



The Buckingham Society

Campaigning for a Better Buckingham

Newsletter February 2015

A Word from our Chair – Roger Edwards

It seems clear that the planning system at present is in chaos and because of that Buckingham and neighbouring villages are coming under increasing pressure from property developers. While members of the Buckingham Society could never be accused of Nimbyism, and we all understand that there is a need for additional housing, that does not mean that we should not express alarm at the extent of development that could take place if a series of planning applications were to be agreed.



In addition to the houses already built or under construction on the Moreton Road there has been a proposal for a further 130 properties adjoining those houses. Applications are in for 400 houses at Maids Moreton running from the church to the A422 and a further 132 on the road to Akeley. There are also plans in the pipeline for building in Tingewick and Padbury. All of this on top of major developments planned along the Tingewick Road in Buckingham and the continuing growth of the Lace Hill estate. There are also a number of smaller developments under way or likely to be proposed within the town.

If all of these houses were to be built, they would totally change the character of the area and would clearly have major implications for Buckingham with regard to schools, medical facilities, car parking and other amenities.

Because of these and other concerns your Executive Committee has written to Aylesbury Vale District Council suggesting that it should join the Society and groups and individuals in Maids Moreton in opposing the proposed 400 house development. The Society has encouraged members of AVDC's Strategic Development Management to listen to the voices of local people. Surely something they must be willing to do if localism is to mean anything at all.

As I said at the start of this piece, the Buckingham Society does not and should not in any way oppose appropriate, well-planned building that would bring benefits to the town and the surrounding villages. Elsewhere in this newsletter you will read about

the Buckingham Neighbourhood Plan. The adoption of the Plan would go a long way to ensuring that development takes place in appropriate locations and that the proper infrastructure goes with it for the benefit of all of us.

As can be seen from what is happening with the Lace Hill site, building large numbers of houses in the wrong place and without a carefully thought through plan, will have a highly detrimental effect on our town and the surrounding area. This must not be allowed to happen. Therefore, your Executive Committee will continue to oppose plans for inappropriate building and encourage properly planned, well designed and carefully thought through development.

The Buckingham Society Transport Group – David Child

Riverside walks – The Buckingham Society planning group continues to work towards the riverside walks being linked and extended. In that respect we are pressing for



the Candleford Court riverside walk link to be opened to the public in line with the original planning application agreement. The pathway beside the Candleford Court development links Bridge Street and the Cornwall's Meadow Car Park. It has a properly constructed pathway, pictured left, but is currently closed to the public by a

barrier and barbed wire, preventing access from the parking in Cornwall's Meadow to Bridge Street and Nelson Street. The Society is making representations to the managers of the development for the path to be opened.

Cycle routes – The society is working closely with BTC on cycle routes within Buckingham and linking Buckingham other conurbations and tourist points of interest. The aim is to ensure the cycle route from Winslow to Buckingham centre does not just stop at Buckingham.

Road Crossings– Work is continuing on the safety of road crossings within in Buckingham - working in conjunction with Access For All.

Pathways– The pathways map as exhibited at the AGM is still being added to. It will be displayed on the Buckingham Society website when it is nearer completion. The picture on the left is taken at a viewpoint on the railway walk.



Green Spaces

Ted Farmer has been responsible for Green Spaces for the Buckingham Society for more than twenty years. His enormous commitment and persistence has been put to great effect and we are very grateful for his work. He has now retired from this role

and we are seeking someone to replace him. If you have an interest in protecting and developing Buckingham's green spaces then please contact us.

Planning – Ian Orton

The Town Council (BTC) has now produced the latest pre-submission iteration (Mark III) of the Buckingham Local Neighbourhood Development Plan for consultation.

This takes on board the detailed comments made by a firm of planning consultants commissioned by BTC to give the Mark II plan a health check prior to its submission to AVDC, BCC and the Inspector.

The comments, which mainly cover points of detail, such as linking plans to specific policies, have been incorporated in full to produce a much more coherent and comprehensive document.

There are two important points of substance namely the decision to withdraw the “aspirations” for a link between the A421 and A422 and a southern bypass. The reality is that these would probably be rejected by AVDC, BCC or by the Inspector, which would delay further both approval of the plan by these bodies.

Recent events have reinforced the importance of having a statutory land use plan in place. Opportunist developers are currently besieging Buckingham and the surrounding villages with planning applications for big housing developments.

There are currently applications pending, or in the pipeline for Maids Moreton (2), Padbury and Tingewick, all of which will have significant traffic and infrastructure implications for Buckingham.

We still have some protections and it is by no means certain that any of these proposals will get approval. But approval and adoption of the Buckingham Local Neighbourhood Plan will provide an additional level of protection, not least because the courts and the government have already upheld the contents of other neighbourhood plans when challenged

As far as other developments are concerned AVDC has granted the Town Council planning permission for new public toilets. Unfortunately AVDC, which owns the site, has yet to give BCT, a licence to develop it as it has a number of issues concerning location and safety.

It has been relatively quiet on the planning applications front apart from more extensions, garage conversions etc., many of which don't actually require a formal grant of permission.



One outstanding application of note comes from the University of Buckingham which wants to permission to re-designate Walnut Yard in Church Street as “institutional residential” and “residential”. The Buckingham Society Planning group will take a view on this when it has seen details of the application.

Destination Buckingham Group – Roger Edwards

The Destination Buckingham Group (DBG) continues, under the energetic chairmanship of Councillor Mike Smith, to seek ways to encourage more people to come to the town as visitors, shoppers etc.

Present plans include a leaflet to be circulated to all homes and businesses in Buckingham seeking people's comments on “what is good about Buckingham” and “what could be done to make it better”. The leaflets will be delivered in early Spring 2015.

Last year Councillor Chris Strain-Clarke organised an Access Awareness day. Members of various town organisations, including the Buckingham Society, participated in the exercise that examined the problems experienced by people with disabilities in getting around our somewhat hilly town. Following Chris's report, the DBG and Buckingham Town Council is to fund jointly an *Access for All* led project that will fund a leaflet encouraging improved disabled access, small grants to independent businesses and traders who wished to improve access to their premises, window stickers welcoming the less able; and a small award to the trader or business making the most effort.

There are also plans intended to make it easier for visitors to find their way around the town. In order to point people using the Waitrose car park in the direction of the town shops a more permanent direction notice will be erected on the side of the Community Centre, with the legend “Welcome to Buckingham – Town Centre and Shops” and an arrow pointing in the appropriate direction. This will replace the existing temporary banner. In addition, discussions are to take place with AVDC and BCC about reducing the number of signs around the town centre and putting in place new signs that would guide people towards the shopping areas.

Last year's successful cycling based event, *Bikeingham*, will be repeated this year on Sunday July 19th. More information will be available soon.

The Destination Buckingham Group now has a website, www.buckinghamuk.info that has been recently updated – take a look and see what you think.

Buckingham Civic Day – Roger Edwards

Following last year's successful and sun-soaked event, Buckingham Civic Day this year will take place on Saturday June 20th. Once again the Buckingham Society will partner Buckingham Rotary in the quest to find Buckingham's Citizen of the Year and Young Citizen of the Year. As with last year, the awards will be presented by John Bercow.

The Civic Day event this year will comprise a mass singalong on the terrace outside the Old Gaol. It will be led by members of the Glee Club UK Buckingham choir and will culminate in everybody who wishes to join in singing a song called "Proud". The fairly obvious aim is to encourage people to show their pride in Buckingham.



More details will be published nearer the date.

The Trees in the Cornwall's Meadow Car park

After pressure from The Buckingham Society and others Aylesbury Vale District Council has at last replaced the dead trees in the Cornwall's Meadow Car Park. The dead trees have been replaced with more suitable specimens which will hopefully thrive. The new trees are pictured on the left.

The Buckingham Society Garden party

The garden party is usually held in July and is preceded by a talk, usually garden related. If you have any ideas for suitable speakers, please let Kathy Robins (01280 813967) know.

Dates for Your Diary

5th March - Closing date for feedback and comments on the draft Buckingham Neighbourhood Development Plan
Wednesday 25th March at 5.00pm – Buckingham Society Executive Meeting
Wednesday 25th March at 7.30pm – Buckingham Town Meeting. Community Centre
Saturday June 20th - Civic Day
Sunday July 19th - Bikeingham. Look out for more information.

Executive Committee:

Roger Edwards	Chair
Alistair Alcock	University representative
Carolyn Cumming	Planning
Belinda Morley-Fletcher	Secretary
Tony Mayston	Treasurer
Gill Jones	Membership Secretary
Ian Orton	Planning
Paul Ffello	Transport and Planning
David Child	Transport and Planning
Vacant	Green Spaces
Ed Grimsdale	Planning and society historian

Roger Edwards
Kathy Robins
Nigel Morrison

Destination Buckingham and Civic Day
Newsletter Editor
Without portfolio

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 Tel: 07834484762
If you would like be become in involved in any of our activities or attend a meeting of the executive committee, then contact us or just come along. Dates of meetings and contact details of committee members are on the website
www.buckinghamssociety.org.uk