

Buckden Parish Council Chair's Report March 2021

1) CIL funding Bids

Our bid for CIL funding for improving the cycleway/walkway from Buckden to Brampton was approved by Overview and Scrutiny Committee but turned down at Cabinet because they thought it should be funded by CCC. I entered into correspondence with the leader of the council Cllr Ryan Fuller who expressed his support for the bid. He indicated if it was resubmitted with information showing that Buckden PC had asked CCC for funding then it would be positively considered. We await the result of the next Cabinet meeting on 18.03.21 . If anyone would like further details of the correspondence, please contact me.

The Village Hall Trust was successful in their bid to dredge and improve the Valley Lake. This will be a great asset to the village once it is complete.

2) Flooding

Taylors Lane We are still awaiting any evidence of action in relation to flooding. A resident Mr Gordon Wyatt has had some information from HDC indicating that Taylors Lane is a water course that has been "awarded" to HDC but the lead from CCC is still seeking further clarification of that information. Even if it has been awarded the responsibility of HDC seems to be limited because this watercourse does not run on land which is owned by the Council, the Awarded status means that HDC would "police" the watercourse but the maintenance duty would fall to the landowners who have riparian rights and responsibilities. HDCs view is that input to sites like this would only be to inspect and check that it is working reasonably well and, if not, to inform the appropriate landowners of the need to maintain it properly.

Lucks Lane development On 26th February we were informed that were concerns over the eastern attenuation pond, residents in the Osiers were concerned about the extreme height of water in the pond. Cllr Hassall followed up on this with Cambridgeshire County Council. They liaised with Bloor Homes but action was not taken immediately. This is a continuing cause for concern.

3) Annual report and Assembly

We have started to plan for the Annual Assembly. This is where we invite the public to hear about the year in the Parish. I have emailed out to all Councillors asking for input into the report and suggestions for speakers. The meeting has by law to be held by 1st June. The suggestion is that we make it either on that date or because that is in half term week the week before possibly Wednesday 26th May I would like Councillors views on the best date to hold the meeting. The advice from Acre is that we can then expect to be able to meet inside with the room at 50% capacity. Possible presentations might include:

- Report on Flooding
- Report from School
- Report from GP surgery
- Report from Police
- Report from Church(es)
- Neighbourhood Plan and Community Action Plan
- Kick start the CIL spend and prioritisation discussion
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Report will include Achievements, Challenges and the future . Please keep sending me ideas.

4) Risk Management Review

We have to complete the Parish Council's Risk Management review annually. This was done last year and it has been reviewed and revised 3 times during the course of the year. The Chair, Vice Chair Finance Lead and Clerk will complete the annual review by the end of March for submission to Council in April.

5) Telephone Box renewal

I am pleased to report that with the help of the Lorrigan family the Telephone Box, that at one point housed the defibrillator, is now a book swap and information point. The Parish Council thanks them for their hard work in getting this done. Ruby and Martha the two Lorrigan girls will be monitoring the use of the box and tidying it on a weekly basis as part of their bronze Duke of Edinburgh award.

They would also like to improve the small patch of green by the box. The Gardeners association have been approached to do the work and the proposal is to ask the new owners of the George to sponsor the area. The consensus view is that it is HDC that has responsibility for the land but Parish Handymen have maintained the plot over the years. I would like the Parish Council to endorse the improvement of this small plot of land.

6) Parish Council meeting reports

Parish Council meeting dates will be set for the coming Council year starting in May. We are required to physically post the Agendas on the notice boards around the village and in Diddington. This is very time consuming for the Clerk so we are going to instruct the Handymen to do this. This means due to the days they work that notices will have to be posted on Wednesdays not Thursdays as they are currently. We will therefore require all reports by Monday of the week before the meeting rather than Tuesday.

7) New residents

We are getting a significant number of new residents joining the village. It is important to ensure that they feel welcomed into Buckden. We pride ourselves on the friendliness of the village and the Parish Council should promote that. Many people have no idea about the Parish Council so my proposal is to write a welcome letter to all new residents. The Clerk is informed monthly of those new to the village. The letter will welcome them and provide links to the Parish Council website and the Welcome Pack.

8) Cllr Millard's resignation

It is with regret that I report that Councillor Betty Millard intends to resign as a Parish Councillor at the end of April. Betty was Parish Clerk from 1991 – 2000 then left the Council for a year and came back as a Councillor. During her time as a Councillor she was Chairman for three years. Thank you, Betty, for all you have given to the village over the years and to the Parish Council in particular. I would like to add my personal thanks for all the support you have given to new Councillors and the Clerk. We would like to formally mark your retirement as and when we can get together in person.

Betty's retirement means we have to find a new Chair for the General Purposes and Cemetery AG and a new member of the Planning Committee. Volunteers welcome!