

DISTRICT COUNCILLOR'S REPORT – NOVEMBER 2025

Dear Residents and Councillors,

As I write this, I've just returned from the Remembrance Sunday Service at St Mary's Church. It's a tradition I've honoured many times over the years, and each time I'm reminded how fortunate we are to belong to such a strong and connected community.

The act of remembering those from Buckden who gave their lives in the two world wars is always deeply moving. In those days, our village population was much smaller, though the number of lives lost was heartbreakingly large. The impact to families must have been profound. That we still fill the church today, with generations young and old standing side by side, speaks volumes about the enduring spirit and shared values of Buckden.

This year, our village's social life has flourished. Around 1,500 people gathered at the Towers for Bonfire Night, and events like Shakespeare in the Knot Garden and Buckfest brought energy and joy to the summer months. Halloween has passed, and now we turn toward Christmas, heralded by the switch-on of the High Street lights, a moment that always brings warmth and anticipation that Christmas is not far away.

There's no denying the challenges beyond our village boundaries. However, here in Buckden, I hope we can continue to look toward 2026 with a sense of optimism, grounded in community, remembrance, and shared celebration..

Local Plan Consultation Now Open – Have Your Say

Huntingdonshire District Council has now opened public consultation on its Preferred Options Draft Local Plan to 2046. This is a major planning document that will shape where homes, jobs, infrastructure, and green spaces are located across the district for the next 20 years.

Deadline for comments: Wednesday 17 December 2025 at 11:59pm

This may be the last meaningful opportunity for residents to influence the shape of the plan before it moves toward finalisation. If you care about how Buckden and surrounding areas grow and change - now is the time to speak up!

You can:

- View the draft plan and interactive policy map
- Attend one of the public exhibitions
- Submit your comments online via the consultation portal

Paper copies are also available at Buckden Library and other local venues.

Visit <https://www.huntingdonshire.gov.uk/planning/local-plan-update/preferred-options/> to learn more and take part.

Local Government Reorganisation – Current Position (November 2025)

Local Government Reorganisation remains a rapidly evolving issue, with significant implications for Huntingdonshire. Cambridgeshire and Peterborough councils are currently considering five potential models for local government reorganisation (Options A–E), each proposing different

configurations of new unitary authorities. While Options A, B, and C were initially identified as the most financially viable, Options D and E have since been brought forward by individual councils, including Huntingdonshire's proposal for a standalone unitary authority (Option E).

Each council is expected to vote on its preferred model in the coming weeks. However, only one option per council can be submitted to government, raising concerns that viable alternatives may be excluded from consideration. The final decision on which model(s) proceed rests with the Secretary of State - there is no formal national public consultation planned that I am currently aware of.

Join the Buckden Walking Group!



The Buckden Walking Group is maturing - now with 57 members and social walks now happening on a daily basis. The group is maturing into a friendly, informal network with a primary focus on individually organised social walking. The WhatsApp group has proven to be the most effective way to coordinate spontaneous outings, allowing members to connect quickly and head out together. It's becoming



a brilliant way to stay active, meet neighbours, and explore the local area at your own pace.

Whether you're looking for gentle strolls, good company, or simply a reason to get outdoors, we'd love to welcome you. Scan the QR code to visit the **Facebook page** and see what the group is up to!

Prefer WhatsApp?

To join the WhatsApp group, please email me your **name and mobile number** this helps us stay GDPR-compliant and keep the group safe and inclusive.

Let's keep walking, talking, and building something special together!

Wishing you well,

Martin

Martin Hassall

District Councillor for Buckden, Diddington and Southoe

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