rent and Shared Ownership units to meet local needs. However, the significant increase in the cost of building materials and labour following COVID has meant the original main contractor is unable to deliver the scheme at the agreed price. BCHA and the original main contractor have now terminated their agreement by mutual consent. The main contractor completed the enabling works (demolition and sewer diversion works) before handing back the site.

BCHA is now re-tendering the scheme and they hope to have revised proposals soon, this will then go to BCHA's Board for approval.

BCHA has stated that they will ensure the site is kept enclosed and as secure as possible, they will monitor the situation and take any additional steps necessary. As you may have seen the height of the crushed material has been reduced and the fencing around the site has been improved.



Holly Court

As you may already know the roof of Holly Court was badly damaged by Storm Eunice in 2022 and further surveys have found other serious issues. The building is dated and no longer meets the needs of residents. So a decision has been made to replace the building.

Anchor Hanover have now submitted a planning application to demolish the building and to replace it with a new build of 34 one bed flats and 3 two bed flats. Each dwelling has access to an individual terrace or balcony, along with all facilities required for independent living. All the flats will be social housing and existing tenants will have a right to return.

If you require further information it can be found on DC's website and the application number is P/FUL/2023/03241. Comments can be made until 28 July 2023. Cllr David Gray has been supporting existing tenants with their housing needs.



WTC Sports and Activities Champion

Cllr Bell has been appointed as The Sports and Activities Champion for WTC, a role created to support local clubs and societies. Most recently Cllr Bell has been supporting the Triton Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu Club with its successful grant application to WTC. They were able to secure a significant sum to purchase essential equipment, enabling them to increase their membership numbers dramatically.



Triton Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu is a non-profit club based in Weymouth. They are keen to involve all age groups in their club and are also aiming to provide a creche so that parents are able to join in. They run classes and open mat sessions. They are starting to offer community concessions, the first being a 10% membership discount for blue light services and armed forces personnel. More info is available by searching for Triton BJJ on Facebook or Instagram or Tritonbjj@gmail.com The QR code takes you to the FB page.

If you run a not for profit Sports Club or Society and would like some help to apply for a WTC grant please get in touch with Cllr Bell.

Radipole Lake Angling Society

Cllr Bell has been in touch with Dorset Council to help Radipole Lake Angling Society improve the fishing platforms they pay a significant sum of money to use. The club are now making good progress with improving the platforms for the benefit of their users.



There are particular issues with blanket weed and they have been seeking volunteers to help clear the areas around the platforms. If you are keen to get involved with the society please search for them on Facebook, the QR code will take you there. All anglers using the platforms are required to purchase tickets from Weymouth Angling Centre prior to fishing.

Please can all users of the platforms take their litter home with them.

Bus Service

We are delighted to announce that the Southill bus trial that Cllr David Harris and local resident Terry Hirons fought so hard to get going is now underway. The bus will only remain in service if it is financially viable so it's a real "use it or lose it" situation. Please use it. Further details are on the First bus website. *Timetables for Wessex, Dorset & South Somerset Service Number 3*



Sewage Shame Continues

In 2022 there were 37 sewage spills into Radipole Lake and 59 off Chesil Beach.

Local Liberal Democrats are calling on Wessex Water to stop the sewage spills which are blighting our beaches and rivers. 2022 Data for our area from the Rivers Trust shows 130 sewage spills totalling 414 hours. This included 59 spills totalling 343 hours from the overflow off Chesil Beach and 37 spills totalling 25 hours into Radipole Lake; a Site of Special Scientific Interest.

Liberal Democrats have been calling for the Government to legislate so water companies are obliged to stop these sewage spills and for the water companies themselves to foot the bill rather than pushing up bills for consumers. Water Companies have been paying out billions of pounds in dividends instead of investing to stop these sewage spills. Further info is available from Surfers Against Sewage and The Rivers trust.



Radipole Park and Gardens

We are really pleased to see that the Radipole Park and Gardens Project is now underway. Huge thanks to the Friends of Radipole Park and Gardens and to WTC staff for all their hard work over many years.

The Work has started and should be finished in December. The work includes a café, a new childrens' play area, a raised foot path running from the orchard down to where the café will be, a sensory garden, a pétanque terrain, outside table tennis etc...



Dorchester Road traffic restrictions

The works to replace the traffic lights at the Mercy Rd junction took many weeks and were closely followed by the works to replace the gas main. This means that residents have had to endure traffic congestion for most of the year to date. This has had a significant impact on residents' lives and quite understandably has resulted in many complaints. We have been in regular touch with DC to pass on the complaints and to see if anything can be done to make life easier for residents. One frequent comment has been why did the gas works have to be done now, the reason is that works on the gas mains can only be done when demand for gas is very low so it has to be done in the summer. A bit of good news is that the works are on target and are still expected to be complete before the schools break up for the summer holiday.



Park and Ride

There have been further problems at the Park and Ride with anti social driving and Traveller encampments. The last time this happened we got DC to install extra bollards and a lockable gate to keep the Park and Ride secure overnight. Cllr David Gray has investigated why the problem has returned and it turns out the gate was not being locked as agreed. This has been rectified and the gate will be locked at 10:00 PM.

At long last we have managed to get a bus service operating from the Park and Ride. It will be run by a local company and will operate for the six weeks of the holidays from 8AM to 7PM and prices will be kept as low as possible.



Highways Trees

As we all know trees are great for the environment and make our Town a nicer place to live. Highways trees are maintained and installed by the Arboricultural Team at Dorset Council and Cllr Bell has been in contact with them to highlight the numerous places in the ward where trees could be planted. We are asking residents to help with this, if you have an idea for a location where trees could be planted email Nick OR Steve with the idea. It's a good time to contact them as they are currently compiling planting and maintenance lists for the 2023/2024 programme.

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Your local Lib Dem Team is always keen to hear from you

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