



Cllr David Hopkins - Unitary Councillors Report to Wavendon Parish Council - January 2025

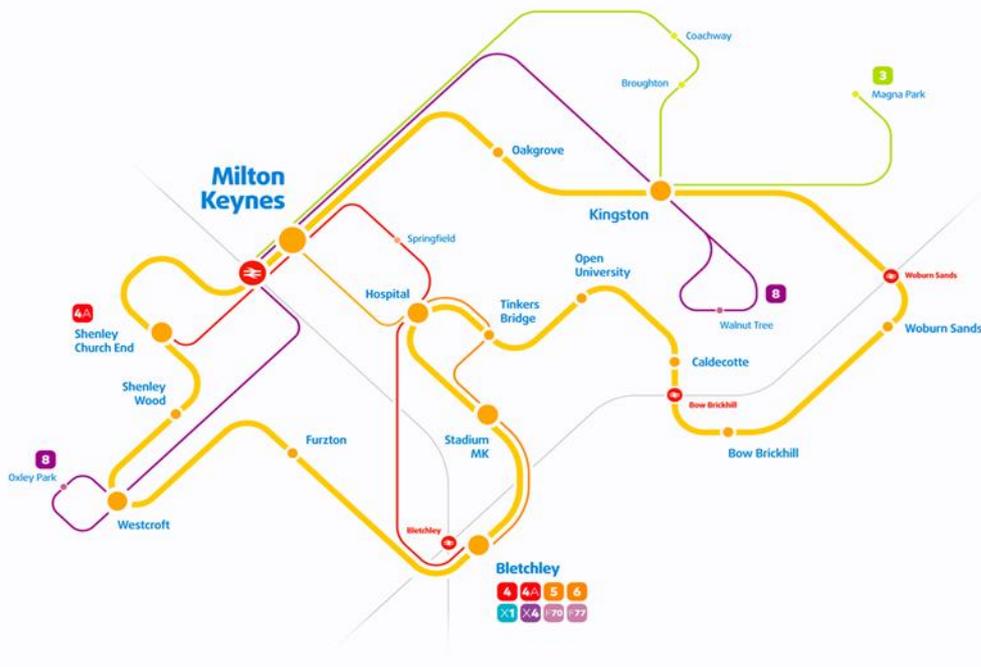


Bus Announcement

Arriva, Milton Keynes' leading bus operator, has announced the launch of Loop, a groundbreaking new bus service designed to connect key destinations across Milton Keynes. Commencing from Monday 6 January 2025, Loop represents the most significant expansion to the city's transport network in over five years.

Buses will run up to every hour, six days per week from early until late.

Connecting communities like never before.



The Loop's route will serve new destinations within Milton Keynes and enhances existing connectivity by allowing seamless travel across more of the city without the need to change buses. These destinations include:

- Oakgrove
- Kingston
- **Woburn Sands and Bow Brickhill**
- **Caldecotte**
- The Open University
- MK Hospital and Stadium MK
- Bletchley
- Furzton
- Westcroft
- Shenley Wood
- Milton Keynes city centre

The service will operate in both clockwise and anticlockwise directions, with buses running up to every hour, Monday to Saturday. This new fixed-line route has been carefully designed to link residents to major shopping, education, work, and leisure hubs, providing seamless connectivity across the city.

Circle line to circle line

Our new route serves rail stations at Milton Keynes Central, Woburn Sands, Bow Brickhill and Bletchley – meaning that you can connect to fast trains to London, as well as other destinations in the region, without paying expensive parking fees. Arriva drop you right outside each station entrance.

With the first services between Oxford, Bletchley and Milton Keynes set to begin in June 2025, East West Rail will provide easier and faster connectivity across the region.

Arriva is also linking up with our core bus corridors at key interchange points – with The Loop offering bus-to-bus connectivity to all routes in the Arriva Milton Keynes network, making it easier than ever to make local journeys, or for travelling further afield to Leighton Buzzard, Dunstable, Luton and Aylesbury.

There is no financial support for this service from MK City Council and the initiative is a commercial risk to Arriva based on residents and town and parish council feedback.

The Loop timetable is at <https://arriva.widen.net/s/lqhpzw7x2f/loop-timetable>



Woburn Sands Futures

Notes of Futures Panel – 8 January 2025

Update from EWR

EWR representatives outlined the current options on which they were informally consulting. Once the informal consultation process was complete EWR intend to publish final proposals for formal consultation later in the year. Subsequent timescales will depend on external (political/financial) factors.

It appeared that EWR favoured a reduction of stations on the Marston Vale Line and the move of the WS station (but this would have a number of consequences – see below), but this would only be confirmed in the formal proposals to be published later this year. EWR envisaged 6 trains per hour with a vehicle closure downtime of approximately 25 minutes per hour at crossings including WS which would remain open. The situation at BB was more complicated and was still being evaluated in the light of the latest traffic volumes. It is hoped that improved technology will reduce the projected downtime. The junction of Cranfield Road and Newport Road will need remodelling.

Update from developers

Formal Outline Approval has not yet been issued. Section 106 discussions not yet completed and there is still uncertainty over EWR plans.

O&H have not been able to progress the planning application for the Northern part of their site due to uncertainties over Network Rail/EWR plans but have submitted Pre-Application paperwork to MKCC. O&H unlikely to proceed with a formal application until 2026.

Points from Discussion

- Latest plans envisage two entrances to SEMK from BB/WS Road (apart from possible junctions at east end of proposed BB bypass which await EWR decisions); one into Woodleys Road and then over railway to H10, the other connecting into the Local Centre/School/Medical Centre.
- Current traffic modelling does not envisage any significant increase in traffic on the double roundabout in WS.

- Possible relocation of the WS station has a number of implications:
 - Increased pressure to open access from Swan Hill development to the East to the station which will create a “rat run” from SEMK to Newport Road and increased pressure on the railway crossing.
 - Possible demand for (free) station parking in Parklands.
 - Concern over drainage problems created by increased hard standing in station area.
- SEMK development will create additional significant pressure on Kingston roundabout. This is being considered by MKCC but no timescale available for either development or implementation of scheme.

Timescales

Delay in EWR decisions will mean SMEK development takes considerably longer than originally envisaged.

There is a need for a coordinated Timescale Plan which incorporates the construction traffic generated by both EWR and the developers and minimises the detrimental effect of the development of the area on existing traffic flows. This is difficult to produce due to the many “moving parts” but MKCC responsibility.

Very briefly, issues and points raised and doubtless I will have missed something ...

- There will be an average (possibly worst case) of 25 minutes in the hour downtime on the level crossing at Woburn Sands (this includes freight and passenger traffic)
- Fisherman’s Path to close and foot traffic to divert towards Woburn Sands and/or the new station
- Woodleys Farm Crossing to close
- Pony Crossing at Browns Wood to be a red light stop bridleway crossing. Browns Wood crossing to close and divert to Pony
- Bow Brickhill (if it closes) will be a bridge, if it remains as a station then the existing crossing will likely remain open with no bridge
- L&Q are still waiting for the planning permission on their part of the SEMK site to be issued by MKC (Negotiating 106 arrangements and EWR priorities).
- MKCC were asked to forward a detailed results paper on their multi modal transport findings for the SEMK and surrounding area.
- O&H have submitted pre app and scoping applications to MKCC (in late Augst 2024) but have no response whatsoever to date
- O&H have been issued with Compulsory Purchase order by Network Rail (on behalf of EWR) for a substantial part of its land north of the railway. Not likely now to see any movement on a planning application from O&H on that land during 2025 whilst the lawyers sort that out!.

Questions raised included.

- Impacts on Hardwick Road, the Leys and Theydon Avenue
- The implementation of the 20 MPH programme in Woburn Sands
- Future commuter use into London (both to Euston and via Thameslink)
- Can we have a strategic Transport Plan for the Woburn Sands / Wavendon/ Bow Brickhill area please?
- Can we see the construction movements plan for SEMK (L&Q and O&H areas)
- Is this a jointly agreed plan for developers and EWR (No!)
- Station Construction traffic will come in from the north (i.e. from Bletcham Way and then from the Bletcham way link to the new Woodleys Farm crossing bridge)
- Will the MRT link to the new station site
- Concern that station users will park on parklands to avoid car parking charges to the new station car park.
- Concerns about flooding and the attenuation ponds (and drainage in general)
- Will the access to the new station car park and transport hub become a rat run to access Newport Road from SEMK
- The max speed of trains on the line will be 75 MPH (not 100 MPH as originally predicted) and the current max is 60 MPH



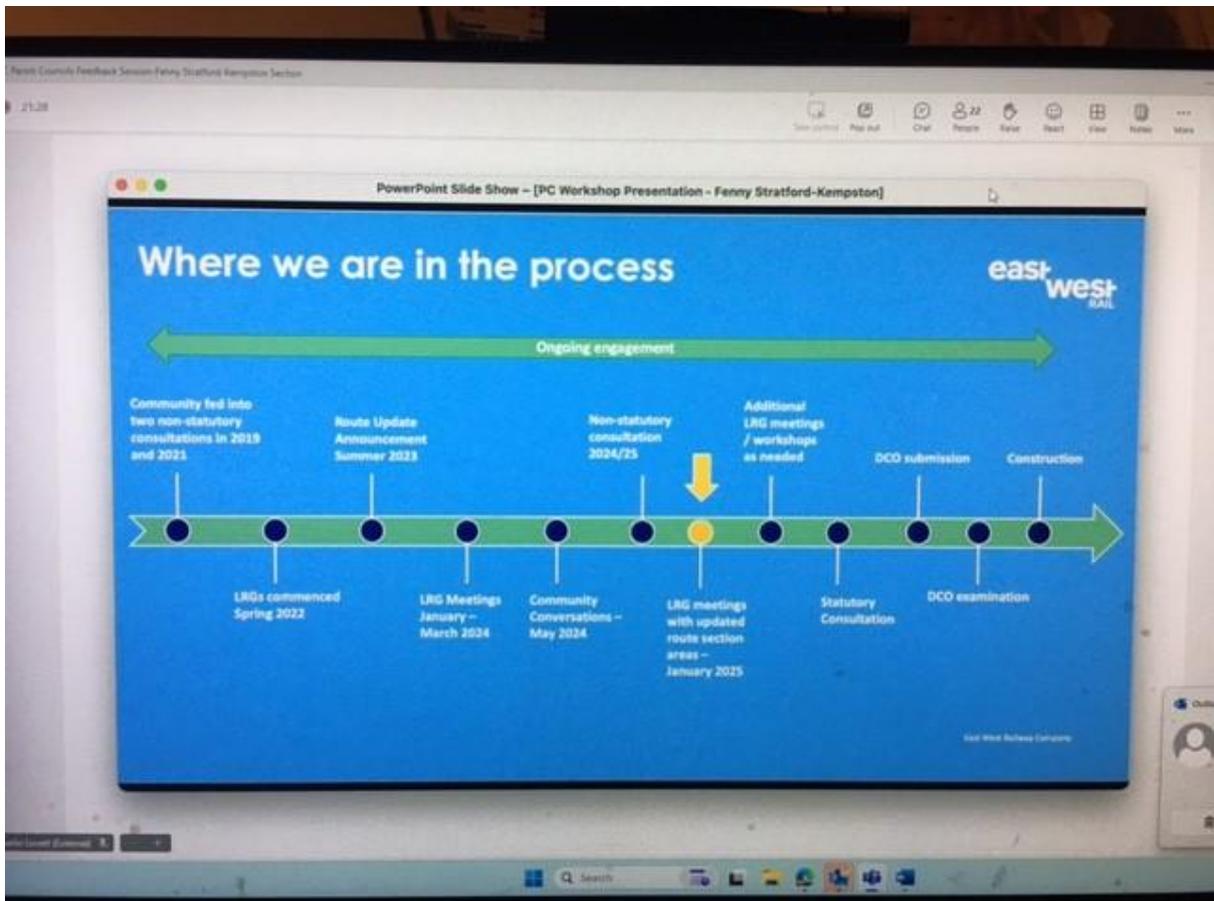
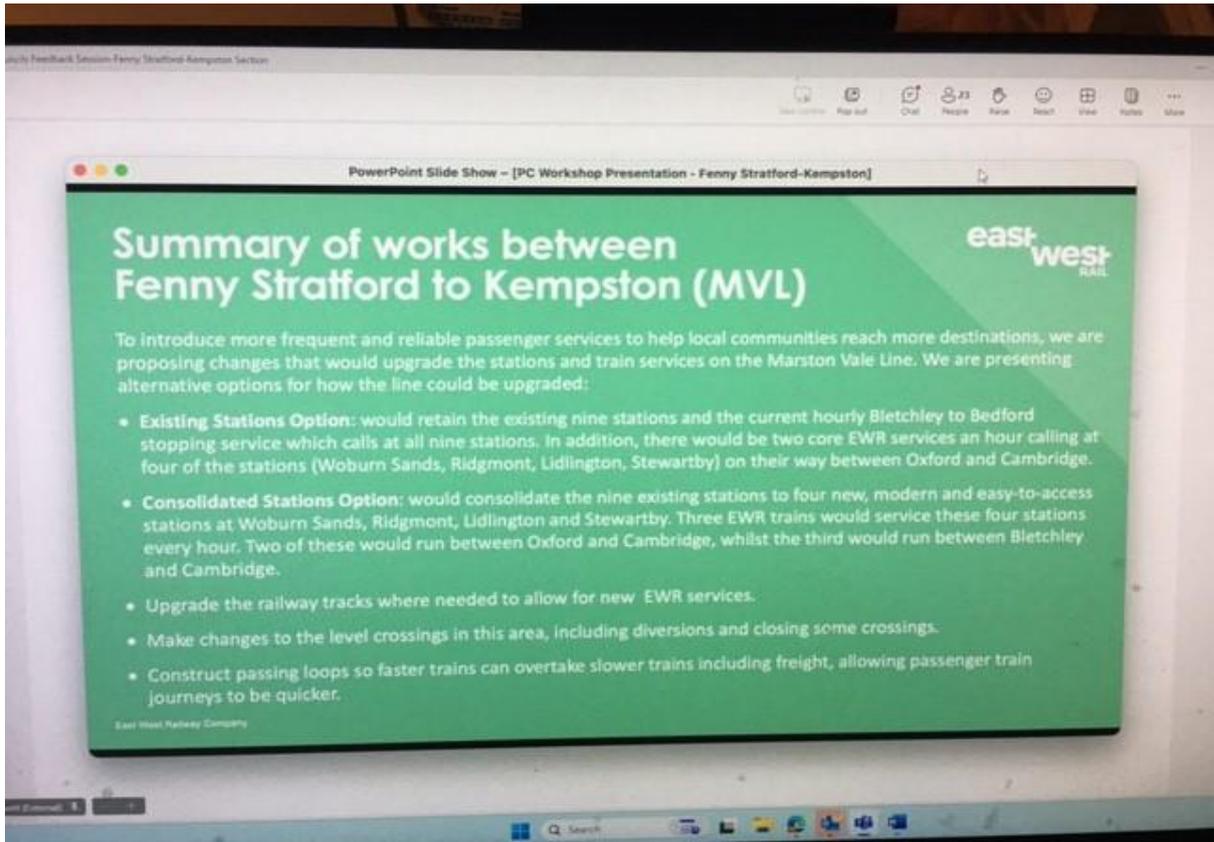
EWR Workshop

Alex raised a number of pertinent questions on the on-line call with EWR on Thursday evening, 9 January.

The most surprising revelation came after questioning by local campaigner, Nick Burton after it was revealed that option 2 (4 new stations) is not currently a funded option and would rely upon private sector monies to deliver!

Therefore, if someone selects option 2 from the informal consultation you are selecting an option against which there is no certainty of delivery whatsoever!

It was also surprising that at this stage they could offer no estimates of likely passenger numbers at each of the four 'new' stations and that although they had the results of the traffic modelling at station crossings such as Woburn Sands they would not release those numbers until they get to the statutory consultation stage.



Feedback Session Fenny Stratford-Kempston Section

PowerPoint Slide Show - [PC Workshop Presentation - Fenny Stratford-Kempston]

Non-statutory consultation so far

east west RAIL

- We are now over halfway through our non-statutory consultation
- 10 in-person events held so far with over 3000 attendees
- 2 online events held with almost 100 attendees
- Over 2000 responses received as of 2nd January
- View a large range of materials and information on our website including a Virtual Consultation room

Remaining consultation events:

Venue	Event location	Event date
Comberton Village Hall	Comberton	10-Jan
Blitchley Masonic Centre	Blitchley	15-Jan
Summerlin Centre	Wilburm Sands	17-Jan
Clayton Hotel	Cambridge	18-Jan
St Andrew's Church	Cherry Hinton	21-Jan

eastwestrail.co.uk/consultation2024

east west Railways Company

102 Parish Councils Feedback Session Fenny Stratford-Kempston Section

15:10

Recording and transcription
Started by Sarah Jacobs (Sherriffs). By attending this meeting, you consent to being recorded. [Privacy policy](#)

Introductions – Meeting the Team

east west RAIL

- Sarah Jacobs – Senior Engagement Manager
- Siobhan Adeleke – DCO Statutory Stakeholder Engagement
- Ryan Robertson – Development Programme Manager
- Toby Wastling – MVL Area Environment Manager
- Ben Nicholass – Traffic, Transport Planning and Modelling Senior Manager
- Freddie Luff – Engineering Manager
- Peter Roberts – Engineering Manager
- Jonathan Wallace – MVL Area Design Manager

Charlie Lovett (External)



Proposed parking restrictions outside Walton High School (Walnut Tree and Wavendon Gate)

Officers have now taken into consideration all of the comments that were submitted and have amended the proposal drawing to include some additional double yellow lines on Fyfeild Barrow, Isaacson Drive and Gregories Drive.

I am now in the process of preparing the proposed traffic regulation Order with the intention of formally consulting on the proposals in January 2025. You will all be sent a copies of the proposed Order, notice of proposal and statement of reasons at the start of the consultation.

Please do not hesitate to contact me should you wish to discuss this matter further.

Paul Harrison - Network and Enforcement Manager



Devolution

Summary

Government has a desire to see the majority of England enter into a devolution agreement by the end of this Parliament, and the English Devolution White Paper published on 16 December 2024 sets out the framework and benefits of devolution.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/english-devolution-white-paper-power-and-partnership-foundations-for-growth/english-devolution-white-paper>

The Devolution Priority Programme is for areas that meet the Government's criteria, as set out in the White Paper, and are ready to achieve Mayoral devolution at pace. The objective of the Programme is to establish Mayoral strategic authorities in time for May 2026 Mayoral elections. There will be full backing from Government to deliver this. The Programme will streamline Government's usual processes, reducing burdens on councils.

Government has provided briefing sessions for those authorities (including us) that it considers meets the requirements of the Devolution Priority Programme. Those authorities have been informed that, in order to participate in the programme, a letter of intent (which does not constitute the Council's final decision) is required from Leaders by the 10 January 2025.

What are the criteria?

- Scale: Strategic Authorities should be of comparable size to existing institutions. The aim is for them to have a combined population of 1.5 million or above, but it is accepted that smaller authorities may be necessary.
- Economies: Strategic Authorities must cover sensible economic geographies with a particular focus on functional economic areas, reflecting travel-to-work patterns and local labour markets.
- Contiguity: Any proposed geography must comprise councils with shared boundaries
- No 'devolution islands': Geographies must not create devolution 'islands' by leaving areas which are too small to go it alone or which do not have natural partners.
- Delivery: Geographies should ensure the effective delivery of key functions including Spatial Development Strategies, Local Transport Plans and Get Britain Working Plans.
- Alignment: The Government will seek to promote alignment between devolution boundaries and other public sector boundaries.
- Identity: A vital element of successful devolution is the ability for local residents to engage with and hold their devolved institutions to account – and local identity plays a key role in this.

Why might MKCC want this?

- MK would have a Mayor elected in May 2026 – the earliest possible point – and gain access to the Mayoral Strategic Authority level of the framework.
- MK would get a seat at the Council of the Nations and the Regions, and Mayoral Council, to feed into national policy making.
- The clock would start on getting to Established status, which requires a Mayor being in place for 18 months.

This would unlock the single settlement in Nov 2027

- MKCC would get backing from Government, including Ministerial support and engagement, to meet the timescales for May 2026 and capacity funding would start flowing one year before the election (i.e. in May 2025)

Community Safety Survey 2024/25

Your thoughts about crime in Milton Keynes

The Safer MK Community Safety survey allows residents, employees, and visitors to provide feedback on anti-social behaviour and crime concerns.

To take part in the survey, visit

<https://forms.office.com/e/RSQ1Qp1Hev> or scan the QR code in the attachment.

The survey closes at 5pm on 31 January 2025. To request a paper copy of the survey for completion, please contact the Community Safety Team on safermk@milton-keynes.gov.uk or 01908 691 691.



Ward Boundary Changes

<https://www.lgbce.org.uk/all-reviews/milton-keynes>

The Local Government Boundary Commission for England (the Commission) has launched the second part of the consultation on proposed new warding patterns for MKCC which ends on 24 February 2025.

The draft recommendations propose that Milton Keynes City Council should have 60 councillors, an increase of 3 from the existing arrangements.

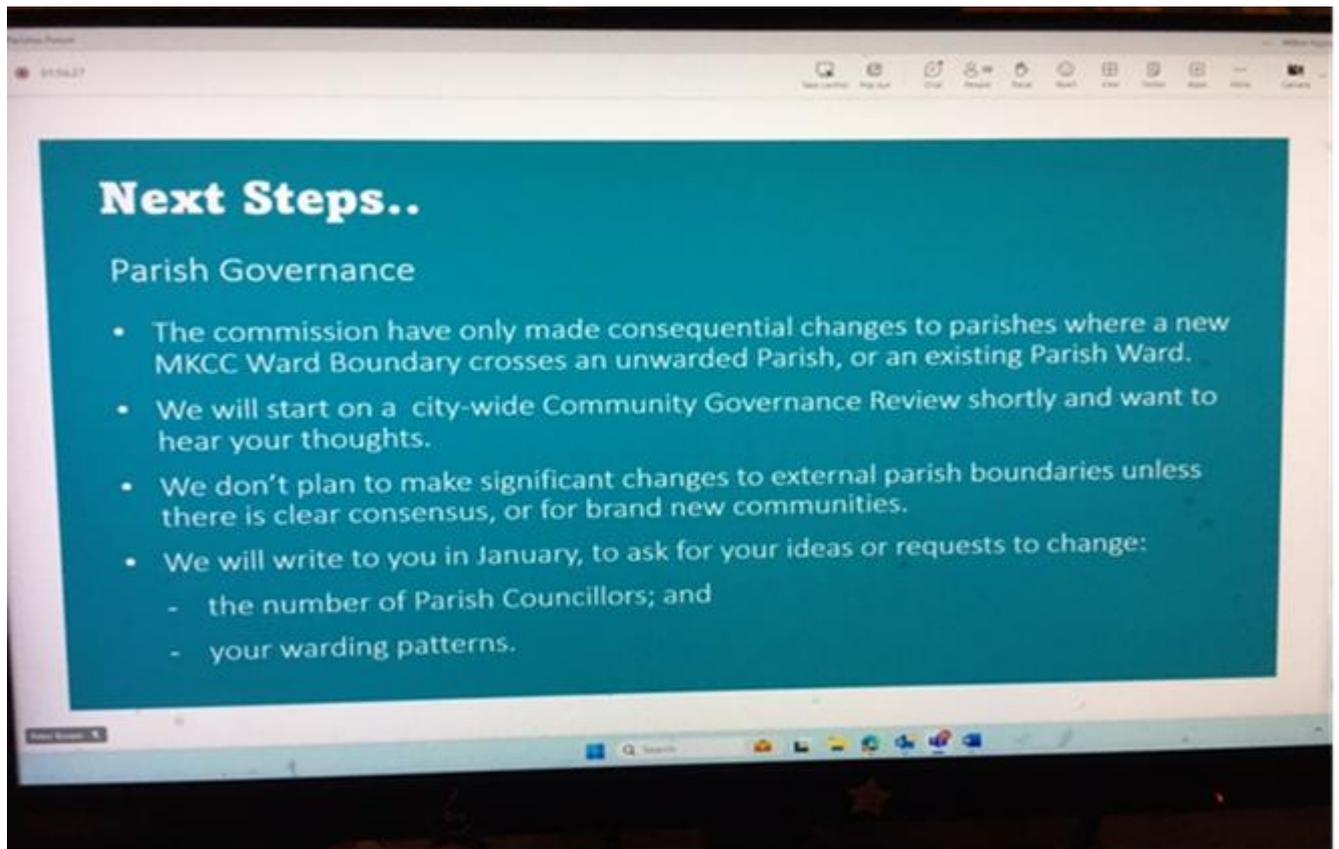
Those councillors should represent 20 three-councillor wards across the council area.

Further information can be found on the review website <https://www.lgbce.org.uk/all-reviews/milton-keynes>, including an interactive map. Feedback can be submitted via the website or by emailing reviews@lgbce.org.uk. Submissions can also be sent by post to Review Officer (Milton Keynes), LGBCE, 7th Floor, 3 Bunhill Row, London, EC1Y 8YZ.

Briefly and locally, the new ward boundaries will be in place for the 2026 elections and Bow Brickhill appears to be part of a new Danesborough ward (with three members) consisting of the parishes of Wavendon, Woburn Sands, Bow Brickhill and Little Brickhill.

Walton Parish will be combined into one new ward to be called Walnut Tree.

There will be the opportunity for a parish boundary review, work on which starts shortly, and which would be implemented following the 2026 elections - but only if a parish council requests a review in its area.



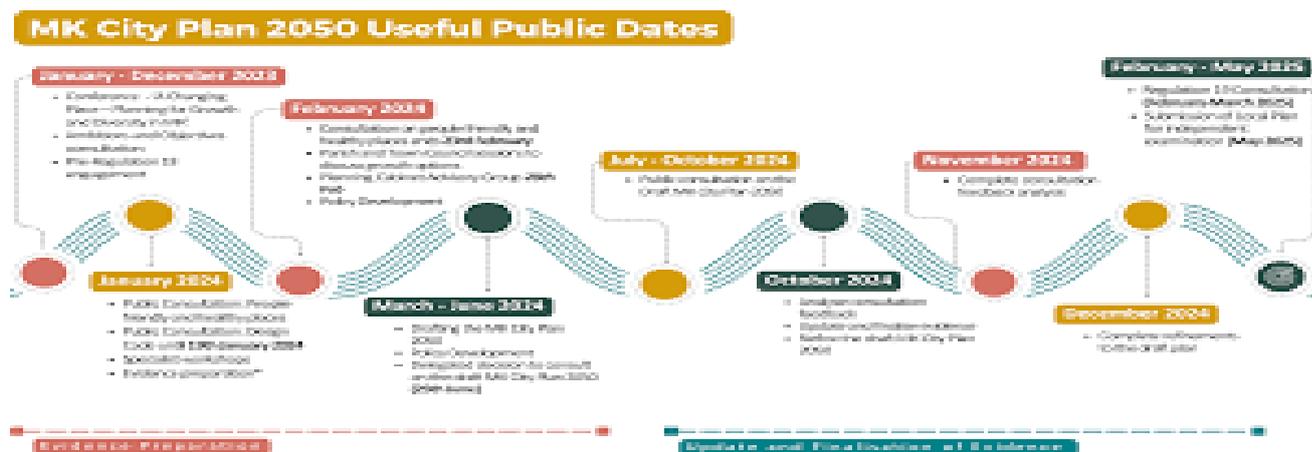
Marston Vale Railway – Update from Phil Warner (Marston Vale Community Rail Partnership)

A monthly update from West Midlands Trains regarding the Marston Vale line. Please see below:

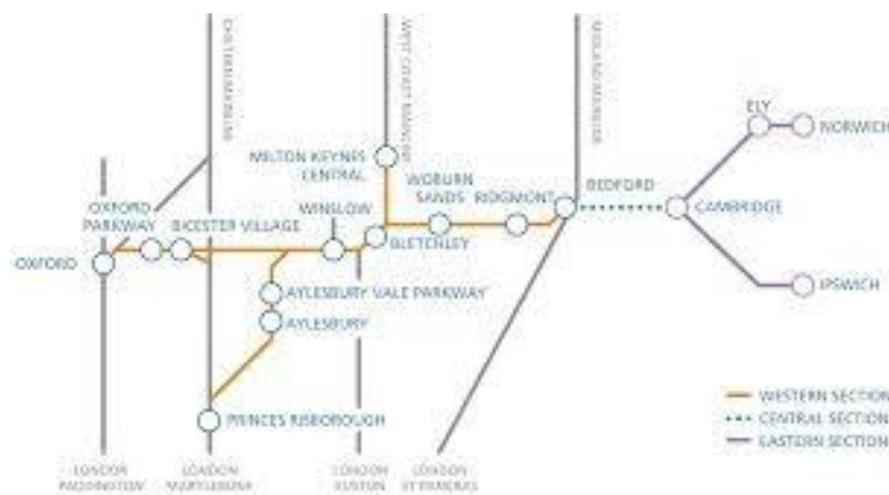
“I wrote to you last month following a run of poor performance on the Marston Vale Line outlining some of the steps London Northwestern Railway is taking to improve the service for our customers.

I am pleased to report that in the six weeks since, we have seen an improvement in performance on the line and a reduction in the number of cancellations. One of the key factors in this has been the establishment of a new Rest Day Working agreement with the ASLEF trade union, which has improved the availability of drivers. There is still more work to do, with traincrew availability on Saturdays in particular a challenge we are continuing to work on with our resourcing teams”.

Plan MK 2050



The next stage. MKCC is working on the basis that there will be a Cabinet Advisory Group meeting (CAG) in February, where the council will look to present the pertinent points from the consultation and the timetable for the remainder of the local plan process.



EWR - In-person events

We are holding a series of in-person consultation events across the route. At each event you can review the updated proposals, talk to members of our team, ask questions and submit your feedback.

EWR is holding 16 events during its consultation period, the two most local being detailed below.

- Bletchley, Bletchley Masonic Centre, 15 January 2025, 2pm - 7pm
- Woburn Sands, The Summerlin Centre, 17 January 2025, 2pm - 7pm

Section 106

106 Funding

<https://www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/planning-and-building/developingmk/planning-obligations/exacom-live-s106-monitoring-information>

The link to the Public Facing Module (PFM !) is near the top of the explanatory text.

Principle S106 Planning Obligations Officer (Development Plans)

Email: Sharon.price@Milton-Keynes.gov.uk

Mobile: 07518 745067

Web: www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/planning-and-building/



Phoebe Lane

A small section of bridleway has been disturbed by the ditch clearance works and is very muddy, not good to walk on. MKCC will be laying some mulch along this section from the bridge at Caldecotte Brook going north, to make it safe to walk on. the majority of this hedgerow, although well established was of limited ecological value and was fairly monotone in terms of species diversity. It was also self-setting and, as a result of a lack of maintenance, was therefore becoming a significant part of the cause of the problems affecting the ability of the ditch courses to function effectively.

MKCC officers tell me that they do appreciate that there is a 'shock' impact when works of this nature are done systematically at this time of year, as they have to be, but we are committed to a landscaping and planting scheme, post completion of the highway works, that I expect to be a significant upgrade, both aesthetically but also in terms of ecological value, as measured against the pre-existing position.

Attached to this report is a plan showing what we expect the final scheme to look like but this is definitely a draft, as discussions are ongoing with the Parks Trust, who we are working closely with on this project, about optimising the species we use and providing diversity.



Strengthening the standards and conduct framework for local authorities in England.

You may have already seen this important consultation which will potentially affect parish councils. To take part click on the link below and then scroll down to 'how to respond,' and click on 'citizen space'.

This consultation seeks views on introducing a mandatory minimum code of conduct for local authorities in England, and measures to strengthen the standards and conduct regime in England to ensure consistency of approach amongst councils investigating serious breaches of their member codes of conduct, including the introduction of the power of suspension.

https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/strengthening-the-standards-and-conduct-framework-for-local-authorities-in-england/strengthening-the-standards-and-conduct-framework-for-local-authorities-in-england?utm_source=emailmarketing&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=news_bulletin_18_december_2024&utm_content=2024-12-30



New Year Honours List 2025

Congratulations go to a range of individuals who live, work in, or have connections to Milton Keynes, and who were recognised in His Majesty The King's New Year Honours List for contributions to their community or significant career accomplishments

Commander of the British Empire (CBE):

- **Joseph Harrison - Chief Executive of Milton Keynes University Hospital NHS Foundation Trust, for services to Healthcare**

Officers of the Order of the British Empire (OBE):

- Heidi Travis - lately Chief Executive of Sue Ryder, for services to Palliative, Neurological and Bereavement Care Services
- Dr Wei Yang - Chief Executive Officer and Co-Founder of Digital Task Force for Planning and Chair, Construction Industry Council, for services to the Town Planning Industry
- **Local resident Kevin Whately (Aspley Heath)** – Actor, for services to Drama and to Charity

Member of the Order of the British Empire (MBE):

- Adrian Christy - Chief Executive Officer, Table Tennis England, for services to Table Tennis

David Hopkins

Representing Wavendon at MKCC