

Buckden Parish Council Chair's Report May 2022

1) Council Elections and Council Vacancies

We have 9 elected councillors and two prospective Councillors for co-option this gives us a total of 11 Councillors and 4 vacancies. I suggest we do a large advert attached to our Annual report and possibly a leaflet drop particularly on the Bloor's estate. Plus an advert on Facebook. Any other thoughts?

2) Annual Assembly

The Annual Assembly will be held at 7.30 in the Millard room on 17th May. It would be good if all Councillors could attend. What is the opinion of Councillors on offering refreshments?

3) Work by Pump House Pit

A local resident contacted us with concerns about a blocked path near Pump House Pit. I contacted Aggregate Industries and Thornhill Estates to ask if they could explain what was happening.

Aggregate Industries (AI) explained that the Company has been undertaking works along Pump House Pit in line with their Environmental Management Plan which complements the Paxton Pits Nature Reserve Management. Over recent years many informal paths have been created along the northern boundary of Pump House Pit which is having a negative impact upon the nesting Nightingales.

It has been agreed access to the lake should be retained but controlled. AI have therefore been erecting a new fence path to the lake side and used the felled trees to restrict unauthorised routes as a means to protect the local habitat.

It is hoped the local residents will understand the need to protect special habitat for conservation value and it is hoped the additional rights of way being opened will provide other lake vantage points and walks.

4) Cycle Path and Cycle racks

We have received an update from Clare Rankin CCC on the both the cycle path and the installation of cycle racks.

The estimate is for the design work on the cycle path is £55,000 which includes preliminary design for the two options of a refuge or signalled crossing with estimate costs and then detailed design for the scheme once the preferred crossing option is agreed. The programme is for the detailed design to be completed by the end of November and construction to be by the end of March. We would look to fund the design work through our Integrated Transport Budget funding and use the CIL funding for construction. If the cost of construction is more than we have in the budget (£208,000 + £10k from Parish Councils) we would then look for alternative funding, probably again from our ITB pot.

Cycle racks

CCC are planning to install the stands w/c 16th May. The contractors will be in touch nearer the time to confirm dates.

5) Work on the High Street

The work on the drainage is now complete. They finished ahead of schedule and the money that was saved from the early completion was used to resurface and white line the road. The contractors were at all times excellent and kept me informed of progress. I am having a final meeting with Brian Heffernan CCC Flood Officer on Thursday 5th