

# Buckden Parish Council Annual Report



## What have we achieved this year? What didn't work? Future priorities?

### Highways

#### What have we achieved this year?

- Installed speed cameras on Mill Road. These are being monitored to determine their impact.
- Commissioned plans to improve Cycle Way from Buckden to Hinchingsbrooke. It is hoped the upgrade will be complete by March next year.
- Sought agreement from Cambridgeshire County Council (CCC) to fund:
  - Bollards on pavement to north of Church St outside The Hoo to protect the pavement from cars driving along it.
  - Maintenance of footway on south side of Church Street opposite The Hoo where 2 people have fallen over
  - Double yellow lines at Hunts End/School Lane in selected locations to stop problem parking
- Reinstated double yellow lines in several places around the village. There is still more to do.
- Cut-back vegetation at the end of Silver Street

#### What didn't work so well?

- School Streets didn't work due to lack of volunteers.
- There remains a serious parking problem at the school

#### Future priorities.

- Installing cycle racks by the telephone box and at the village hall
- Complete Cycle path to Hinchingsbrooke

### General Purposes & Cemetery

#### What have we achieved this year?

- Installed a Zip Wire and Bouldering Wall at the Village Hall
- Created a digital map of the cemetery which is nearly complete. It has been an enormous task to transfer all paper records to digital. An information board will be installed for use by those searching for graves.
- Improved the Village Green – Including an insect hotel, seat and new litter bins. The wildflower planting should flourish this year.
- Created a beautiful wildflower/meadow area in the Churchyard and with St Mary's church enlarged the interment of ashes plot.
- Commissioned the refurbishment of the Village sign
- Continued to work on replacement and refurbishment of playground and bought a new mower.

#### What didn't work so well?

- The Christmas lights were not been very reliable last year or the year before, we are looking to improve this.

#### Future priorities

- Continue to maintain infrastructure and equipment owned by BPC, and develop the amenities in the village

## Large Scale Planning

### What have we achieved this year?

- **Silver Street** -Repeatedly requested that HDC amend proposals so that the Silver Street development met the Neighbourhood Plan (NP) conditions. Despite several policies not being met, HDC gave outline approval to the development in September.  
BPC have ensured that a significant number of conditions have been imposed on the development. These include provision of funding to improve the cycleway to Hinchbrook. It is also interesting to note that there are no 4 bedroom houses proposed on the new development which evidences the impact of the Neighbourhood Plan.
- **Buckden Roundabout** -BPC meet regularly with National Highways on the plans for the A1 roundabout. There are still many concerns about the proposal that we are asking the contractors to address.
- **Drainage** - This continues to be a priority for the village BPC meet regularly with the flood authority to highlight the concerns in the village and continue to lobby for additional safety measures for the Lucks Lane attenuation ponds

### What didn't work so well?

- The approval of Silver Street was a disappointment. We continue to challenge the developers to meet the policies of the NP

### Future priorities.

- Continue to challenge large scale developments in line with NP Policies
- Monitor the cumulative impact on Buckden of all large-scale developments

## Planning

### What have we achieved this year?

- The Planning committee has reviewed 41 planning applications for development of individual residential properties plus 8 applications to work on protected trees and 3 business park applications for land and buildings to be used for industrial and commercial uses around the edges of the village.
- We have commented on:
  - Diddington and Buckden solar farms' pre-application consultations and first documentation on potential environmental impact
  - London Luton Airport Arrivals changes to air space
  - OxCam development (Oxford to Cambridge routes)
  - HDC landscape & Townscape SPD
- Commissioned planning lawyers and specialist planning consultants to support us when needed to challenge planning applications that we judge are potentially a significant detriment to the village. All applications are assessed against the policies in the NP

### What didn't work so well?

- HDC has not always taken account of our recommendations in the way that we judged best met the needs of the parish and its residents

### Future priorities.

- To increase our knowledge of planning policy locally and nationally to help us engage as effectively as possible with developers and with the HDC Development Management Team.
- To present our case as clearly as possible, based on "material planning considerations" to help shape the location, nature and appearance of developments affecting the Parish.

## Green infrastructure and biodiversity

### What have we achieved this year?

- Produced a Biodiversity Strategy to support the Council and its staff in maintaining and improving the biodiversity in the village.
- Implemented “No Mow May” to help butterflies and insects
- Commissioned our triennial tree survey and carried out all recommended work
- Completed the work on Hunts End and have a beautiful wildflower area developing
- Produced a leaflet on Tree planting and there will be another leaflet later in the year.
- Together with the Friends of Buckden Towers planted one of two oak trees to mark the Queen’s Platinum Jubilee
- Created a footpath working group to help maintain paths

### What didn’t work so well?

- Have not as yet managed to get a new footpath designated

### Future priorities

- Establish a tree walk, with “talking trees” using QR codes
- Continue to work to get a new footpath designated
- Implement the Biodiversity strategy.

## At the allotments

### What have we achieved this year?

- New shelter built and seat installed to commemorate Stan Studd a keen allotment holder and Parish Councillor
- A regular newsletter goes out with news and seasonal tips for working the allotments
- We are installing new fencing to ensure compliance with our lease for the allotments. This will be important when we negotiate with the developers about the allotments e.g. parking
- Created a Buckden Community Allotments Facebook group.
- All plots will be cultivated this year, 50 in total, and reduced the waiting list
- Set up seed bank

### What didn’t work so well?

- Haven’t been able to organise any social events

### Future priorities

- Increase Social activities.
- Plant some community fruit trees.
- Maintain and enhance the allotments area to a high standard.

## Climate Change

### What have we achieved this year?

- Supported residents to use thermal imaging camera to identify opportunities for reducing heat loss from homes
- Ran a Greening Buckden afternoon on the Village Green
- Funded the purchase of two water pumps for use by those in the village most at risk of flooding.

### What didn’t work

- Unable to install on-street charging points for electric vehicles as grants for that are no longer available.

### Future priorities

- Continue to promote energy conservation

## **Flooding**

### **What have we achieved this year?**

- Drew together information about flooding in the village both now and in the past so there is a record of, for example, who is responsible for things like the Taylors Lane culvert. This information is on our website.
- Worked with the Flood Authority and pressured them to come up with solutions for the High Street. This has now been implemented and the work completed before time and under budget, the money saved was used to resurface the road .
- Lobbied CCC Flood Authority about the serious concerns in relation to the water levels in the attenuation basins on the Lucks Lane development. We have monthly meetings with them and continue to press our concerns.

## **Communication to Residents**

### **What have we achieved this year?**

- Consulted with residents to agree priorities for spending funds from housing developments via a questionnaire and at the Annual Assembly. We are now funding the priorities that were highlighted e.g. cycle way to Brampton, more facilities for young people (Zip wire and Bouldering Walls)
- Developed an annual Council Operating Plan
- Made more active use of Facebook to help keep residents informed
- Started to put regular supplements in the Roundabout highlighting our work.
- Ensured Welcome Packs are posted to all new residents.

### **What didn't work**

- We haven't yet been able to install the equipment to enable residents to link into our meetings remotely.

### **Future priorities**

- Continue to improve communication via all media.

## **We need you**

**You can see the Council has achieved a lot BUT there is much more we could do. We are low on numbers of Councillors and we could do more if we had more Councillors.**

**PLEASE THINK About becoming a Councillor**

**If you think you might be interested come and talk to us.**

**Call the Clerk on 07483333557**