

Buckden Parish Council Chair's Report May 2023

Engaging with Youth groups

Last month I reported that we had begun the process of engaging with youth groups in order to bring their viewpoint into plans that the Parish Council make. I have now met with the leaders of the scouts, guides etc and attended, together with Cllr Clark their AGM 28th April 2023. They welcomed parish council members and were pleased to hear the news of the cycleway and would very much like to be involved in an inaugural cycle ride when the project is completed.

CAPALC

I am formally informing you that we renewed our membership of CAPALC in March. Each Councillor has access to the members area of the site. The Clerk provides login details. It provides much useful information and following our finance meeting we have agreed to make more use of the CAPALC support in relation to issues of policies etc.

Little Paxton Quarry liaison meeting

I attended this meeting on 26th April. As usual they informed us of the progress they are making both in the quarrying work and the reinstatement of the areas that are no longer in production. It was disappointing to note that despite plans going into CCC in 2019, we are no further forward in the new right of way being established from Diddington to the restored pits and the old route from Diddington to Little Paxton being closed. I have sent an email to Tom Ruzsala the lead on this issue at County expressing our concern at the delay. I shared a copy with other members of the liaison group so they can send something similar if they wish to.

Hedge

The work on the electric poles by the allotments has caused damage to the fencing and breached the security of site. I am in contact with National Highways to find out what hedging or fencing we would be permitted to put in. There will then need to be a discussion with the RFO and Chair of Finance Advisory Group in relation to the possible budget issues.

HDC/Towns and Parishes engagement session

Cllr Sansom, the Clerk and I attended this virtual session. The level of communication from HDC continues to impress. There was detailed information on planning and the progress they are making in resolving long term planning issues. There really are signs of improvement one example being that planning enforcement have reduced their backlog from 700 allocated cases and 767 unallocated cases to 664 allocated cases.

There was more information about the local plan. One very important aspect was the **Call for sites**. As a Parish Council we should note that the call for sites **IS NOT** just in relation to housing development it has a much wider scope than that, including land for community use and land for environmental schemes. I have circulated the slides from the session but it is very important that if you have time you engage with the consultation on the Local Plan at [Huntingdonshire District Council Consultation Home - Keystone](#)

Flooding

A resident contacted me concerned about the Taylors Lane culvert being blocked. She had tried to clear it but was concerned about some of the blockages. As it was a Friday evening we were not able to contact the Handymen. We were advised to call the police who attended promptly but this is an example of not knowing quite who to contact. Thanks to the Clerk for dealing with this on a Friday evening.

Grass cutting

The CCC contractor who cuts certain areas of the village three times a year, cut across the wildflower area at Hunts End and the area of lovely daffodils by the Green War memorial. We are liaising with both the contractors and CCC to ensure this does not happen again.

Cycleway to Brampton

Clare Rankin from CCC has sent a detailed plan of the proposed works which I have circulated to Council. The trees proposed to be removed are either dead or in a poor condition. CCC are waiting for the final target cost, once they have that they can programme in the works which they are hoping to start in July. I have asked what will happen if the costs are greater than our budget. I have not received a response as yet.

May = National Walking Month!

Living streets are promoting May as National Walking month. See attached link

<https://www.livingstreets.org.uk/get-involved/campaign-with-us/national-walking-month>

Annual Report

The draft Annual Report will be circulated to Councillors separately.