



The Buckingham Society

Campaigning for a Better Buckingham

Newsletter October 2016

A Word from our Chair – Roger Edwards



Your Executive Committee is always on the lookout for new ways to promote the Society and, wherever possible, to increase membership numbers. The more members we have, the greater will be the Society's influence when trying to get things done to ensure that Buckingham remains a great place to live.

One of the newest initiatives, originally suggested by Tony Mayston, is the Buckingham Society "Buckingham Trader of the Year" award. The Society has launched the award in order to give recognition to the fact that there are many excellent traders in the town. While only one will be able to be crowned "Buckingham Trader of the Year", it is hoped that the award will draw attention to all the great traders that there are in the town.

This new award will go to a trader whom the people of Buckingham think represents all that's good about the town and its shops. People will be able to nominate their favourite trader with nominations to be based on criteria such as friendliness, quality of service, excellence of window displays and the variety and quality of goods sold.

Nominations will be able to be made throughout October and the winner will receive a shield, to be presented by the Mayor of Buckingham on Saturday November 5th. So please support this initiative by nominating your favourite Buckingham trader and getting friends and neighbours to do so as well. Nomination forms are available at the Old Gaol.

Another annual event organised by the Society is Buckingham Civic Day. This year it took place on Saturday June 18th and we revived the old Buckingham tradition of the "Feast Day". In the past an ox would have been roasted but we were not able to go quite that far so we provided food, drinks and entertainment in the courtyard of Clay's Butchers.

The weather was kind to us and a good time was had by all who attended. We also managed to recruit a number of new members and I would wish to take this

opportunity of welcoming them all to the Society. It was good to see so many people enjoying themselves in Buckingham summer sunshine.



The Buckingham Society is very grateful to Jackie Bramham and her team at Clay's for providing the food and facilities and also to AVDC and Waitrose for their sponsorship of what proved to be a great way to celebrate Buckingham.

You will see elsewhere in this newsletter various items relating to the work of your committee aimed at trying to ensure that Buckingham remains a good place to live in. I am always impressed by the sheer amount of work that is put in by all members of the Committee. Whether it is considering planning matters large and small; pushing for better and safer cycling and/or walking routes around the town; keeping an eye open to protect our existing green and open spaces or attending Town Council and other meetings, Executive Committee members are always busy discharging Buckingham Society business.

Buckingham will continue to face many challenges – not least how to cope with increasing numbers of houses to be built here. You can rest assured that your Committee will continue, alongside colleagues from the Town Council, to work hard to mitigate the consequences of change.

Planning – Carolyn Cumming

The Vale of Aylesbury Local Plan - The Society submitted a response to the draft consultation plan, detailing our concerns. These included:

1. The lack of information when assessing both housing and population numbers, particularly in relation to what is referred to as “unmet need” from neighbouring districts to the south of Aylesbury Vale.
2. That allocations within made Neighbourhood Plans should be built out before any new sites come forward within the revision period.
3. Revision of Buckingham's Neighbourhood Plan cannot be undertaken without further detailed knowledge of future transport improvements; e.g. East-West rail and Oxford-Cambridge Expressway.

We questioned the need for a new settlement within the Vale, which in our view would lead to unacceptable urban sprawl.

It is intended that a summary of all responses will be posted on the District Council's website but one month on from the closing date for responses (5th September), no further information has been posted. A second consultation on the proposed final draft is promised for January 2017.

Planning Applications - There have been several major planning applications, the outcome of which has yet to be determined:

16/01850/APP University Precinct, Hunter Street

The Society is broadly supportive of this proposal to replace the Santander building with a new teaching block. Although the size of the building will loom large in comparison, we believe the layout will fit with both the street scene and the campus.

16/03302/APP Care Home Cornwalls Meadow

Following presentations within the town, this application for 68 assorted care home places has recently been received. The Society backs the Ecology report which calls for a 10 metre wide wild 'buffer' zone next to the river. We also feel it is essential to grant public access to the riverside. Loss of parking and re-siting of recycling bins also an issue.

16/03138/APP Revised Plan for Block 2 of 'Nightingale Rise'

Approval for 27 units within Block 2 of this development was received in 2012. The applicant now seeks to increase the number of one bedroom apartments, increasing the number of units by 11.

16/02641/APP Hamilton Precision

This application for 51 residential units continues to generate debate with regard to flooding issues and access.

16/02320/AOP_Land to the East of Buckingham, Stratford Road

Although in the parish of Maids Moreton, this site lies next to Page Hill and the application for 140 dwellings relies totally on Buckingham for all facilities. The Society opposes the application, which would see an intrusion into open country and a dangerous access on to the A422 opposite Lockmeadow Farm.

Planning applications approved

Despite objections from both the Town Council and the Society, Domino's Pizza was granted permission on appeal to establish a take-away on the site of the former Willen Hospice shop in Bridge Street.

Neighbourhood Plan - Maids Moreton is currently in the process of creating a Neighbourhood Plan.

University of Buckingham Public Consultation: Station Road – Kathy Robins

The University invited the public to comment on its plans for student accommodation in the Chandos Road car park, Station Road. The online consultation ended on Friday 14th October 2016. Our response was as follows:

"We realize that the University has not yet made a planning application and so we make the points below in the hope that they may influence your decision making, with the aim of adding a building of real distinction to the town.

Design – Our key point is here:

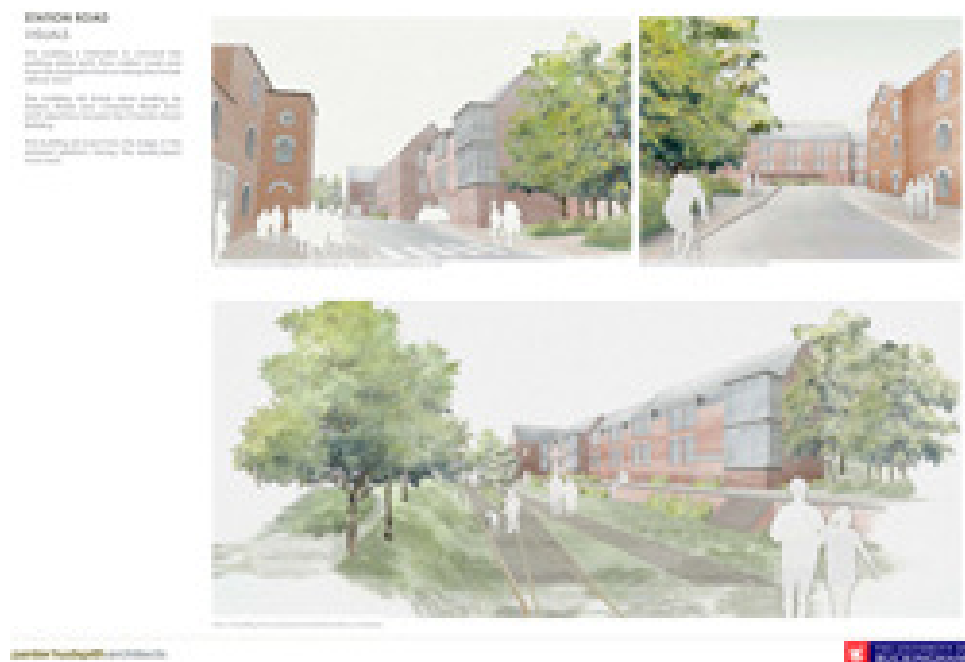
- This building will dominate one of the most important vistas in Buckingham: the length of Chandos Road. The proposal presents an opportunity for the university to promote itself as an exponent of innovative architectural design. An exciting elevation acting as a focal point here would be something of which both the university and the town could be proud and would be constantly seen by many people. The current proposal is dull and fails to grasp this opportunity.

We would therefore propose that either:

- The current architect is invited to submit alternative designs of a much higher standard, which reflect the importance of the building to the town
- Or it might even be worth running an open architectural competition specifically for this aspect of the work.

This building offers an opportunity to bring some contemporary architectural excitement to Buckingham.”

The picture top right below is an image of how the view up Chandos Road would look if the current design is accepted.



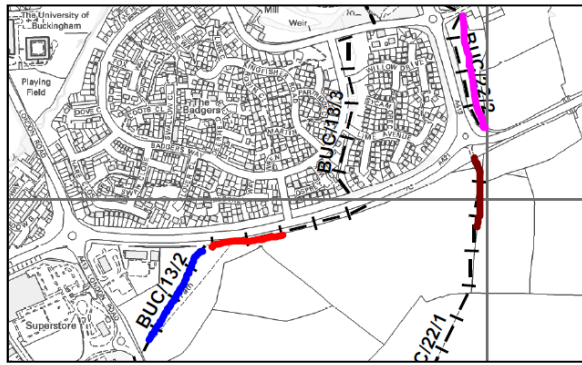
The Vice Chancellor reacted positively to the points we made above and has promised to stay in touch with us about them.

The Transport Group – David Child

The Transport Group continues to work on a number of projects and of course unfortunately they have to revisit some the tasks they thought had been resolved.

The latest re-visits were the BCC defined paths BUC /22/2 & 22/1 & 13/2. These defined paths have been reported to BCC as they are not serviceable, safe - even for the able bodied. Our aim is to make these rights-of-way suitable for use for all members of the public. The latest group marked on the map below runs from the Tesco store entrance round the bypass. Also the pathway marked in brown skirts to the east of Lace Hill and links across country to the A413.

Public rights of way map



This is the type of obstruction that is found on the 22/2 rights of way (in fact I could not work out the correct route).



On a brighter note **Buckingham / Winslow Cycleway**

The link to Winslow funded by the east / west railway is well under way and is expected to be completed February 2017. Pictures taken from the latest BCC bulletin

If you would like to see more detail use this link

<http://www.buckscc.gov.uk/transport/scheme-and-projects/strategic-economic-plan/a413-sustainable-travel-scheme/>



Green and Open Spaces – Ian Orton

A recent surge of vandalism on the part of developers, who have destroyed a number of trees, hedgerows and habitats around the town over the past year, has resulted in Buckingham Town Council creating a new steering group with interested parties to monitor the situation and consider ways in which we can conserve as well as enhance the environment within the town.

I will represent the Buckingham Society on this committee, the first meeting of which is scheduled to take place in November. Other members of the steering committee will include organisations like the Buckingham Canal Society, Friends of The Railway Walk and Friends of Maids Moreton Avenue, all of whom are represented on Councillor Ruth Newell's Wildlife Committee, which continues to meet on a regular basis.

The new steering committee could be a useful forum to promote and help coordinate action with other groups for two of our ongoing projects, namely David Child's footpath and bridleways project and my (latent) linear park concept.

There has been action of sorts to "repair" the damage caused by developers to trees, hedgerows and habitats, although prevention is always better than cure.

AVDC's ecologist has submitted detailed proposals, included new planting, to help reinstate the hedgerows and trees destroyed during work associated with the Clarence Court development off Tingewick Road.

The developer at The Sidings, off Lenborough Road has agreed to the University reinstating at least part of the damage sustained in the vicinity of the former railway station platforms, if not replant the former hedge that was grubbed out.

In addition the Town Council have recruited more tree wardens - including some Buckingham Society Members to watch over our stock of trees and identify suitable sites for new planting.

The latter will almost certainly include the putative St Rumbold's Park which hopefully will form part of the equally putative linear park extending from the Radclive roundabout to Lock Cottage on the rewatered canal. Apparently there is quite a variety of funding sources for tree planting.

Nonetheless, it is very sad to report that there has been a recent outbreak of more conventional vandalism on the Railway Walk and Chandows Park with fencing, signs and picnic tables destroyed.

It is also sad to report that The Green Man on Maids Moreton Avenue may not be around for much longer as he is currently being attacked by woodworm. Another instance of nature taking its course!

The Buckingham Neighbourhood Action Group – Kathy Robins

NAGs were originally set up by the Home Office in the 1990s to provide a direct link between the police and the communities that they serve, bringing together the police, local agencies, and community groups to address and seek resolution to local issues. The local NAG has been an effective forum for discussing and looking at ways to resolve local problems, such as crime, littering, noise nuisance and speeding. It has been very effectively chaired for the last ten years by Buckingham Town Councillor Mike Smith.

Of late attendance at the NAG meetings have diminished and this may well reflect changes in our local community. Crime figures have reduced substantially in most categories and overall crime in our area is down by 15% from last year. Social media has meant that people are generally better informed about local issues and the Thames Valley Alert website keeps subscribers aware of key areas of risk. Some agencies have also changed their approach to one that is more targeted, for example The Buckingham Activities Group provides activities for young people to distract them from problem behaviour and there is a separate group which targets problems with the University as they arise. It was agreed at the latest NAG meeting on 19th October that the Buckingham and Maids Moreton Neighbourhood Action Group should be wound up.

Buckingham Society Members who are not already registered with the Thames Valley Alert Scheme can register at: www.thamesvalleyalert.co.uk

Dates for your diary

15th November:

- 6.30pm Drinks and canapes prior to the AGM
7.00pm Annual General Meeting – The Sunley Lecture Theatre, Chandos Road Building University of Buckingham.
8.00pm Sir Anthony Seldon will give a talk on “Anglo American Relationships Over the Last Century”, which will form the basis of his next book. All are welcome to this talk in the in The Ian Fairbairn Lecture Theatre Further details will follow.

Executive Committee:

Roger Edwards	Chair
Alistair Alcock	University representative
David Child	Transport and Planning
Carolyn Cumming	Planning
Paul Flello	Transport and Planning
Ed Grimsdale	Planning and society historian
Gill Jones	Membership Secretary
Tony Mayston	Treasurer
Belinda Morley-Fletcher	Secretary
Nigel Morrison	Destination Buckingham
Ian Orton	Green and Open Spaces
Kathy Robins	Newsletter Editor, planning and transport

We should like to hear from you

Please give us some feedback - tell us what activities you would like The Buckingham Society to prioritise. Comments to: kathyrobins@walnutyard.co.uk Tel: 07834 484762. If you would like to become involved in any of our activities or attend a meeting of the executive committee, then contact us or just come along. www.buckinghamssociety.org.uk