



# The Buckingham Society

Campaigning for a Better Buckingham

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## Newsletter July 2015

### A Word from our Chair – Roger Edwards

I hope that you are all enjoying the summer which, so far, has been quite pleasant. Fingers crossed that, now the school holidays have begun, it doesn't revert to a traditional English wash-out. In particular let's hope for good weather for the annual lecture and garden party. It looks certain to be an interesting lecture and the garden of Prebend House will be a lovely venue for the party on a pleasant summers evening. Kathy and her team always do a wonderful job with the garden party and it would be great to see a large number of Buckingham Society members and their guests coming along and enjoying the evening.



Looking towards the end of the summer, it looks as if the Buckingham Local Neighbourhood Development Plan referendum will be on 17 September. It is particularly important that the plan is put in place if Buckingham is not to be prey to speculative and inappropriate housing development – we do not want another Lace Hill type fiasco. The Society has agreed to provide assistance to the Town Council with the administration of the referendum as it is so important that there should be a good turnout of voters to give solid backing to the plan.

During the next few weeks keep an eye on the London Road bridge. The bridge, built in 1805 by the Marquess of Buckingham, and on the main route into Buckingham since then, is due to be refurbished. The Buckingham Society has been encouraging this action for some time and Buckinghamshire County Council has agreed to undertake the work during the school holidays. You may have noticed already some brighter looking strips on the bridge; that is where the Council's engineers have undertaken test cleaning to gauge the effect on the stonework. If plans come to fruition, we can expect fairly soon to see the whole of the bridge cleaned up, stonework repaired and this important part of Buckingham's history restored to something approaching its former glory.

Looking back to last month, Buckingham Civic Day has come and gone. The Buckingham Society has organised this event for the last three years, working closely with Buckingham Rotary who present the awards to the Buckingham Citizen and



Young Citizen of the Year. Despite a somewhat drizzly morning a good sized crowd joined us on June 21<sup>st</sup> and sang along with the Buckingham branch of the Glee Club UK and demonstrate their pride in our lovely market town. Even the Speaker of the House of Commons joined in. Thanks to the Old Gaol, Waitrose and AVDC for their help with this event.

As you will see from this newsletter, your Executive Committee remains busy on your behalf as we all try to maintain the fine quality of life that we have here in Buckingham. The Buckingham Society has been a force for good in Buckingham for 40 years now and it is vital that it continues to have influence around the town. To that end, we are planning to step up our efforts to recruit more members and I would ask all of you to do whatever you can to get more people to join the Society. This is vital for the Society's continued survival.



And finally; we are still looking for somebody to take over from Ted Farmer as the Society's Green Spaces Officer. If you are interested in helping with this important work please contact me or any other member of the Executive Committee.

Looking forward to seeing lots of you at the Garden Party.

## The Transport Group – David Child

The transport group is still working on the safety and improvement of the roads and pathways in Buckingham. It is clear that any expenditure will need to come from S106 / new homes bonus or similar sources. The group is preparing a list of projects that can be raised with Buckingham Town Council and Bucks County Council to try and get them included as part of the planning development. Unfortunately this is a long process - as invariably money is not forthcoming until building work is complete. Work continues to see if the railway walk can be included on the BCC Definitive Map which safeguards this route for the future.



Recording all the minor pathways across Buckingham is still an on-going project. It is quite a task getting round and recording the detail. We are also trying to ensure pathways are not lost (see the picture of a pathway in Lace Hill taken earlier this year). If you think you can help email me at [transport@buckinghamssociety.org.uk](mailto:transport@buckinghamssociety.org.uk)

The Winslow to Buckingham cycle/pedestrian route -

The detailed plan of this new cycle path (along the A413) which is being funded from the East West rail project is being studied to ensure that any problems that can be identified are raised with the planning authority.

There is still some Section 106 money to be spent on extending the cycle/pathway around the Buckingham bypass. We will be pushing for this work to be brought forward now that the work on the London Road roundabout road seems to be finished.

## **Planning – Ian Orton**

Remember Jarndyce versus Jarndyce, the long running legal case around which Charles Dickens' Bleak House pivoted? For the past four years Buckingham has had its own version in the form of the Buckingham Neighbourhood Development Plan.

Buckingham was one of the towns selected for “fast-track” status when the government first launched its neighbourhood planning concept as part of its “localism” initiative along with the new national planning framework.

But the process of creating a neighbourhood plan, which will determine land use within Buckingham over the next 20 years, has been anything but fast for a variety of reasons. The plan is very complex and wide ranging, far more so than most, if not all, of its peers.

The great news, however, is that the latest draft plan has been approved by the independent assessor (bar a few tweaks) and can be voted on in a referendum by voters that live within the area covered by the plan. The referendum is scheduled to take place on 17 September.

If more than 50% of the votes cast in the referendum approve the plan then it will be formally adopted by Aylesbury Vale District Council (AVDC), our planning authority. This is even better news as the plan effectively closes the door to those opportunistic developers who have effectively put Buckingham and other villages in the locality under a state of siege over the past two years or so since the last “statutory plan” lapsed.

The plan does sanction new development, but only in those areas determined by Buckingham Town Council (BTC).

The Buckingham Society has played a very important role in the preparation of the new plan. Not only did we make suggestions and submissions on various facets of the plan as well as commenting on the various drafts produced by Buckingham Town Council (BTC). We also played a critical role in the consultation process especially when it came to manning the various exhibitions and events arranged to solicit feedback on the plan's proposals.

We should feel very proud of the plan. It may not be perfect. But then nothing is and it must be the most “consulted on” document produced in this locality in living record.

## The Summer House at Cobham Cottage West Street

The building work going on behind Moreton Road has meant that ivy has been removed from the remains of the Summer House at Cobham Cottage and its shell is revealed. It used to belong to Castle House and in Victorian times guests would stroll from the house up the hill to sit in the summer House and admire the view.

The plan is that the Summer House will be renovated by the developers and made into a cycle store for residents.



## Town Clerk Chris Wayman Wins an Award

Chris received a "Public Sector Hero Award" - within the category of "supporting localism". The Town Councillors sent in the following commendation - "We expected solid support and professional guidance from our Clerk when embarking on creating our local Neighbourhood Development Plan. All Buckingham Town Councillors would like to declare how much our Town Clerk, Mr Chris Wayman MILCM, has gone beyond our expectations. Without his heroic and exceptional diligence, insight,



patience and rigour, our local plan would not be nearing its final stages. Beset with unpredictable hurdles (including a parish council that had previously agreed to be part of the plan, then withdrawing its agreement at a late stage or when the local district council managed to upload the wrong map at one point, necessitating a further consultation phase), our Clerk has finessed these with grace and resilience. Leading and being supported by an able team of other officers, Mr Wayman has navigated the Council expertly through the shifting sands of the Government's localism project over the last four years. He has done this with fortitude, humour and just plain hard work. Usually first at and last to leave all the local consultation events, our Clerk has listened carefully to local residents and

studiously deconstructed the contributions from developers, close local authorities and many other stakeholders. He is a true local hero!" Chris was presented with the award at The House of Lords. Here he is with our Mayor Andy Mahi

## The Buckingham Society Garden party

The garden party is on Thursday 30<sup>th</sup> July 2015 starting at the Radcliffe Centre at 6.30pm with a talk by David Foster Chief Executive, The Parks Trust, Milton Keynes. With 5,000 acres of parks, lakes and woods across Milton Keynes, David will explain how this unique, self-financing social enterprise came into being and some of the

challenges of looking after such a varied estate from nature reserves and ancient woodland to miles of road corridor.

After the talk we move to the garden at Prebend House, Nelson Street for Prosecco and canapés.

The talk is free and open to members and guests. The drinks party after costs £4 for members and £6 for guests. If you haven't already booked a place contact Kathy Robins on 01280 813967 or email [Kathyrobins@walnutyard.co.uk](mailto:Kathyrobins@walnutyard.co.uk).

## Dates for Your Diary

9 <sup>th</sup> August	Stowe House and the National Trust garden will be providing free entry for the grand opening of the new Stowe House "Welcome and Discovery Centre".
12-13 September	Heritage Open Days: Guided walk by Ed Grimsdale – The 3 Avenues of Buckingham Free entrance for the Old Gaol, Stowe Gardens and Stowe House on 12 <sup>th</sup> . Radclive Manor gardens, church open and teas on 13 <sup>th</sup> More details to follow
17 September	Referendum Buckingham Neighbourhood Development Plan
23 September	Buckingham Society Executive Meeting 5.00pm Villiers Hotel
24 <sup>th</sup> November	Buckingham Society AGM

## Executive Committee:

Roger Edwards	Chair
Alistair Alcock	University representative
David Child	Transport and Planning
Carolyn Cumming	Planning
Paul Fello	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	Planning
Vacant	Green Spaces
Kathy Robins	Newsletter Editor, planning and transport

## 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) Tel: 07834484762  
If you would like to be 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](http://www.buckinghamssociety.org.uk)