

Borough Councillor report to Downham Market Town Council

Cllr Josie Ratcliffe

23rd January 2024

Contractor parking off Bexwell Road

Residents reported that contractors working on the new Care Home development on Bexwell Road (planning application 22/01443) have been parking in nearby residential streets. I reviewed the planning documents and found this is a breach of Condition 11 of their planning permission. I reported this breach to the Borough Council's Planning Enforcement Team and they visited the site.

The site manager confirmed he was arranging off-site parking at the rear of the development by the Anglian Water site. I will follow up with residents to check whether the problem parking has stopped.

Lidl store update

In December, Lidl applied for planning permission (23/02236) for the signage they would like for their proposed new store on Bexwell Road (planning application 20/01893).

Discussion of the requirement to incorporate Carrstone into the frontage, as requested by DMTC, is ongoing. The Lidl store at Heacham has some carrstone in its design (note, our store will be smaller than that one).

Surface water flooding on A1122 near Denver

During December's DMTC meeting, I was asked to look into flood water that has recently been a problem on the A1122 Downham Market bypass, at the Nightingale Lane housing development opposite Denver (planning application 21/00152). I reviewed the planning documents, and it appears the site is not managing water run-off in accordance with the plans submitted (for an Infiltration Basin and managing surface water so it drains into a stream near the A10).

The Borough Council's Planning Enforcement Team advised me that Norfolk County Council is working with the developer to stop water coming from the development, and NCC is also investigating the highway drainage system in case a repair is needed. I will monitor the road conditions (please let me know if any improvement is seen, or still a problem).

When I raised this query, it was discovered that the developer had not notified the Borough Council that work had started on the housing site. Nor had the developer paid their first instalment of Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) funding, which will total around a million pounds in staged payments. Of this, 15% will be passed to Downham Market (which could have been 25% if the Neighbourhood Plan had been completed in 2021 as originally scheduled). The remainder will be held in a fund by the Borough Council to be allocated to community projects, and applications are invited in January and July each year.

Downham Market Library – Warm and Well ‘grab bags’

Norfolk County Council is continuing to provide the ‘Warm and Well’ offer via libraries. They say:

“We are going through a bit of a cold snap and we know there are families looking for help to keep warm. The Warm and Well offer is available at all Norfolk libraries.

Pop in to collect items like **blankets and hot water bottles** as well as toiletries like **toothpaste and shower gel**, should you or your family need them.

Plus the **Tricky Period** initiative is still running in Norfolk libraries, where you can get sanitary products like **sanitary pads, washable pads and menstrual cups**.

Most importantly, all items are free, with no questions asked - just pop in and pick up what you need.”

In addition, Library staff can provide a **free hot drink** for visitors, and they host weekly ‘Just a Cuppa’ events on Friday mornings (10.30-12) which are open to anyone to relax and chat over a cuppa. And many other weekly activities for all ages.