



**The Buckingham Society**

**Campaigning for a Better Buckingham**

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## **Newsletter June 2013**

### **Celebration of Civic Day – 22<sup>nd</sup> June 10.00 am -2.00 pm**

Saturday June 22<sup>nd</sup> is Civic Day - a national celebration of civic pride. The Buckingham Society is organising Buckingham Civic Day to celebrate Buckingham and to say "we care about where we live".



The Rotary Club will be honouring Buckingham's "Outstanding Citizen of the Year" with a trophy presented by Speaker of the House of Commons John Bercow who will also open the day. The Mayor Ruth Newell will present cheques to local charities benefitting from Rotary's recent "Swimathon".

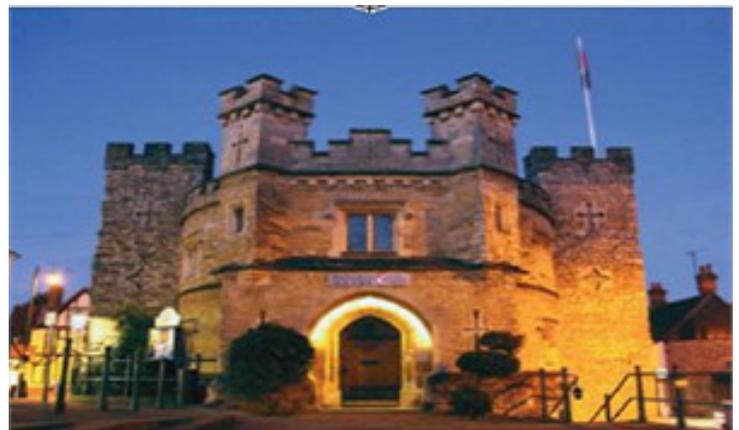
There will be a "tea party" on the terrace outside the Old Gaol with local musicians providing entertainment and tea and cakes on sale.

Ed Grimsdale will be taking groups on guided walks around "civic Buckingham" at 11.00 am and 2.00 pm. Places are limited and tickets are available from the Old Gaol.

There will be an opportunity to find out more about the Buckingham Neighbourhood Development Plan.

Entry to the Gaol museum, just for this day, is free including the display of the civic regalia.

Put the date in your diary and tell your friends.



## Ford Meadow



Congratulations to the University of Buckingham for purchasing the 3.58 acre site at Ford Meadow. Over the last two years the site had become derelict. The previous owners announced their intention to build 10-15 luxury houses on the land, which is on a flood plain, but a planning application was never made. The area will now be used as a sports field and the University will explore ways in which the new sports field can also

be used by the community. The University's intention is to restore the football pitch and to provide new courts for sports such as basketball on the higher ground next to the clubhouse.

## Planning Report – Ian Orton

Enforcement, or the lack of it, has dominated planning-related issues over the past three months along with AVDC's new planning procedures, especially in relation to the objections/support received in relation to proposed developments. We must be much more specific with these.

AVDC seems to be increasingly reluctant to enforce planning policy within Buckingham, especially in relation the Conservation Area. AVDC's main default position is that it is "not expedient" to take the necessary action or that the matters referred to are not material. But this is rarely the case and AVDC's actions may reflect a lack of resources or indolence.

Buckingham Town Council's Planning Committee are becoming increasingly irritated about the state of affairs and are exploring ways in which the situation can be remedied. Sometimes nothing more than a letter is needed to get results

There are more "houses in multiple occupation" (HIMOs). AVDC seems unwilling to acknowledge that there may be a problem here (contrary to Buckingham Town Council's view).

Buckinghamshire County Council's tree cutting activities on the ring road continues to cause controversy on a number of fronts - was it properly sanctioned, quality of work, etc., etc.

Turning to individual planning applications/developments, AVDC has decided that its officers will decide whether or not the developer gets permission to demolish the old Chandos Cinema and build a local convenience retail store in its place along with any necessary conditions.

Candleford Court is to be underpinned. Invitations for the necessary work required have been issued.

Jonathan Harbottle, who originally initiated the Candleford Court development, has now turned his attention to “self-build” houses and earmarked a site on Bourton Road adjacent to the cricket club for such a development.

Irrespective of AVDC’s “appeal” against the Planning Inspector’s report on Bellway’s proposed development of 80 houses on the Moreton Road Belway, the developer, has submitted a new application

## **Green Spaces – Ted Farmer**

After the long cold winter and coldest spring for 60 years there seems to be abundant growth in all the many green areas.

We were very pleased to get agreement of the landowner to our preference for a Hornbeam as the replacement for the formerly dominant beech by London Road. Just a few days before planting we heard that budget cuts in the company included the tree and planting. We appealed to the company senior management who have reversed the decision and will replace the tree.

The mound in Heartlands Park had been replanted with various tree and bush whips over a smaller area than previously and the sledging run has been left unplanted but regrettably a large part of the mound is now a mess of weed growth, dead and alive.

## **Buckingham Neighbourhood Development Plan – John Wilkins**

### **Recent and Current Activity**

#### **April Meeting with our MP John Bercow**

Kathy Robins and John Wilkins, with Councillor Warren Whyte, met with John Bercow to brief him on current issues relating to the Neighbourhood Plan. We received a sympathetic and enthusiastic response and an assurance of support when the Plan is finalised.

#### **Future Planning Strategy for the Aylesbury Vale**

Aylesbury Vale residents are being given a final chance to comment on the future planning strategy for the district – **the closing date for comments is 19 June 2013** – details can be found on the Aylesbury Vale District Council website – <http://www.aylesburyvaledc.gov.uk/news/2013/may/final-chance-comment-future-planning-strategy-aylesbury-vale/>

Buckingham Town Council is making a detailed response to this consultation. The Society is contributing to this work. The Vale of Aylesbury Plan sets a planning framework for the Neighbourhood Plans developed by each parish.

#### **Generating Options for the Neighbourhood Plan**

Site options are being developed by the Town Council. The target is for these to be available by August, when public and stakeholder consultation events will be held.

### **Creation of a Draft Plan**

The draft Neighbourhood Plan will be prepared September to November. There will be a six week consultation period probably ending in January 2014.

### **Referendum**

The public referendum to approve the Plan is scheduled for June/July 2014. This follows the final draft Plan's scrutiny by the independent examiner.

### **Dates for Your Diary**

- 1 Lecture by Timothy Walker, Curator Oxford Botanic Garden, followed by a garden party at Walnut Yard 18<sup>th</sup> July at 6.30 pm. (This is different to the date in the previous Newsletter)
- 2 The Next Executive meeting will be held on Wednesday 24<sup>th</sup> July at 5.00 pm at The Villiers Hotel.
- 3 Heritage Open Days 12-15<sup>th</sup> September

### **We would 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](mailto:kathyrobins@walnutyard.co.uk)

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](http://www.buckinghamssociety.org.uk)

We save money by using email rather than printing and posting. Please let Gill Jones [gill@e-jones.net](mailto:gill@e-jones.net) know your email address if you still receive your Newsletter by post.

We are still seeking a Minutes Secretary for executive committee meetings, to support one meeting every other month. If you would like to help please let us know.