

Buckden District Councillors Report

Dear Residents and Parish Councillors,

As we bid farewell to 2024 and usher in the dawn of a brand new year, I want to take a moment to extend my warmest wishes to each and every one of you for a prosperous and joyous 2025.

This past year has been a journey of both challenges and triumphs, and your resilience and community spirit have been truly inspiring. As your district councillor, I am filled with hope and excitement for the opportunities that the New Year will bring. Together, let's continue to build on our successes and work towards a brighter future for our parish.

May 2025 be a year of health, happiness, and fulfilment for you and your loved ones. Here's to a year filled with new adventures, growth, and shared accomplishments.

Happy New Year!

Flood Update

Hilary Ellis of the LLFA has agreed to engage with Anglian Water to discuss a multi-agency approach to address flooding in our area. Alconbury, Brampton, Buckden, and Southoe are all experiencing issues with high levels of ground and surface water flowing west to east, resulting in localised flooding and sewer inundation. Anglian Water has successfully implemented similar approaches in other areas of the county, and we hope they will agree to do the same in our area.

The LLFA has agreed to advance the actionable components of their Atkins survey, specifically focusing on elements that impede flow and cause pinch points. Additionally, they will investigate Towers Lake, its conduits, and possible links to the valley.

Does anyone know of any area formally known as the shrubberies in Buckden?

I'm trying to help an HDC Officer who is mapping the watercourses in the village. Any insights would be appreciated - he's working off 1813 documents. We're hoping that this will help with our flood responses going forward:

***Twelfth Public Drain** And one other public drain of sufficient width and depth to carry off the water commencing at the East end of a Tunnel across Buckden High Street about the distance of Ninety two yards from the North west corner of the **Shrubberies** and proceeding in a Northward direction by the side of the said Shrubberies and an allotment to the Lord Bishop of Lincoln till it enters the seventh public Drain*

***AND WE** the Commissioners do hereby award order and direct that the several Drains shall be kept of sufficient width for the free passage of water along the same and shall Together with the public Bridges and Tunnels over and across the same for ever hereafter be cleansed scoured repaired and maintained twice in every year that is to say in the months of March and September by and under the direction of the Surveyors of the Highways of the Parish of Buckden for the time being and that the costs and charges thereof be raised by him or them in such and the same manner as he or they are by Law authorised to raise money for defraying the Expenses of repairing the public roads within the Parish of Buckden which said Surveyor or Surveyors and his or their Servants Labourers and others employed by him or them are hereby authorised at seasonable times in the year to enter into*

the allotments herein awarded for the purposes aforesaid without being subject or liable to any action for so doing so as no wilful or unnecessary damage be done thereby.

Net Zero Villages

£250,000 of capital grant funding from the CPCA to tackle:

- Energy use and/or supporting energy efficiency or generation retrofit
- Enabling access to public transport or access to local services through low carbon transport
- Nature based solutions to tackle overheating of community buildings
- Grants from £5,000 to £50,000

Not eligible:

- Funding of electric vehicle charge points
- New gas/oil boilers, repair, maintenance or renewal due to normal wear and tear
- Projects that are not intended for community use and negatively impact the wider determinants of health
- Private households, business premises or public sector buildings except Parish Council owned facilities and buildings
- Huntingdon, St Neots and St Ives

When:

- Launching mid-December 2024
- Expressions of interest: end of January 2025
- Successful applications announced: 14th March 2025

Potential Big Changes Coming to Local Councils

The government wants to change how our local councils work. In many ways this could make sense as we have many layers of local government in Huntingdonshire/Cambridgeshire, which has many inefficiencies. That said, moving from multiple councils to a single unitary authority could be quite challenging. Huntingdonshire is unlikely to be a unitary authority on its own, which could raise issues if there is not commonality across the new authority.

Summary points:

- They plan to get rid of county councils and district councils.
- Instead, we might get one big council (called a "unitary authority") to handle all local services.
- This new council would do everything - from collecting bins to caring for the elderly.
- The government thinks this will save money and make services better.
- Some people agree with this idea, but others worry it might not work well.
- If this happens, it could mean big changes for how things are run in our villages.
- We might have to deal with a larger council that covers a bigger area.
- Some worry this might make it harder for our small villages to have their voices heard.
- Nothing is decided yet - the government still needs to give more details.
- Many current council leaders are waiting to see these details before they say what they think.
- The main goal is to make things simpler and save money, but it's important to make sure our local needs aren't forgotten.

Remember, this is just a proposal for now. If you have concerns, please get in touch to discuss how this might affect our area.

Wishing you well,

Martin

Martin Hassall

District Councillor for Buckden, Diddington and Southoe

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