

## District Councillor's Report

December 2021

Could I remind you of the importance of taking regular lateral flow tests at home before meeting people in the course of your parish council work. These can be delivered free to your home and can be ordered at:

<https://www.gov.uk/order-coronavirus-rapid-lateralflow-tests>

The District Council is extending its opening hours over the Christmas school holiday period. From Tuesday, 14 December they will be open 7 days a week until the schools return in January: • Monday – Friday, 10:00 – 16:30 •

Saturday: 10:00 – 17:00 • Sunday: 10:00 – 16:00

The new Novium exhibition, Brick Wonders, opened on Saturday, 4 December. Brick Wonders takes visitors on a global journey of wonders old and new, recreated from 500,000 LEGO Bricks. Tickets to the exhibition cost £4 for adults, £2.50 for children and £12 for a family of up to five.

CDC has continued to develop the Invest Chichester site

<https://investchichester.co.uk/> which was launched a few months ago. The site is constantly being improved and it now has an interactive mapping feature

The Council is now able to demonstrate a five year land supply as demanded by the Government. This will 'hold back' speculative developments and give the Council more control of house building. The land supply is now 5.3 years' worth (as defined by Whitehall!), amounting to 634 dwellings per year.

The Southern Gateway is being discussed shortly at Council, having run into a variety of problems.

Midhurst shop vacancy rate is 8.3%. Although there are several new ventures in the offering, the town still needs some rather obvious premises back in use. Chichester city continues to suffer more, given the loss of high street names. That said, there have been 122 start-up businesses in the last quarter.

The Test and Trace Support Scheme (which pays eligible residents up to £500 to self-isolate) has been extended up to 31 March 2022. Parishes are asked to promote this within their area for anyone who may be eligible. For further information please visit [www.chichester.gov.uk/helpwithfinances](http://www.chichester.gov.uk/helpwithfinances)

The number of rough sleepers in Chichester remains low, (three at the last count). To help prevent a rise in rough sleeping over the winter months the Council has secured funding to provide nine 'Winter Beds' at the Woolpack Inn in Fishbourne.

There was a win for Midhurst in the Sussex Heritage Trust Awards 2021 for the small development at Belloc Close where 4 contemporary houses have replaced the former ambulance station. The development also won the Trust's prestigious design award. Dundee House at the entrance to Sainsbury's supermarket was also highly commended for its mix of period style architecture.

Gordon McAra