



The Buckingham Society

Campaigning for a Better Buckingham

The Buckingham Society Newsletter May 2012



The Annual General Meeting

The AGM talk this year was given by Tony Burton, the Executive Director of Civic Voice. He emphasised the importance of the civic movement in making places more attractive and distinctive, in the promotion of civic pride and in encouraging participation in the planning process. He gave examples of civic societies building civic pride including the role of the Tottenham Civic Society after last summer's riots.

He stressed the importance of campaigning about what really matters and in the process raising the profile and influence of a civic society like ours. He shared many ideas which could be used on our Civic Day on 23rd June 2012 and Heritage Days 8th and 9th September 2012. (See events below.)

He considered the role of localism within the "Big Society" and the changes in planning policy initiated by the present Government.

He encouraged us to get involved in our own neighbourhood Plan. Buckingham is unusual in that it is one of only 20 towns chosen to receive some financial support to help in the setting up of a neighbourhood plan and we were pleased to have Samuel Dix, the newly appointed Town Plan officer attached to the Town Council, in the audience that evening: Samuel will address a meeting of the Buckingham Society on the subject. (See below.)

Special Interest Group Reports

Green Spaces – Ted Farmer

Replanting of tree and shrub whips, which will change the face of the Heartlands Park mound, has been postponed to next year due to the recent long dry spell. It is understood the long saga to restore public access to Maids Moreton Avenue through to Watchcroft Drive, continues between Page Hill School and the County Council. If it is agreed AVDC will take responsibility for the trees.

Transport – Geoff Shaw

Most of the current issues are still outstanding but we are continuing to press for action where we can. One success - we now have some white lines outside Wharf Yard.

The sudden decision to withdraw the 32A bus and to alter the 32 has produced strong opposition in the town and we have attended a protest meeting held on 3rd April attended by John Bercow MP. Some revisions have been made and this is to be further discussed on 18th May. It is hoped that will have our say in the attempt to get a sensible answer to a problem that has been created out of nowhere and a great worry to our most vulnerable for a miniscule saving in the overall Bucks CC budget.

Destination Buckingham – David Peevers

New large 'Welcome to Buckingham' maps will shortly be appearing in the town, one at Waitrose, the other at the bus stand. These maps are the initiative of the town's Destination Buckingham Group which includes the Buckingham Society alongside the Mayor of Buckingham, the traders and AVDC. They will show visitors to the town arriving by bus or car the location of the main attractions in the town.

Planning – Ian Orton

This group monitors and comments on planning applications. The comments are either passed directly to AVDC, or are raised with Buckingham Town Council's Planning Committee, where the Buckingham Society has one co-opted member.

The development at Benthill, which has already received outline planning permission, has generated a plethora of applications over the past three months, in relation to housing, road layouts, parking and landscaping. Both the Buckingham Society and Buckingham Town Council are concerned about the failure to "connect" it with the rest of the town. As things stand the development will be effectively cut-off from the rest of Buckingham by the by-pass.

The Bridge Street development has changed significantly since the initial grant of planning permission. All of the changes were considered by AVDC to be so minor as not to require a new application for planning permission. However the collective effect of all these minor changes has been to create a "substantial" change. The detailed finishing of the project leads a lot to be desired. This is something The Planning Special Interest Group will monitor and comment on going forward.

Dates for Your Diary

- 1 28th May 7.30-9.00 pm Radcliffe Centre. A meeting to consider and comment on The Buckingham Neighbourhood Development Plan. Presentation by Samuel Dix, Town Plan Officer.
- 2 13th June. 6.30 pm Talk in The Radcliffe Centre “The Lost Forest of Bernwood” by John Tyler, followed by drinks and canapés at Walnut Yard.
- 3 22nd June 8.00 pm Ghosts of Buckingham Past - A walk led by Ed Grimsdale. Part of the Buckingham Fringe Week.
- 4 23rd June Civic Day. Displays by The Brackley Morris Men in front of The Old Gaol at 2.00 pm and 3.00 pm. Part of the Buckingham Fringe Week.
- 5 18th August 4.30 – 6.30 pm A Garden Party with music from the Winslow Brass Band in the garden of the High Sheriff Carolyn Cumming.
- 6 8th and 9th September Heritage Open Day. Details to follow

Ways in which you could help the Society

If you would like to become involved in any of our activities or attend a meeting of the executive committee, then please contact us or just come along. Dates of meetings and contact details of committee members are on the website www.buckinghamssociety.org.uk

We can save money by using email rather than printing and posting. Please let Gill Jones gill@e-jones.net know your email address.