

Buckden Parish Council News

Council Website

For more information, please visit the Buckden Parish Council (BPC) web site at www.buckdenpc.org.uk. To automatically find out what is going on subscribe to our Newsletter service using your email address.

Annual Parish Meeting / Assembly

This was held on 20th May and reports were received from the PCSOs of the St Neots team, the Huntingdonshire District Council Biodiversity Team, our District and County Councillors, Buckden Village Hall Trust, Buckden Parochial Charities (The Alms Houses) and Buckden Neighbourhood Watch.

Following the Report from the Parish Council there were questions, suggestions and comments from residents. These included an appeal for volunteers to help in the Knot Garden at Buckden Towers, details about the initiatives for young people in the village, problems with contacting Parish Councillors direct, "No mow May" and the need for greater use of Facebook.

Parish Council Annual Report

At the Annual Assembly the Chair of the Parish Council, Peter Clark, gave the Parish Council's Annual Report. It was a privilege to chair Buckden Parish Council and with the huge input by Councillors. The Council now had two Committees, Planning and Village Maintenance, as well as several Advisory Groups. All Committees and Advisory Groups had both Councillors and non-Councillors as members.

The Council continues to work towards obtaining Quality Council status and operates to a very high level, the only obstacle being that most of the Councillors have been co-opted. We are subject to both Internal and External audit. The former, which has been completed and looks at our procedures, gave a glowing report. We have recently updated our Standing Orders and Financial Regulations and financial reporting to Councillors has improved.

The Planning Committee continues to respond to the District Council on all planning applications and our Large Scale Planning Advisory Groups has recommended refusal of the application to convert the Buckden Marina Leisure Centre into holiday flats.

The Highways Advisory Group, which liaises with both County and National Highways, has continued to install more road safety features such as MVAS units which monitor and indicate speeds of motorists, and dropped kerbs. We are still awaiting the promised 30mph buffer zone in Mill Road.

All of the papers and reports for Council Meetings are available on the Thursday before meetings on Council website www.buckdenpc.org.uk. This provides the opportunity to see the agenda, reports of work carried out by the Council as well as reports from our County and District Councillors. Any questions or comments on this report should be addressed to the Parish Clerk at: Buckden Parish Council, Buckden Village Hall, Burberry Rd, Buckden, PE19 5UY. Telephone 07483 333557 Email: clerk@buckdenpc.org.uk.

Both the Climate Change Mitigation and Green Infrastructure Groups continue their work. The former has held 3 Repair Cafes, the latest being in conjunction with an Eco Fair, and bought a thermal imaging camera which can be borrowed. The latter continues to monitor the state of our footpaths, encourage more wildlife and wildflower planting and has completed a plating scheme at the junction of Lucks Lane and Stirtloe Lane.

Biodiversity is also a theme being pursued by our Allotments Advisory Group, where the excess produce is donated to Diamond Hampers. Following the receipt of a Notice to Quit from our landlords, the Church Commissioners, we are now beginning negotiations to purchase the Silver Street Allotments.

We continue to strive to improve our communications with the village, including through Roundabout and our Facebook page. The latter has been particularly useful for our new Hub and Youth Engagement Advisory Group. This group is working hard to provide activities for the young people of our village. This year will be what we hope to be the first of many years when we have "Shakespeare at the Towers" and the Parish Council is working closely with the Trustees.

We have a good relationship with the Village Hall Trust and our Village Maintenance Committee is working with them regarding a new enhanced Play Area which will be the subject of a wide consultation. The Committee continues to maintain the Cemetery and Closed Churchyard, where it is encouraging biodiversity, as well as several seats, bus shelters and small grass areas throughout the village.

As Huntingdonshire District Council is reviewing its District Local Plan we will be responding and reviewing our own Buckden Neighbourhood Plan. Our Neighbourhood Plan Advisory Group would welcome additional volunteers from the village to join it.

The Parish Council has a small team of staff, two maintenance/groundstaff and an Assistant Clerk ably led by our Parish Clerk and supported by an excellent group of Parish Councillors

Play Facilities at the Recreation Ground

As mentioned in last month's Roundabout we are very keen to understand your views about the current play equipment and what you would like to see in the future.

We will therefore be circulating a survey shortly via social media and Buckden school and preschools, on behalf of the Parish Council and the Village Hall Trust. You can access and complete the survey via the following link

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<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/buckdenpark> or via the Parish Council's website.

Greener Buckden Eco Fair and Buckden Repair Cafe Saturday 7th June

Firstly, a big thank you to all those who gave up their time, both before and on the day to make these events a success. We couldn't have done it without you. Secondly, thank you to everyone who supported these events, turning out despite the weather forecast for cataclysmic storms which thankfully never materialised! AND thank you for your generosity as without the donations our visitors make, we would find it increasingly difficult to run the Repair Cafés. Thirdly, thank you to the village hall staff for their help in setting up and clearing away after the event.

Visitors to the Eco Fair were able to meet and chat to representatives from a wide range of organisations about topics ranging from reducing energy costs in the home, looking after wildlife in your garden, how to garden in a hotter and drier climate, environmentally friendly libraries, how and where to observe the natural world, keeping the village litter free, badgers and building green walls on the Village Hall.

The Repair Cafe saw 48 items of which 33 were repaired on the afternoon and another 12 were identified as repairable. Our repairers provided advice to owners as to what to buy, where from and how to complete the repair themselves. Our average of repairing 2/3 items at a café matches that seen for other repair cafés across Cambridgeshire. If all the repairable items go on to be repaired, that would be a success rate of greater than 90%. It just goes to show that because something doesn't work, we shouldn't be too quick to consign it to the bin!

Data from the Restarters website suggests that the combined efforts of our repairers over the three events so far have prevented 317kg of waste from going to landfill and 2.45tCO₂e being released into the atmosphere. More importantly, there are over 160 items out there with a new lease of life and over a dozen satisfied repairers who have grappled with a problem and found the solution. Notwithstanding that they have also saved our visitors the expense and faff of buying a replacement.

We hope to be back again in the autumn – do join us, either as a visitor or perhaps as a volunteer/repairer. If you are interested in either of those roles, please contact the Parish Clerk.

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Vandalism

The report from the police at the Annual assembly emphasised there is very little crime in the village unfortunately recently we have had a couple of incidents of vandalism in the village. We take this very seriously and they have been reported to the Police who have responded speedily and effectively, for which we are grateful.

Council Meetings

The next Council meeting will be at 7.00 pm on Tuesday 8th July. The meeting will include a 15-minute open forum. If you want to speak at the meeting, please let us know what you want to say, by contacting the Parish Clerk. You will get a three-minute slot. The Council Planning and Village Maintenance Committees will meet as required. Agendas are posted on the Parish notice boards no later than the Saturday preceding the meeting.

Office opening hours

The Clerk operates flexibly between the office and home. If you wish to meet with the Clerk, please call 07483 333557.