



## Programme of Events to Commemorate the Great Fire of Buckingham

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**On March 15<sup>th</sup> 2025** 300 years will have passed since the Great Fire of Buckingham devastated the town. The intention is to mark this significant milestone in the history of Buckingham with a series of appropriate activities and events. This commemoration will involve local schools, many adult organisations and individual volunteers together creating a fitting and memorable period of reflection.

### Timeline of events:

#### Saturday 22<sup>nd</sup> February

##### Project launches in the Town Centre

- **The Town Crier** will be calling the start of the fire commemorations
- **A musical celebration supports the formal opening of the exhibitions** located at the following locations:
  - **The Old Gaol** will house the Scale Model Town circa 1725 with a loop film showing the dramatized story of the starting of the fire.
  - **The Library** will stage the “Clay Tile” collage created by children from four local Primary Schools.
  - **The Vinson Building** in Buckingham University will host the exhibition of artwork created by children from local Primary Schools.
  - The **Royal Latin School** will be exhibiting Creative Writing pieces produced by their pupils.
  - **The towns** shops and businesses will sport window displays

These exhibitions will be open to view until March 17<sup>th</sup>, although the Town Model will continue to be on display for a longer period.

Thornton School will also launch their pupil-creation of the “**Horrid History of the Fire of Buckingham**” available for distribution to schools and libraries.

The **Souvenir Programme** will be available to purchase from today, for a suggested donation. Thereafter it will be available from all the Exhibition venues and several other local outlets.

#### Thursday 6<sup>th</sup> March

“**The Great Fire of Buckingham**” Talk - Venue tbc.

- Under the auspices of the Buckingham Society, a talk by Julian Hunt

#### Saturday 8<sup>th</sup> March

**The “ABLAZE” installation outside the Old Gaol**

- Opens and will remain in place for the duration of Commemoration week.

#### Monday 10<sup>th</sup>, Tuesday 11<sup>th</sup> and Wednesday 12<sup>th</sup> March

**Daytime tours of fire affected areas**

- Aimed at school groups guided by trained volunteers with visits to all three exhibition locations also included in the tour.
- In the evenings adult and family tours will be organised in a similar way. These tours will be free of charge and booking arrangements will be advertised.

## Friday 14<sup>th</sup> March

### A formal reception – White Hart

- Invited guests, local dignitaries and representatives of all the groups involved with the Commemoration Project.
- **7.30pm Unveiling of the memorial plaque** to mark the occasion. Followed by refreshments in the White Hart Function Room where speeches may be made and a premier viewing of the Docu-drama film “Buckingham Ablaze” will be shown.

## Saturday 15<sup>th</sup> March

### Actual day of the Fire in 1725

- **10.30am** Outside the Old Gaol, Buckingham School will perform “**The story of the fire .....in Dance**” Followed by other musical groups who will provide entertainment to the public.
- **4.30pm** The High Street and Market Square will be closed to traffic for the evening event “**1725 And All That**” - The town centre will be transformed into 1725, the period of the fire. Many facets of historical relevance will set the atmosphere including music, dance, shows, livestock sales, children’s games, refreshments and much more, all in an appropriate manner and dress.
- **7pm** a **re-enactment of the actual starting of the fire** with selective musical items, lighting and other magical elements!

## Sunday 16<sup>th</sup> March, 6pm

### “Chariot of Fire” concert in the Villiers ballroom

- **The Band** of the “West Midlands Fire Service” will play a variety of musical numbers accompanying the animated story of the fire (illustrations by pupils of the Royal Latin School) compered by Charlie Ross. This will be very suitable for families and we hope a fitting finale to the week.

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## An artist’s impression of where the Fire started at 7pm on March 15<sup>th</sup> 1725



The Unicorn Inn, behind which the fire started.

The line of buildings from right to left are now the White Hart, Nail bar, Oxfam Charity Shop, Estate Agents, Coffee#1 and Browns’ hairdressers. The artist is John Whitehead a member of BAFA.

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For up to date information as it gets confirmed please visit the Buckingham Ablaze [Facebook page](#) or keep an eye on the [Buckingham Society Website Events](#) page.