

Councillor Annual Report 2016/17

Name: Councillor Michael Edwards

I was elected to Nottingham City Council for Bridge ward on 20th October 2011.

Roles

I serve as -

- the Chair of the City Centre Forum
- a member of the Planning Committee and the Police panel (until May 2017)
- a council nominated member of the EnviroEnergy Board
- a council nominated observer of the Meadows Partnership Trust (MPT) Board

I attend public meetings, tenants and residents groups' meetings (NeMTRA and OMTRA), and have supported -

- the Arkwright Meadows Community Gardens and the In Bloom campaigns in their work,
- the Friends of the Meadows Library.

I attend the Meadows & Clifton Family and Communities Advisory Board meetings (whose work includes oversight of Sure Start Centres).

I hold advice "surgeries" at the Meadows Library (as well as collecting casework at the Bridgeway Shopping Centre) and I attend ward walks.

Way of working

I seek to add value as an elected representative - celebrating our free society and embracing the principles of public life; demonstrating how we can achieve more together in partnership and through public services; helping those most who need most help; and meeting the challenges of today and the future (local jobs for local people, an ageing society, climate change and energy security).

For current services and new initiatives, I test the vision, the planning and the performance management, the capacity, capability and culture, the overall legitimacy; and whether it is inspirational.

I try to visit sites of planning applications in the ward that have been referred to Planning committee and have sought to promote greener architecture and facilities for bikes in particular.

As of 30th April 2017, 1944 items of concern ("cases", including - demands for improvements, requests for information, concerns about failure in service delivery) that require some form of oversight have been logged, probably from around 810 or so clients. Whilst walking around, I also report problems in the public domain (including tipping and litter, road and pavements defects) directly to specific council officers, for them to deal with; there may well have been some hundreds of such reports that were not formally logged.

I have met many hundreds of residents during the 2105 and 2016 elections and referendums.

Much of my work is reported on a photo-based blog which I began in October 2012 – <http://www.michaelmedwards.wordpress.com>.

New Opportunities in the Meadows and the Challenges that come with them

Main campaigns have been -

- introduction of the extended tram systems; and dealing with outstanding snagging works (including re-connection of CCTV cameras);
- tackling ASB in Arkwright Walk;
- residents parking permits for most of the New Meadows;
- using all the Bridgeway Shopping Centres units;
- the new cricket pavilion for Meadows Recreation Ground, and improving Victoria Embankment;
- new play equipment for the west of the New Meadows (since installed on The Green);
- challenging rogue private landlords, especially in the Wilford Grove neighbourhood;
- identifying trees in the public domain that are most in need of pruning;
- recognising Crocus Street as part of The Meadows exploring the potential for development;
- objecting to a free school being sited next to a thriving engineering business, and
- seeking style, detail and decoration in designs for significant new buildings.

Crime has generally remained low in The Meadows, although special attention has been required along Arkwright Walk, and now a number of locations throughout The Meadows. The robbery at the Post Office and the burning of the Embankment bandstand were particular disappointments.

The number of complaints about the services provided by Nottingham City Homes has remained low.

More queries and issues have been associated with growing commuter parking in residential areas and plans to improve parks.

Previous achievements include the engineering changes to avoid cutting at least 27 trees down for the tram, introducing 20mph speed zones, the retention of Portland Leisure Centre through transfer to a trust, defending plans to double the capacity of Riverside school and the continuation of decent homes work. It was a pleasure to see the refurbishment of "crosswall" semi-detached houses, new street lighting throughout The Meadows and to attend the opening of the extension to the outstanding Welbeck primary school, improvements to the Victoria Embankment and Meadows Recreation Ground (road resurfacing, NHS outdoor gym etc.).

A Meadows regeneration plan has previously been issued and updated.

Meadows concerns

There has been a continued determination to tackle tipping.

City Centre concerns

I have reported issues concerning the public domain, ASB (esp. fast and/or loud cars) and begging.

Plans for renewing Broadmarsh shopping centre and a new college on Suffolk Street are huge opportunities and bring major challenges.

City concerns

I continue to take interest in the use of the railway station.

Impact of cuts in public spending

I have liaised and sought to help on the following issues of concern –

- Cuts in benefits to those most in need, especially families with disabled children, means Meadows Advice Group has needed to reach even more people.

Personal

I enjoyed -

- Making a video on the 250th anniversary presenting of the Cheese Riots;
- Co-presenting “I, Daniel Blake” in The Meadows;
- The re-opening of Arkwright Street and Walk as a wide avenue to Trent Bridge;
- Victoria Embankment Memorial Gardens tree trail;
- Diwali in The Meadows and the Indian ladies’ food at the Community Gardens Autumn event;
- the statue to Jimmy Sirrel and Jack Warner on Meadow Lane,

I appreciate and value the help of Councillor. Nicola Heaton, Lilian Greenwood MP and her staff, and the caseworkers of the city council.

Lord Mayor

The report is for the civic year of 2016/17.

From May 8th, I have served as Lord Mayor (see twitter (@LordMayorNottm) and Flickr (account “LordMayorMike”).

The duties are additional to those of ward Councillor and include chairing meetings, acting as First Citizen, giving speeches and making people feel welcome and being proud of Nottingham.

I want to promote the stories of Nottingham.

Dated 30th June, 2017