

Rise in number of road casualties in Bucks

By Isabella Perrin

THERE were more road casualties reported in Buckinghamshire last year, new figures show.

The RAC Foundation said the increase in casualties across Britain is a reminder that more work needs to be done to improve road safety.

Figures from the Department of Transport show 880 casualties were reported on Buckinghamshire roads in 2022 up from 795 the year before.

roads is a tragedy and it is worrying that after the pandemic, road deaths are rising.

"It is a preventable tragedy that a fifth of people who die in cars on our roads are not wearing a seatbelt.

"There needs to be concerted and targeted education to reach those drivers who choose to risk their lives for the sake of a two second action.

"It's on all of us to eliminate deaths and casualties on our roads. As well as having more cops in cars to catch people

in the act, road users need to take responsibility when heading out on the roads."

Overall, there were 135,480 casualties last year up 6% on 2021, but down 12% on pre-pandemic levels.

Last year's figures include 28,031 people who suffered serious injuries on Britain's roads.

In Buckinghamshire, 197 people were seriously injured.

RAC road safety spokesman Rod Dennis said: "Confirmation that last year saw a rise

in the number of casualties on our roads is a chilling reminder that there remains so much work to do be done to improve road safety in the UK, even if statistically we have some of the safest roads in Europe.

"It's time the Government turned the dial up on tackling these issues which, while complex, result in hundreds of people losing their lives every year."

A DfT spokesman said: "We welcome the continued decrease in road casualties

compared with pre-Covid levels, with our roads being some of the safest in the world.

"Nevertheless, we continue to work tirelessly to improve road safety through our world-renowned Think! Road safety campaigns and £47.5 million safer roads fund, so local authorities can also work to keep road users safe."

Outside of coronavirus lockdowns there has been no significant improvement in road crash fatality figures since around 2010.

Man facing child sex charge



Aylesbury Crown Court

A MAN charged with sexual offences against children is due to appear in court.

James Robert Tossell, 56, of Ivingshoe Aston, Buckinghamshire, was charged with multiple sexual offences involving children following a Thames Valley Police investigation.

He was charged with eight counts of sexual assault of a girl, two counts of sexual assault of a child by penetration, three counts of sexual activity with a child and three counts of making indecent images of children.

The charges relate to non-recent offences in Buckinghamshire, the police said previously.

He appeared at High Wycombe Magistrates' Court on Thursday, October 5.

He is due to appear next at Aylesbury Crown Court on Monday, November 6.



Police believe these men may be able to help with their enquiries. Image: Thames Valley Police

CCTV released in hunt for TK Maxx shoplifters

CCTV images have been released after hundreds of pounds worth of items were stolen from TK Maxx. Police are looking to speak to two men who may have information about a shoplifting incident in Aylesbury.

The incident happened on Thursday, September 28, at 5.40pm.

Two men entered the TK Maxx store and stole £300 worth of goods. Investigating officer PC Jake Frost, based at Amersham police station, said: "We would like to appeal to anybody who recognises the individuals in these images to please get in touch as they may have vital information about this

incident.

"You can get in touch by either making a report online or by calling 101, quoting reference number 43230436270.

"Alternatively, for 100% anonymity, you can also call the independent charity Crimestoppers on 0800 555 111."

Woman to cycle across Kenya



Angie Lench

A 62-YEAR-OLD woman will leave for Africa next month to take part in a mega bike ride for charity.

Angie Lench, from Monks Risborough, will fly to Kenya to embark on a 500km trek across the country's national parks.

This is in aid of the charity child.org, which helps mothers and newborn babies in the East African nation with life-saving healthcare and information.

Angie was inspired to take part in the cause after her sister Susan, was killed when a tree branch landed on her near her home in California.

Angie said: "This has been such a shock to all the family, but being able to do this ride in her memory has helped a lot, as she loved her mountain bike too."

To donate, go to www.justgiving.com/page/angie-lench-ride-attr-ca-2023

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The lights are in very close proximity. Image: Karl Parker

Streetlights placed right next to each other

A COUNCIL has been forced to explain why one streetlight was spotted right next to another in the middle of a pedestrian walkway. Buckinghamshire Council said a lack of communication between the local authority and housing developers was to blame for the installation of two streetlights right next to one another.

spotted a streetlight that had been installed in the middle of a pedestrian walkway in Queensmead in Loudwater last week.

He posted a photo of the two streetlights in a High Wycombe Facebook group alongside the caption: "Can anyone tell me what the hell the point is (in this) and why this new lamppost has been

put in when the other one was fine and wasn't in the path?"

Bucks councillor Steven Broadbent said the streetlight had been installed by the council in 2008, before a nearby housing development was built.

"The second streetlight next to our own was placed by the developer, which we don't have any information on," he said.

Care home closes after safety breaches

By Noora Mykkanen

A CARE home has closed following repeated breaches of health and social care regulations.

Chilterns Manor care home on Northern Heights in Bourne End has closed its doors after the Care Quality Commission rated it 'inadequate' three times in a row. The residential home operated by Chilterns Healthcare Ltd was inspected in February and May 2023 following a previous 'inadequate' rating by the care watchdog in August last year.

Now the Free Press understands the care home has closed following its latest inspection report published on August 9, which rated the key categories of safety and leadership as 'inadequate'.

The CQC said residents were not 'protected from the risk of avoidable harm.' This included use of portable heat-

ers, an "extremely hot" radiator in one room and lack of risk assessments creating a choking risk, the report noted.

People were put at risk of fire at the people as the provider couldn't assure the watchdog its fire risks had been addressed or were in action.

The incident reports did not always show the extent of injuries or who were affected. The CQC found people at the home could not be confident they would be "protected from the risk of abuse," the report said.

Medicines were not always safely managed, including no records of medicines being received in the home and lack of administration records, which was a continued breach of Health and Social Care Act 2008.

Following repeated poor ratings, by August the service had been in special measure for the maximum 12 months

adult social care providers are allowed to be in special measures for.

Consequently, the service was deregistered with the CQC in early August, preventing it from continuing to operate as normal.

Care homes in England cannot operate legally without a CQC registration.

The phone lines for Chilterns Manor appeared disconnected and the site seemed empty during a visit on August 15.

The senior team at Chilterns Manor said over email: "Chilterns Manor was deregistered with the CQC on August 3.

"Chilterns Healthcare Ltd will no longer be operating a care home."

When asked about their plans regarding the planning application to knock down the current building and to build a new care home, the provider said they had not formulated "plans for the future."

Wildlife reserves planned for border

NEW nature reserves are being proposed between Aylesbury and Oxford in effort to protect wildlife and benefit residents, including improved flood protection.

The Berkshire, Buckinghamshire and Oxfordshire Wildlife Trust (BBOWT) has published a list of potential schemes following an 18-month consultation with local partners.

The region, encompassing 300km² of Buckinghamshire and Oxfordshire countryside, is home to nationally significant habitats and rare species.

The aim of the project is to connect existing habitats, capture carbon and benefit farmers and the local economy.

Buckinghamshire Council's cabinet member for climate change and environment Gareth Williams said: "We welcome these exciting new proposals from BBOWT, having been pleased to provide feasibility funding for the research and engagement with stakeholders that led to them. Through ambitious initiatives that establish new nature reserves, restore meadows and wetlands, and connect corridors of ancient wood-

land, we can bring back wildlife, reduce flood risks, and provide residents with greater access to experience the wonders of nature.

"Together, with our partners, we can create a greener and more biodiverse Buckinghamshire and beyond for all to enjoy. This ties in with our Bucks Tree Mission, which aims to plant over 500,000 trees in the county within the next decade."

The study was funded by the council in response to a growing number of threats to nature in the Oxford-Cambridge arc from the government including HS2, the BBOWT said.

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