



The Buckingham Society  
Campaigning for a Better Buckingham

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## Newsletter June 2018

### A word from our Chair

June, as Rodgers and Hammerstein wrote, is bustin' out all over and, as I write this, the sun is shining, birds are singing, and you can almost hear the plants throwing off the shackles and sprouting and spreading themselves. And Buckingham has been looking beautiful for weeks now. The wet winter weather seems to have given the trees and bushes extra energy and they have bloomed and blossomed magnificently. We have been privileged to see an explosion of white, pink and red blossom; the whole gamut of greens in the trees and fields as well as yellows, coppers and all the other colours nature provides. How fortunate we are to live in a place blessed with such exuberant abundance.

And it is not only nature. The Old Town Hall has been beautifully restored thanks to its new owners and other properties in the historic old parts of our town have been lovingly brought back to their best. Take a look around the conservation area and see how local people are looking after their parts of our town.



Buckingham's cultural life also continues to be enhanced by such events as the recent Music in the Market and the forthcoming Literary and Summer Music Festivals. In addition, there will be a whole range of events taking place throughout the summer as listed in the Town Council's excellent "Buckingham Town Matters" magazine (which also of course includes Ed Grimdsdale's always amusing musings on Buckingham's history).

So, a great deal to be thankful for. But we must continue to be aware of the challenges that the town faces. For example, the planned additional 400 houses on the Tingewick Road have been the subject of scrutiny by the Society's Planning Group and recommendations have been made to the Town Council aimed at improving the site. The aim, as always, is to try to ensure that the development enhances Buckingham rather than detracts.

Also, the Buckingham Neighbourhood Development Plan will have to be redrawn and put before the residents of Buckingham in the light of the new Vale of Aylesbury Local Plan. The Society hopes to be involved with developing the plan in the same way as we were when the original BNDP was created.

Thus, although we live in what is clearly, “a green and pleasant land”, we must all be on our guard to try to ensure that it remains that way.

But, having started this piece on a series of positive notes, I want to finish on one. Buckingham Civic Day was created by your Society to act as an annual celebration of the town. This year it will take place on Saturday June 23<sup>rd</sup> starting at 10.00 a.m. when proceedings will be opened by our fine Town Crier Russell Cross. As has become traditional now, awards will be presented to the Citizen and Young Citizen of the Year. This will be followed by entertainment by local groups “busking” outside



the Old Gaol and collecting donations for the League of Friends of Buckingham Hospital. So, please come along and support your Society and celebrate what is good about Buckingham.

Finally, I am sure that many of you have heard the Town Clerk, Chris Wayman, pictured left, is leaving to seek a new challenge elsewhere. Chris has been a good friend to the Buckingham Society during his time with the Town Council and we wish him well for the future.

## Civic Day

On Saturday, June 23<sup>rd</sup>, communities across the country will be showcasing how proud they are of where they live as part of national Civic Day. Civic Day is an annual event for communities to say “I care about where I live”. In Buckingham the Buckingham Society will once again be organising events on the day and hoping that people will come out and take part in a celebration of the historic town.

As in previous years, proceedings will be opened by Buckingham’s wonderful leather-lunged Town Crier, Russel Cross, and then there will be the annual presentation of the awards to the Buckingham Rotary Club’s Citizen and Young Citizen of the Year and cheques to various local groups who raised funds through the Rotary Swimathon earlier in the year.

That will all be followed by “Buskingham” - musical entertainment from the Buckingham Ukulele Group and the “Bobcats”, the Buckingham and District U3A’s ukulele band playing together; the Buckingham and District U3A Recorder Group and regular performers from the Woolpack’s Acoustic Club. Buckets will be out to collect money for the League of Friends of Buckingham Hospital.



So, please come along to terrace outside the Old Gaol, from 10.00 a.m., join in with the fun and support your Society and our local hospital.

## Destination Buckingham group report

The Destination Buckingham Group (DBG) was set up a few years ago with the aim of seeking ways to improve the look of the town and encourage more people to come to the town as visitors, shoppers etc. To this end members of various organisations around the town including the Town Council, local businesses and the Buckingham Society have been involved. However, the Destination Buckingham Group has been wound up.

The Town Council is to establish an Economic Development Sub-Committee of the Planning Committee. As the aims and activities of the DBG fit neatly with broader economic development, it was agreed to merge the DBG with the new Sub-Committee. The new Sub-Committee will aim to focus on the future changes that the town needs to address to sustain itself and prosper. Your Executive Committee has asked that the Buckingham Society be represented on the Committee and we await news on that from the Town Council.

Meantime, the balance of DBG funds will be transferred to the Town Council to carry on various outstanding DBG actions and initiatives such as:

**Directional signage** to be installed throughout the town centre this summer.

**Bunting** which may, subject to landlords' approval, be strung across the Old Gaol terrace area and, possibly, across the Cattle Pens, suspended from the trees.

**Railings outside the Post Office Sorting Office** which will be painted by the Town Council in time for *Best Kept Village* competition.

**The Buckingham App** which has been suggested by a student at the University. This mobile phone app could be used to promote the town. Also, increased use of **Social Media** to promote pride and positivity in the town, including its parks, hidden gems etc; and perhaps linking with other initiatives. This might include use of a "LoveBuckingham" hash-tag, a logo in shop windows etc. The main thrust would be to get people to share their good experiences of the town.

## Planning – Carolyn Cumming

### Vale of Aylesbury Local Plan

The long-awaited Examination in Public is scheduled to begin on 10<sup>th</sup> July. Three sessions are relevant to submissions made by the society and the Town Council. A town councillor will attend on all three dates. These are:

10<sup>th</sup> July dealing with Neighbourhood Plans

18<sup>th</sup> July dealing with Salden Chase and various allocated sites in Buckingham

20<sup>th</sup> July dealing with Transport

### Civic Voice Press Release

You may already have noted their recent Press Release referring to the Civic Voice response to the New Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) consultation. Ian Harvey,

Executive Director, who spoke at our AGM last year, said: "If the report in Planning Magazine over the weekend is true and the Government's Chief Planner did confirm that the Government has received over 27,000 responses to the draft consultation, we believe that this shows the breadth of feeling across the country about the importance of our planning system."

Responding to the draft NPPF, Civic Voice is calling for:

1. Given our membership and reach nationwide, we are concerned by the London and South East-centric nature of the NPPF; a greater level of ambition for economic development to is vital to address the viability challenges in some parts of the country.
2. The draft NPPF says much about the importance of design, however, it is our fear that as drafted, high quality design could be seen as a 'nice to have' but 'easy to ignore' rather than as an essential dimension of good planning.
3. Civic Voice supports the emphasis on early and meaningful engagement with communities within the draft NPPF and we would welcome working with MCHLG to develop the accompanying Planning Practice Guidance on this.

Civic Voice President, Griff Rhys Jones said: "Whilst the Government wants to see the 'right homes in the right places', if it doesn't get this right, it is very likely to end up with the 'wrong homes in the wrong places. We hope they listen to the voices of communities across England."

### **Recent Planning applications of interest include:**

**17/04725/APP** Land to rear 10 Market Square. The archaeology report is interesting. Amongst the odd saxo-roman and medieval pottery shards found was a large amount of animal bones from goats and sheep, mainly metatarsals. Further research discounts the idea of a bone working cottage industry in the town but the four recorded medieval guilds (Cordwainers, Mercers, Tailors and Butchers) will all have used animal products. The most likely use of these metatarsals is thought to be as a tool for removing the skins.

**18/00328/APP** 1-2 Market Hill. There have been mixed reactions to these proposals to provide flats and retail space within the old Nat West Bank building. The Society understands that the current proposals will retain the arcaded front to the retail premises, as well as a traditional 'Georgian' frontage on the street elevation. To the rear, a more contemporary design is envisaged, which will allow each flat a balcony. The Society's planning group support the proposals, while others have referred to the rear elevation as "brutalist"! In our view, the key to its success will be in the quality and detail of the materials used, as well as being able to open up access from the Verney Close side.

### **18/00938/AOP 11 Lenborough Close**

Another, in our view, interesting contemporary design with undercroft car park was submitted for outline approval. However, it did not receive support from either the Town council or Highways, both of whom objected to the undercroft car parking. A pity, as this purports to be an innovative way of dealing with town centre sites.

### **18/00928/APP Conversion of garage at Little Oaks**

As predicted, the planning "creep" has resulted in yet another proposal to convert the garage to a bedsit. It was rejected in the past and it is to be hoped that the strong objections from TC and BS will ensure AVDC do not give it the go ahead.

### **18/01670/ADP University Tingewick Road (Innov8 site)**

Proposals have at last been submitted for the regeneration of the spine building on this site. It will be an improvement on the current state of the site. However, a number of trees have been proposed for removal which the Society objects to. In particular a mature walnut at the proposed entrance, see below. We also feel it is important to ensure that the landscape proposals in general are sufficient to enhance the boundaries to this site and would like to see more detail in the scheme.

### **18/01744/APP The Coach House, Wharf Yard**

There have been vigorous objections to these proposals, which if agreed, would create housing in an area that the Neighbourhood Plan zones for commercial/retail activity. The development would also lack any amenity for residents, be subject to noise and pollution from neighbouring uses as well as pose flood and security risks.

## **The Walnut Tree at the Entrance to the University Tingewick Road Development – Kathy Robins**



The walnut tree, pictured left is proposed for removal in the plans for the proposed University Tingewick Road development. It is standing in an area where the entrance to the site is to be. The Society is keen to preserve it and would like to see the entrance moved to allow it to remain, undisturbed.

The tree has a Tree Preservation Order, made on January 18th, 2008, along with 17 other named trees on the site. All lie along the boundaries of the site with Bath Lane and Tingewick Road. There are actually two walnut trees here but according to the plan, the one marked for removal is the last in the line and is no. T17 (it is listed as being next to the pines - of which there are 3 varieties). There is a mixed line of trees, which includes an oak, a laburnum, a pink horse chestnut and a lime. All are listed.

The Society's concern about this tree has led Ed Grimsdale to reflect below on Buckingham's unique relationship with walnut trees and their fruit. He adds that walnut trees have become rare across Buckingham. There is still one in the garden of Ondaatje Hall, once the old vicarage.

## **BUCKINGHAM'S TANNING INDUSTRY - Ed Grimsdale (Chemist and Buckingham Society's Local Historian)**

Buckingham's tanning industry is believed to be ancient. It is probable that the ponds" seen along what is called Hunter Street a.k.a. the University of Buckingham in John Speed's 1612 map of Buckingham were pools used in multi-stage process of turning hides into leather. Tanning needs a good water supply and a river "sewer" to carry away its appalling wet waste. Tanning was an example of crude chemistry; it was dirty, smelly and deeply unpleasant work. Tanneries were at the end of towns – where rivers were leaving.

Tan sheds were never built at the entrance to towns because all the people would suffer from polluted water. (Buckingham's Victorian bathing area was near Brackley Road. One couldn't have bathed in the Chandos Park area: at that time, the Great Ouse's water would have been a horrid brown colour and so smelly!)

Here's a selection of the stages in the Tanning Industry carried out by Mr Norton and his employees in a "tan yard" between Hunter Street and the river. The tanners lived next to their work in tiny cottages in "Norton' Place" their tiny homes, once a no go area, tanners being notoriously "wiffy", remain in situ as student housing!

- |  |                              |
|--|------------------------------|
| 1. Buy raw hides from horses and cattle  | <b>SMELLY</b>                |
| 2. Collect "pure" i.e. dog poo!  | <b>A JOB FOR BOYS</b>        |
| 3. De-flesh the rotting hides  | <b>VERY SMELLY</b>           |
| 4. De-hair the hides   | <b>VERY SMELLY</b>           |
| 5. Cure hides in a lime-pit  | <b>MESSY &amp; DANGEROUS</b> |
| 6. De-lime the hides using a pool of water plus<br>"pure" or chicken droppings | <b>GROSS!</b>                |
| 7. Tan the hides slowly in Oak Bark and water                                  | <b>COULD BE WORSE!</b>       |
| 8. Wash all the residues from the leather                                      | <b>YUCK!</b>                 |
| 9 Dye the leather in a pool filled with Walnuts                                | <b>GETTING BETTER</b>        |
| 10 10. Dry and finish the leather in a big shed                                | <b>ALMOST PLEASANT!</b>      |

The Duke of Buckingham was proud of Buckingham leather and he ensured that the Royal Bucks Hussars and his Yeomanry used Buckingham saddles and other goods on their horses.

Buckingham's tan yard sheds lasted until the 1970's. They were situated between the cottages lining Hunter Street and the river Great Ouse.

Sometimes, things went wrong, as may be judged from this report:

### **The Fair saves Buckingham Town in 1816**

Early on Thursday morning, 6<sup>th</sup> May 1816 around 8am, sparks flew from a malfunctioning engine used in Mrs (Anne) Bartlett's tanning business in Prebend End. Unfortunately, some of the piles of bark caught alight and the fire started to spread to nearby buildings. After their massive fire of 1725 that had destroyed one third of their town, Buckingham people were very frightened by house fires and they had bought no fewer than five fire engines. Buckingham was in luck on that day in May, for it was a Fair Day. When news spread across town, particularly through the Bristle Hill area that had developed into the town's Sheep Market, hawkers and people in town for the Fair rushed down the slope to Prebend End, hauling the town's five fire tenders. The subsequent report in the Northampton Mercury applauded the utmost exertions by the Fair folk although the newspaper noted that they could save neither a large quantity of the bark nor two nearby cottages. But, Buckingham, a town still in recovery mode from its greatest fire, was saved from what might have been a devastating, final blow.



The Nortons sold the business to the powerful Bartlett family who also ran a woolstapling business in “Bartlett’s Wool Yard”. We know those premises as Yeomanry Hall and other buildings of the University of Buckingham. The Bartletts became

evangelical Christians who worshipped at the Reverend Thomas Scott’s “Wesleyan” Gawcott Parish Church. The Bartletts thrived – look at their proud raised tombs opposite Prebend House in the Old Churchyard - and they were leaders in Buckingham Society. When Thomas Bartlett was Mayor (1839) he commissioned the young George Gilbert Scott (the great Victorian architect and son of Thomas Scott) to design the semi-circular Gaoler’s Quarters that soften what became the new front of Buckingham Old Gaol. The Bartlett family’s tanning business failed in 1861, and their wool-sorting enterprise, that had once employed 20 men, was wrecked at much the same time when Yorkshire came to dominate the wool-trade, aided and abetted by rain, and improved communications, the result of the growth of steam railways.

It’s no accident that there was a Walnut Grove behind Buckingham’s ancient Rectory. It supplied not only a useful dye for the Prebend End tanning industry but

**BUCKINGHAM TAN YARD**

All the very useful Plant

**C**OMPRISES the Valuable Steam Engine and Boiler, Bark Mills, Rolling Beds, Heating-pipes, —Iron Beams, Weighing Engine, Pumps, &c., &c., and also the materials of the Tan Vats, the Stout Oak Slabbing of the Tan Vats, having become hardened by the Tan Liquor, may be found very serviceable for ground cills and other out door purposes, and Waste-bark-Oven, &c., and the handsome chimney shaft,

To be Sold by Auction, by Messrs.

**HARRISON & SON**

(In consequence of the discontinuance, of the business.)

On Wednesday, June 30th, 1875,  
at 1 o'clock.

Catalogues may be had of the Auctioneers.

snacks during dull sermons for choirboys. Local legend suggests that after the spire fell on the Old Church, boys would wedge walnuts in the cracks between the tower stump and the nave. After a week or two, the church’s rocking would crack the nuts. Had it been written in time, I expect the Vicar would have chosen the hymn: “The Church’s One Foundation...”. By the way, if you need a good, fast purge, boil green walnuts with water and drink the juice. Do take two precautions: please drop your pants and take your seat before imbibing!

## Preserving and Enhancing Buckingham’s Treescape, Green and open spaces – Ian Orton

A new approach to “green planning” and lights in the Old Churchyard (at last). Wycombe District Council have produced a very interesting report that provides a new and very relevant perspective to “green planning”\*.

As its title implies “Canopy Cover Assessment For Wycombe District” focuses on the use of the tree canopy as both a variable to be taken into account within the planning process and a policy objective in its right.

It also calculates the tree canopy cover for Wycombe District and its constituent wards using the Bluesky Tree Map dataset.

Defined as “the area of leaves, branches, and stems of trees covering the ground when viewed from the air” the report estimates Wycombe District Council’s tree canopy at 25 percent. Some wards have a much higher coverage, however.

It is easy to see how the tree canopy coverage could be used within an updated Buckingham Community Development Plan, the work for which is just starting, especially if it builds upon the proposals included in the report compiled by the task force established by Buckingham Town Council (BTC) in 2017.

The impact of a projected development on tree canopy coverage could also be used as a factor to be taken into account when considering a planning application.

We, as a Society, should certainly push for the tree canopy to be taken into account as part of an updated Buckingham Community Development Plan.

On more mundane matters Transport for Buckinghamshire has at last replaced the two “missing” lights in the Old Churchyard.

If nothing else the three years that it has taken to replace these lights doesn’t paint a particular inspiring picture of local government agencies or the Oxford Diocese.

\*Hat-tip to Ed Grimsdale

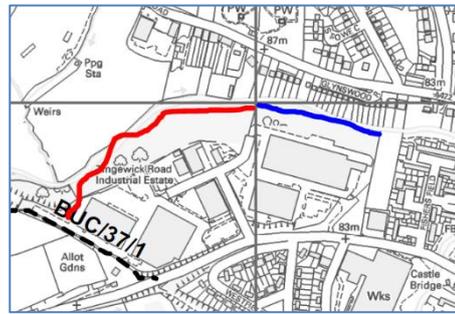
## The Transport Group – David Child

**Clarence Park** open space (Clarence Park is the new development between the river and Tingewick Road) has been open for a while. It is expected that this riverside walk will link up to the Fisher Fields pathway when the Hamilton Engineering site development is completed.



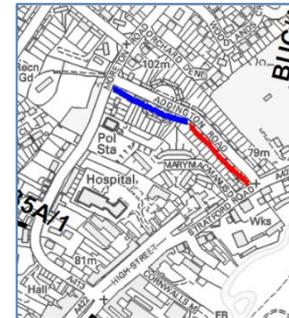
The picture to the left is the view from the entrance (Fisher Fields / Hamilton Engineering end) to the riverside park area.

On the map to the right the Clarence Park riverside pathway covers the section marked in Blue. There is still some distance to go for the concept of linking the railway walk (BUC/37/1) to the river walk (marked in red) to be fulfilled.



**Addington Road** - the one-way system was given the go ahead on 14 May.

The one-way system applies from about half way along Addington Road downhill to Stratford Road. So there will be no entry on the Stratford Road end of the road. The right-hand map gives an indication of the two-way traffic in the blue and the one-way in the red. Work is due to start in June.



## Society website

The new website was launched on 20<sup>th</sup> April 2018. You can get to it by clicking on the link below if you are receiving your newsletter by email. If you are still seeing the old-style web (the black Swan is the old site) you may have to refresh the page.

<http://buckinghamssociety.org.uk/> In the picture below to the left is the new Join page (with the old to the right) the content of this page is substantially the same but we have a new swan and some new pictures. Also, a new joining form which can be completed online and emailed to the membership secretary.

There is still work to be done to the site - there is some new content and some reorganisation of where documents are located.

### New Join page

The Buckingham Society warmly welcomes new members. Membership will enable you to:

- Share and pursue interests and concerns about your town.
- Join in meetings and events.
- Receive our Society newsletters.
- Benefit from the national network of Civic Societies.

Membership Rates:-

- Annual Adult £10.
- Annual Joint Adult (at same address) £16.
- Annual Corporate £40 (includes listing in the newsletter and website).

To join The Buckingham Society click in the link below and send the completed form to the membership secretary by email to - [members@buckinghamssociety.org.uk](mailto:members@buckinghamssociety.org.uk)  
Download the **Adobe Reader** on line joining form by [clicking here](#).

OR alternatively [click here](#) for a printable joining form and follow the instructions.

Campaigning for a better Buckingham [www.buckinghamssociety.org.uk](http://www.buckinghamssociety.org.uk)

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### Old join page

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- Share and pursue interests and concerns about your town.
- Join in meetings and events.
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- Benefit from the national network of Civic Societies.

Some of our current and recent achievements include:

- Publication of the Vision and Design Statement, which is used as important planning guidance for Buckingham.
- Publication of the new Buckingham Town Trail.
- Participation in the Buckingham Plan
- Increase awareness of the River Great Ouse.
- Safeguard the site of St. Rumbold's Well.
- Promotion of Heritage Open Days.

Membership Rates:

- Annual Adult £10.
- Annual Joint Adult (at same address) £16.
- Annual Corporate £40 (includes listing in the newsletter and website).

To join [click here for an application form](#), or contact the membership secretary Gill Jones on 01280 815153.

Campaigning for a better Buckingham [www.buckinghamssociety.org.uk](http://www.buckinghamssociety.org.uk)  
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## The Conservation Area – Booklet

Members of the society are planning to produce a leaflet about the conservation area in Buckingham. If you would like to be involved please let Carolyn Cumming or any other member of the committee know.

## 2018 Dates for your diary

Civic Day 23<sup>rd</sup> June 10.00am outside the Old Gaol  
Executive committee meetings: 25<sup>th</sup> July 2018 at 5.00pm  
26<sup>th</sup> September  
15<sup>th</sup> November AGM

Members are welcome to take part in these meetings. For details of the venue contact any committee member.

Annual lecture and garden party: 19<sup>th</sup> July 2018 at 6.30pm at the Radcliffe Centre for the lecture, the speaker this year is Catherine Taylor, Head Archivist at Waddesdon Manor. At 7.30pm we will move on to Prebend House for the garden party. More details shortly

## Executive Committee:

Roger Edwards	Chair
David Child	Transport, web site and Planning
Carolyn Cumming	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
Colin Stocker	University representative

Three members have recently joined the Committee; Roger Newell, Mark Parsonage and Anthony Ralph. They are all warmly welcomed.

## 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](mailto: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, just contact us and come along.

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

Would you be interested in more Society events? For example, your Committee is considering arranging a visit to somewhere such as Marlborough. Would that be of any interest to members?