



BUCKINGHAM TOWN ACTION COMMISSION (TAC)

Trees, Hedgerow and Open Spaces Report

INTRODUCTION

This Report has been produced by the Town Action Commission (TAC), which was established by the Environment Committee of Buckingham Town Council (BTC), due to concerns about the loss of trees, hedgerows and open spaces, largely resulting from new housing developments.

The objective is “the protection, creation and enhancement of trees, hedgerows and green spaces in new developments”. An initial meeting of interested parties, including representatives of local councils, conservation groups and other stakeholders was held.

From that meeting a steering group was established to produce this report for the Environment Committee of BTC. Members of that group were: Councillor Margaret Gateley (BTC), (Chair); Councillor Ruth Newell (BTC); Ian Orton (Buckingham Society); Neil Pasmore (AVDC Community Spaces Officer); Bill Truscott (Maids Moreton Avenue Conservation Group).

A. THE CONTEXT

1. Thanks to the foresight of previous generations Buckingham now has one of the most diverse mature treescapes of any small market town.
2. The planting activities of landowners and residents, especially during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, has endowed the town with a wide variety of mature native and non-native deciduous hardwoods, softwoods and shrubs planted both singly and in groups (e.g. Maids Moreton Avenue, The Spinney/Castle House, Brookfield House/Royal Latin School and the Old and New Churchyards.
3. These have been supplemented by the planting associated with Buckingham’s parks and open spaces owned by various local government authorities and/or agencies acting on their behalf, e.g. Aylesbury Vale District Council (AVDC) the former Buckingham Borough Council, the Buckingham Borough Development Company, Buckingham Town Council (BTC) Buckinghamshire County Council and the various agencies associated with water and drainage.
4. Buckingham’s extensive areas of open spaces that also make a significant contribution to its distinctive character, not least because of the backdrop provided by the River Great Ouse. Few towns have something like the Heartlands, for example, that effectively brings the countryside right into what is more or less the town centre.
5. Many of these open spaces provide the skeleton of what could become a linear park network (see Appendix A) linking together Buckingham’s parks and open spaces by paths in landscaped and naturalistic settings.
6. Some of the elements of this network are already in place. It is already possible to walk or cycle from the eastern by-pass to the town centre through open space along a network of footpaths. Thereafter it is possible to reach both the western and southern extremities of the



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town using another network of paths through other open spaces, e.g. Chandos Park, the University and the Circular/Railway/Riverside walks.

7. In future the development of the area between the bypass, Gawcott and Tingewick Road may enable walkers and cyclists to get to the Radclive roundabout using an extended network of paths and open spaces. The University's development of the former Hartridge site may also provide additional open space and facilitate an extension and/or completion of the existing Riverside walk.
8. A number of smaller "linear parks" providing footpath linkages between roads and existing open spaces, e.g. the Circular Walk, Maids Moreton Avenue and the Railway Walk have also emerged in recent years. These open spaces are owned and maintained by Local Authorities with support from local societies, e.g. Railway Walk Conservation Group and The Buckingham Canal Society (canal towpath).
9. Not all of Buckingham's open spaces and the land or pathways between them are within the public domain, i.e. are "public open spaces" that are accessible to the general public and owned and maintained by local government agencies.
10. Some open spaces are effectively owned by property developers or their successors (administrators and liquidators) and are outwith the ambit of local authorities. This is the case at Linden Village and Lace Hill, for example. Moreover, at Lace Hill and other new developments, residents are charged an annual fee to maintain their open spaces which have not been adopted by the local authorities, and this appears to be an increasing trend.
11. Schools, sports clubs and the University of Buckingham also own and maintain substantial open spaces and the trees, hedgerows and footpaths that fall within. On the whole, however, private owners, most notably the University, tend to allow public access and enable the community to enjoy their facilities.
12. Buckingham also incorporates extensive areas of hedgerows within its built-up area, a legacy of its agricultural past. In addition to containing a diverse variety of trees, shrubs and other flora these hedgerows provide important habitats for birds, mammals, rodents and insects.

B. THE PROBLEM

13. In recent years the activities of residential and commercial developers coupled with an expanding University have put increasing pressure on the Buckingham treescape, hedgerows and open spaces. Buckingham has expanded considerably over the past 30 years and, according to the Buckingham Neighbourhood Development Plan, is expected to grow even more over the next 20 years.
14. This will put our treescape, hedgerows and agricultural land that falls within the town boundaries, and the habitats that they support, under even more pressure. Even if Buckingham remained relatively static, however, it is likely that there could still be future problems. Growing trees and hedgerows do not always mix with people and buildings.



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15. The reality is that trees and hedgerows can pose a number of problems to existing buildings as well as constraining future developments.

In addition to frustrating big housing and commercial developments by speculative developers, these can include:

- i. Trees can compromise public safety, especially if they become unsafe as a consequence of age or disease;
 - ii. Tree roots can undermine house foundations, sewers and water mains;
 - iii. Growing trees can overhang and shade neighbouring properties and compromise the efficiency of solar panels;
 - iv. Trees and hedgerows can constrain the extent to which “domestic developers” can “develop” their own property, i.e. build houses or extensions in their back gardens;
 - v. Not all trees - especially non-native trees - are compatible with houses or urban landscapes.
 - vi. Growing hedgerows, especially those that demark property boundaries, can become invasive (especially if they encroach on people’s back gardens).
16. Furthermore mature trees and hedgerows need to be managed and maintained. This is very important if Buckingham’s distinctive treescape is to survive. Many mature trees are probably over 100-years old and some of these may be near to the end of their lives. Some hedgerows may be even older.
17. Diseased and dangerous trees need to be treated or cut down if there is no chance of recovery and replaced by new plantings. Self-seeded trees may also have to be cleared to prevent future problems.
18. Trees damaged by adverse weather conditions, as exemplified by February’s gales, which caused extensive damage to many trees, not least the big cedar in the grounds of Manor House, Church Street, may also have to be dealt with for safety reasons.
19. In theory trees, hedgerows and public spaces are protected by the planning system. Some tree work, including felling, requires a grant of permission from the appropriate authority, i.e. if the trunk or wood volume is more than a certain size. Similarly any development on open space, designated or undesignated, must receive planning permission.
20. Outstanding trees can receive additional protection through a Tree Preservation Order (TPO). Hedgerows can receive similar treatment as can trees and hedgerows in a Conservation Area, such as the trees within the Old Churchyard.
21. Unfortunately, and as recent events have shown, it is all too easy for the planning system to be ignored with the result that trees are routinely felled by speculative and domestic developers or have limbs removed. Similarly hedgerows can be grubbed-up.
22. There is often little that can be done to prevent open space being turned into de facto carparks as is sometimes the case on some of Buckingham’s housing estates. Although it is much more difficult to develop open space this is not unknown, especially when its ownership is in doubt.



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Indeed open space whose ownership is unknown can pose particular problems, especially when it comes to ensuring that it does not revert to scrub through general neglect.

23. The reality is that for a variety of reasons the planning system cannot always be implemented and enforced. Resources are always scarce within local authorities and AVDC's planning department, and especially its enforcement division, is no exception in this respect.
24. Furthermore the planning system can do relatively little to "enhance" the treescape or hedgerows, other than making new or replacement planting a condition to securing planning permission or extracting additional resources through Section 106 payments and agreements.
25. Similarly, although the planning authority can insist on "new" open spaces being part of a new development as a condition of the grant of planning permission it can do little to "enhance" existing open spaces even when its ownership is known. The onus is left entirely to the owners.
26. The situation is not one of completely unmitigated gloom, however, as far as the activities of developers are concerned, especially when it comes to trees, hedgerows and open spaces.
27. Some developments effectively open up land that was previously inaccessible to the general public or have enhanced areas that were, to all intents and purposes, derelict or waste land.
28. This is especially the case as far as the University is concerned. Not only has the University enhanced much of central Buckingham - and especially areas adjacent to the River Great Ouse. Hitherto, it has turned out to be an exemplary custodian of the land it has acquired as well as allowing the public to access it.
29. The development between Gawcott Road, Tingewick Road, the A421 and the Old Railway could also provide benefits especially in relation to a putative giant linear park, although it will put some elements of the treescape, not to mention ancient hedgerows and the habitats contained therein under severe pressure.

C. PUBLIC CONSULTATION AND FEEDBACK

30. To help guide its thinking as well as attempting to raise awareness of the challenges faced we consulted the public through a questionnaire accessible via Buckingham Town Council and social media (see Appendix B) as well as staffing a stall on Buckingham Market on the morning of 11 February.
31. Appendix C summarises the responses. This shows, without exception, that the public is very appreciative of Buckingham's trees, hedgerows and open spaces, the flora and fauna these support, and the impact they have on helping to make the town a better place in which to live, work and study.
32. Respondents also identified the importance of linking Buckingham's growing network of public spaces by pathways and tracks.



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33. The public is also well aware of the damage inflicted by developers in recent months. Many respondents noted the ravages inflicted on the hedgerows to the west of Moreton Road, the hedgerow that helped define the river boundary of the Clarence Park development, the loss of trees and hedgerows on the site opposite the old police station on Moreton Road, and the trees and hedgerows associated with The Sidings development.
34. Moreover, the questionnaire responses show that the public is very keen that something should be done to prevent future losses as and when subsequent development occurs. Survey respondents identified, inter alia, more rigorous enforcement procedures; the prosecution and fining of negligent or wayward developers for damage inflicted on trees and hedgerows; the use of Assets of Community Value designations to provide additional protection for sensitive open spaces; more use of native tree species; better monitoring systems to alert the relevant authorities of planning system transgressions concerning trees and hedgerows; and a general increase in the public's awareness of the qualities of Buckingham's trees, hedgerows and open spaces.
35. These responses have been incorporated in the list of possible palliatives and solutions that follow in the next section.

D. SOLUTIONS

36. The palliatives and solutions that we have come up with to help preserve and enhance Buckingham's trees, hedgerows and open spaces fall into two categories: medium and long-term and shorter term.
37. Because of their scope, which is more wide ranging, the former, i.e. medium and long-term palliatives will almost certainly involve other organisations and local government agencies in addition to BTC. They will also be much more costly to implement both in terms of personnel and other resources. As a consequence we have focused our attention on shorter term measures which can be introduced more quickly and cheaply by BTC in association with other organisations within the town.

a. Medium and Long Term.

- i. A long term arboreal, hedgerow and open space management plan for the town will be based on parameters established as part of a Vision and Design Statement that is supposed to be produced under the auspices of the Buckingham Development Plan.

Ideally this should be based on a vision of Buckingham's future treescape, open spaces (including linear parks linking both housing developments and more substantial open spaces) including details of preferred trees and shrubs etc. etc. as well outlining what type of "open space" we really want.

- ii. A management plan for the town identifying:
- all open spaces, trees, and the ownership thereof;
 - planned "new" open-space, tree and hedgerow developments, i.e. new open spaces/linear parks, the ownership thereof etc.;



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- maintenance priorities;
- routine maintenance plans etc., etc.
- the time frame and phasing of any policies contained within the plan;
- the resources available along with any shortfalls to implement the plan.

This will involve consultations with a wide range of stake holding organisations within Buckingham as well as other elements of local government.

Two potential problems here are that the current system of local government may change in the near future with Buckingham forming part of a unitary authority, and that some areas of Buckingham sit outside the control of the public and Local Authorities (i.e. housing associations and managed estates).

b. Short Term.

- i. *More tree wardens and information for members of the public to help enforce and implement the planning system, especially as far preventing tree felling or hedgerow grubbing by developers is concerned.*

BTC, or the BTC's Environment Committee should, as a matter of urgency, produce materials outlining the nature of a tree warden's responsibilities along with useful contact numbers to enable the relevant authorities to be alerted quickly in the event of unauthorised work on trees, hedgerows etc.

Although BTC has recruited more tree wardens (and probably many more people who would be willing to act as tree wardens) the current lack of relevant materials may result in interest evaporating.

- ii. *Inculcating a sense of community pride in Buckingham's treescape and outstanding examples of particular trees along with our open spaces.* The reality is that many residents are probably unaware of just how good some of our trees and open spaces are.

(Outstanding trees could be included in the updated "Town Trail" leaflets produced by The Buckingham Society. One problem here is that some trees are on private property).

- iii. *Encouraging neighbouring residents or local organisations to "take ownership" of the maintenance of trees/hedgerows or open spaces following the examples set by Railway Walk Conservation Group, Maids Moreton Avenue Conservation Group; Friends of The Old Churchyard etc.*
- iv. *Enlisting the help of schools and other organisations to create more interest in our trees, hedgerows and open spaces as valuable habitats that may be "adopted".*
- v. *Organising something similar to the annual "River Rinse" or "Spring Clean" events to help clear and tidy open spaces, hedgerows etc., especially those bordering the by-pass.*
- vi. *Making property owners aware of their [legal] responsibilities under the planning system, especially if they have trees in the curtilage of their property along with the help available to*



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assist with tree maintenance and planting from local authorities and other bodies. BTC to consider providing a free tree advice service, if this were feasible.

- vii. *Extending and completing the existing network of footpaths and embryonic linear parks in conjunction with both local authorities and community groups to help create a giant linear park embracing the whole of Buckingham.*
- viii. *Making use of Assets of Community Value designations to provide additional protection to open spaces where ownership may be unclear.*
- ix. *Paying much greater attention to boundaries when examining planning applications, especially if the boundaries contain trees and hedgerows and making sure that these are protected as far as possible.*

CONCLUSION

This report has been produced, following consultation with members of the public, representatives from conservation groups, and organisations who have an interest in, or responsibility for, protecting, promoting and enhancing trees, hedgerows, green and open spaces in Buckingham.

The response to this consultation shows that the public is appreciative of Buckingham's trees, hedgerows and open spaces and the impact they have on helping to make the town a better place in which to live, work and study; but is also aware of the damage inflicted to trees and hedgerows in the town. A pleasing number of responses indicated a willingness to either join or set up conservation groups (12) or become a tree warden (14) and this demonstrates a keenness to be involved in preventing future losses.

This report seeks to summarise those views and opinions, and set out potential, achievable solutions for consideration by the Buckingham Town Council Environment Committee. It is hoped that the information included here will be able to influence future planning and council decisions.



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APPENDIX A: Linear Parks

There is no dictionary definition of a linear park, but the concept has a long established tradition in urban and regional planning.

At its most basic, a linear park is nothing more than an urban or suburban park or open space that is longer than it is wide. It may be little more than a former railway line or track to link larger open spaces together.

Indeed the provision of links between larger parks and open spaces underpinned the creation of the 'Emerald Necklace' a chain of parks linked by pathways designed by Frederick Olmstead, the great American landscape designer in the 1880s that connects Boston Common and Public Garden to Franklin Park.

Nearer home, Milton Keynes has made extensive use of the linear park concept with nine different examples that include the floodplains of the River Great Ouse and its tributaries.

Floodplains along with disused railway lines are used extensively to provide linear parks. And this is why it makes sense to incorporate the concept into a landscape plan for Buckingham as we have both a river floodplain and a disused railway line.

Linear parks can also provide "green highways" for wildlife.

Other UK examples of linear parks include the Lee Valley Park, a 10,000 acre 26 mile long linear park that runs along the floodplain of the River Lee from Ware, Hertfordshire to its confluence with the River Thames in east London and the Brampton Valley Way which follows the bed of the former Northampton to Market Harborough railway line.



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APPENDIX B: Trees, Hedgerows and Green Spaces in Buckingham Survey

Many people have been concerned about the loss of trees and hedgerows in Buckingham, due largely to the ever-increasing new housing developments. The Town Council therefore decided to set up an Action Commission: a group of people, to find a way to reduce the risk of further loss of such beautiful resources, which enhance our lives so much.

We had an initial meeting, which involved people from the various conservation groups, such as those working in the Railway Walk and in Maids Moreton Avenue. From that meeting a smaller steering group was established, which will report to the Environment Committee in April. We would really value the input of people who share our concerns.

Thank you for participating in our survey. Your feedback is important.

1. Please provide your postcode	
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2. What trees, hedgerows or green and open spaces in Buckingham do you value, and why?	
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3. How important is it to you that parks and green spaces in Buckingham are linked by pathways – making the town more accessible by foot?	
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4. Which of these aspects do you value in Buckingham? <i>Please rank in order of importance with 1 being the most valuable, and 7 being the least.</i>		Allotments
		Green and Open Spaces (e.g. Meadows & Play Areas)
		Native hedgerows
		Individual trees / hedges / features of interest
		Sports Pitches
		Walks / Footpaths
		Woodland / Woodland Flowers

5. Are there any green amenities in Buckingham that have been lost recently, that you particularly cared about?	
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<p>6. If you were moving, what outdoor features would you most value about where you move to?</p> <p><i>Please rank in order of importance with 1 being the most valuable, and 7 being the least.</i></p>		Grassed verges / lawns
		Green and open spaces
		Patio / Low maintenance garden (minimal trees / foliage)
		Play areas
		Sports pitches
		Trees
		Walks / footpaths

<p>7. There are existing planning rules and legislation such as Tree Protection Orders, but how else do you think trees, hedgerows and green spaces could be enhanced and protected?</p>	
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<p>8. In respect of the layout and provision of trees, hedgerows and green spaces, which of the following local estates do you find most visually attractive?</p> <p><i>Please rank in order, with 1 being the most attractive and 8 the least:</i></p>		Badgers
		Lace Hill
		Linden Village
		Mount Pleasant
		Page Hill
		Town Centre
		Treefields
		Western Avenue

<p>9. Would you be willing to join, or set up, a conservation group?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes, I would be willing to join now • I am interested in finding out more information • I am interested, but am not able to commit time at present • No, I am not interested <p><i>If yes, please specify which group / geographical areas / features you would like to help conserve and provide your name and contact details.</i></p>	
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<p>10. Would you like to find out more about becoming a tree warden?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes • No <p><i>If yes, please state which area of Buckingham you could volunteer in and provide your name and contact details</i></p>	
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APPENDIX C: Survey Outputs

Q2: *What trees, hedgerows and green spaces in Buckingham do you value and why?*

Churchyard and trees/green space around St Peter & St Paul because of history, sense of place and views over the town. Stowe avenue for trees, views and walks. Maids Moreton avenue for woodland walk. Riverside for all above reasons. SO important to provide green space for connectivity. So would say almost every tree, hedgerow, etc. within the parish!
Maids Moreton Avenue, important because it is a beautiful mature tree lined pathway. Holloway Spinney, mature trees a good place for bird and bats, also a play area. Bourton Park a mix of parkland including mature trees, play areas and riverside walks, will be enhanced by the return of a wildflower meadow. Chandos Park, parkland for families with all important mature trees. Railway Walk, a designated wildlife area, should continue to be managed with this in mind. The meadow next to St Rumbold's Well due to be left as a green space next to a new housing estate. One of the remaining true meadows in the area, hopefully to be left uncut to retain the species of butterflies, flowers and grasshoppers.
All but particularly woodland areas and large trees
Bourton Park & Railway Walk/Scenic Walk - natural and unspoilt
The parks, Railway Walk, the trees and shrubs between Maids Moreton and Stafford Road, all of them really.
All of them, for various reasons. I enjoy walking my dog in the park and wider countryside. I also love to see birds, bats and other wildlife using hedgerows, woodland and green spaces in the area.
The ancient hedgerows along Moreton Road, A413, but a long stretch of them have been ripped up and decimated. When I drew attention to this initially I was told by the council that they would be replaced. This shows total lack of understanding, you cannot replace hedgerows which have established over hundreds of years.
All publicly owned green spaces - these provide a welcome break in amongst all of the housing
The green spaces on estates like Badgers and Linden. Conker tree in Chandos park and weeping willow in skate park play area and two trees in church carpark.
Bourton Park and Chandos Park are invaluable. Well located for the majority of residents and well managed for wildlife and fauna.
all of them but particularly the avenue along page hill avenue and MM. the spinney and amenity space at the back of Page Hill and the green space in the centre of the town over the river from waitress car park in particular.
Fields, hedgerows, open parks, the daffodil field nearby. These are good for mental health and quality of life
All the parks because they are great spaces to be in.
All of them, but the planning around the bypass especially near Linden Village, the autumn colours and spring flowers lift the heart as you drive past
All of them. I moved here from London for the countryside, the life style, free flowing traffic and quality of life. So much green space has been built on since we moved.
All of them. We need green spaces for wildlife and our own wellbeing!
All, they provide home for wildlife and help to purify the air from all the car pollution from the main roads around us
All of them, from the aspect that wildlife value them more and its destroying their natural habitat without which their population will be decimated. Green and open spaces also provide places for children to play and adults to enjoy, for all to partake in valuable exercise and alleviate mental health issues (recent research has evidenced these benefits).
All. It's proven to combat traffic pollution effects. New spaces should have oxygen provision at the top of the agenda.



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any green space, trees and hedge is important. It enhances our town and wellbeing as a community.
Bertie's Walk for the wildlife and its natural (but tended) flora and fauna Hedgerows along the bypass for their colour in spring and summer. And do they halt noise pollution to the housing estates? The horse chestnut trees in Chandos park and Stowe avenue for their colours! And for the colour in autumn. The old railway line. I realise some of these have gone with the new development but we call it the "yellow brick road" from about 30 years ago when the path was actually yellow and clean. It's a sanctuary. The two church yards. Interesting trees, lovely in the summer (aromatic flowers, grass cutting) and for the trees in the autumn.
All of them.
All trees and hedgerows but especially Bourton Park, a lovely peaceful walk into town or out with my dogs. Bertie's walk, Chandos Park. I could go on and on.
Chandon park alongside the river and also along the railway walk.....so peaceful
Railway walk- is not only beautiful but has lots of history. Chandos- lively river and clear green space with lovely clean air and lots of good memories. Bourton park lovely walk and family area- lots of wildlife. Maids Moreton fields and paths
Riverside walk, railway walk, parks and other open spaces
Walks around Buckingham and Bourton Park
small wood by library, open space over river by circular walk
The Green Heart of Buckingham, the Railway Walk and the section of Buckingham Canal are much valued by residents as the town has a rural feel.
Enjoy the local parks, woodlands and pathways throughout Buckingham
Bourton park riverside, cornwalls meadow, Verney park, maids moreton avenue, Chandos park with it's fine liquidambar and Tulip trees and fine golden weeping willow, Brookfield lodge and Chandos Rd fine veteran trees
All hedge rows and trees, especially the green open spaces on Linden Village, now being used as a car park
I don't have one I like over the other I like all of them for all kinds of reasons.
All of them, because everywhere is being built on and wildlife habitats are being destroyed
Stratford field, bourton park, heartlands, made up footpaths, various habitats, river, spinneys, grass land, mature trees, shrubs and young trees. Good play equipment, keep fit circuit seats and benches and ball court. All ages catered for.
When tidy they present a pleasant outlook but more importantly good for wildlife
The route along the park area / bourton road
MM avenue. Riverside by library. Walk from woolpack to weir past university
Bourton Park, Maids Moreton, Good for dog walking
All of it
All, they help to make it what it is
All
All the ones that are left
Them all, but we keep losing them to housing and about to lose more protected trees, wild space on Chandos Road. Lost Whitebeams behind Station Row, just criminal. Bourbon heart land is good but over managed, more wild preferred. Railway Walk with Bertie's Walk a favourite too, but extent to riverside walk. Chandos Park would be good to see some of the grass area, fringes to left uncut and wild flowers added.



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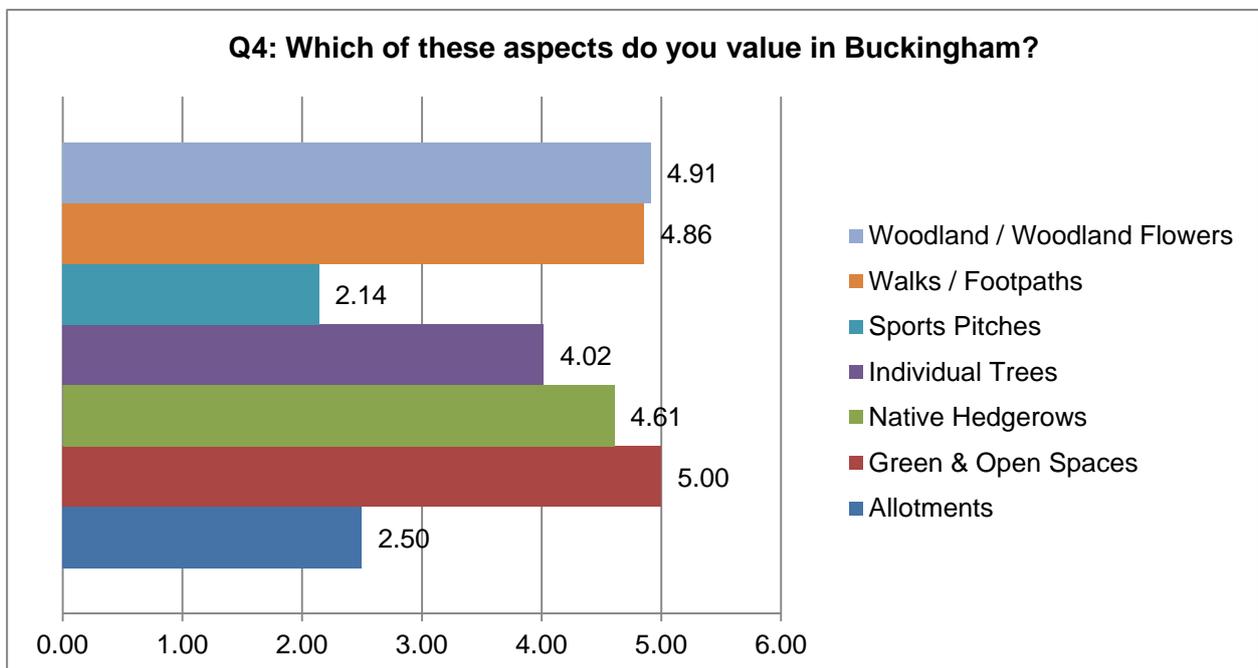
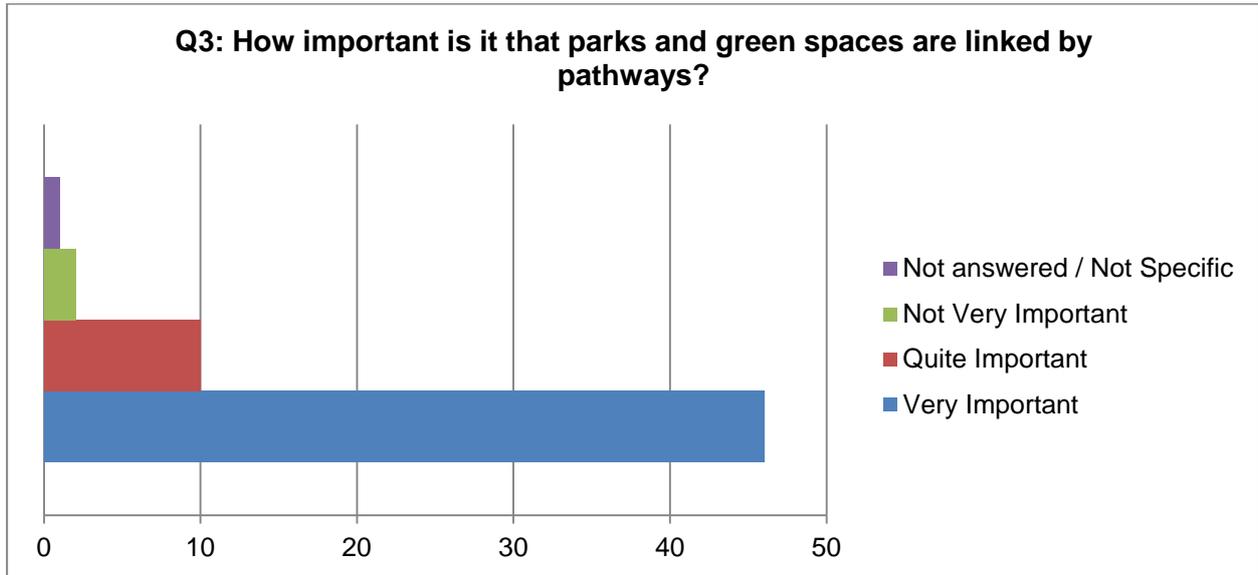
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<p>Maids Moreton Avenue: this is my main walking route into the town, great to be able to avoid the traffic and to enjoy the trees and hear the birds.</p> <p>Heartlands and Bourton Park. An enjoyable place to walk by the river.</p> <p>Holloway Spinney. Again for walks.</p>
<p>All of the above. They break up what can seem a hard urban environment, improve air quality and provide diverse habitats for our birds and wild friends. If you want to see a stark message of how important they are, pop along to Tingewick, where, on entry, there's a new settlement being built to its left. I think it's called Tingewick Park. It's built on a hillside so there are brick houses and many brick retaining walls. No trees or shrubs in sight... Yet. It's ghastly. Time and vegetation will soften it. But, unless we care for hedges, and create new ones, our lives will be denuded. I see housing estates without flora as similar to living in a Nudist Colony : houses need green clothes just as much as people need variegated ones!</p>
<p>All of them. The parks for leisure/wildlife. Outside my house. Also roads for aesthetics and noise reduction.</p>
<p>The woodland either side of Page Hill. The railway walk. The canal. Bourton and Chandos parks. They are pleasant peaceful areas, with lots of wildlife. They are all in walking distance of my house.</p>
<p>We need to keep as much of the above as possible to protect the environment, stop erosion from flooding which trees in particular help prevent and stop turning Buckingham into more of a concrete jungle than it has become with badly planned, badly constructed housing estates.</p>
<p>All the parks and walks since they are very relaxing to be around/walk through</p>
<p>The "spinney" the area you walk through from the footbridge by the skatepark through to Waitrose car park and the trees all along the river.</p>
<p>Bourton Park is a massive asset to buckingham as it provides safe pedestrian access to town as well as allowing nature to thrive and providing areas for dog walking and family interaction outside in nature. I also value the green spaces found along badgers way in and around the estate. My children are able to go out and play with their friends and explore without being confined to either a garden or just a path. These areas also allow for wildlife such as hedgehogs to survive. Learning to ride a bike, explore rivers and streams, socialise in safety and walk amongst nature are all vital to personal wellbeing and we are fortunate enough to have access to all of that in buckingham.</p>
<p>All of the parks are a need in the modern concrete riddled world. I like the river and the trees.</p>
<p>I especially value the old hedgerows around the top of page hill and the spinney and drovers route</p>
<p>All of our parks, open spaces and existing hedgerows. We live in a beautiful town that is enriched by these places. We are also lucky to have an abundance of wildlife which needs to be protected.</p>
<p>Really do appreciate Bourton Road allotments. I have a plot there and it is a beautiful open space near the centre of town where local people can enjoy growing their own fruit, vegetables and flowers. Such a valuable resource for wildlife, too, as many allotmenters grow organically.</p>
<p>Heartland</p>
<p>All but particularly the wildlife conservation areas</p>
<p>Bourton Park. Trees along the ring road</p>



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Q5: Are there any green amenities in Buckingham that have been lost recently, that you particularly cared about?

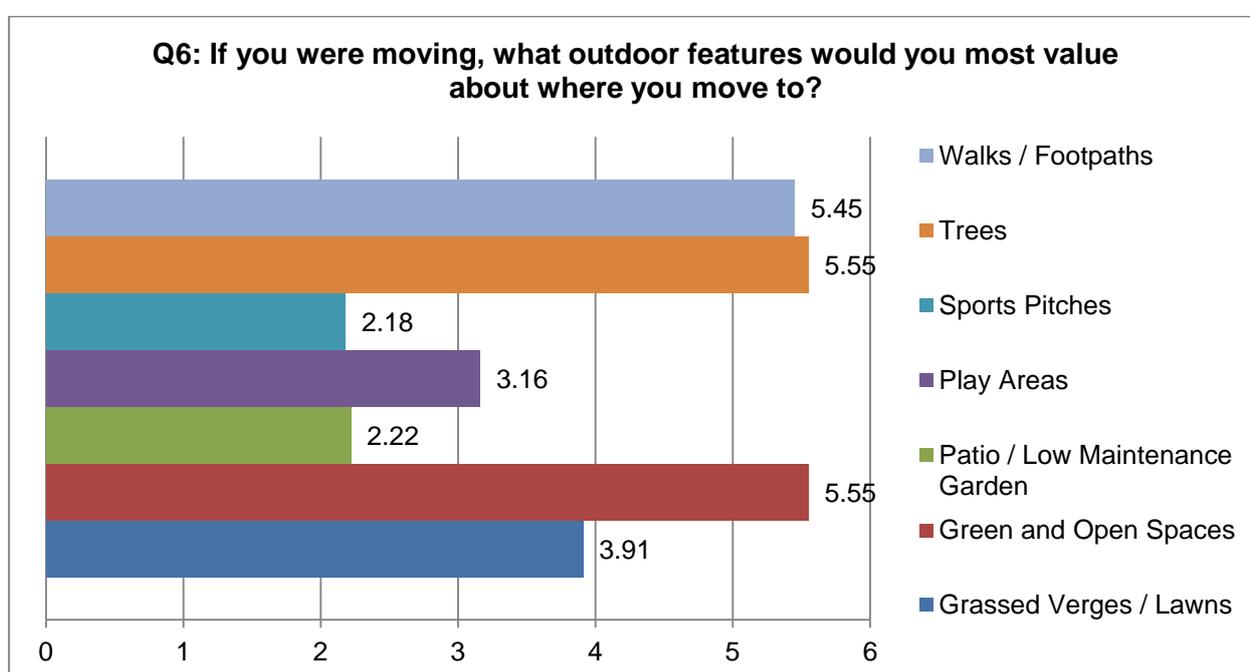
Yes. Bridge connecting Fishers Field walk with town. Tree at foot of Chandos Road. Spinney behind Station Terrace and deeply regret loss of top bit of Maids Moreton Avenue that the school has requisitioned from the town's historic route to Maids Moreton. Potential loss of green riverside habitat south of Grand Junction.
Woodland behind Station Terrace because it encroached into a designated wildlife area and in all probability more trees were removed than absolutely necessary.
Clarence Park, area next to Uni car park, area opposite Police Station
Some riverside "natural" areas
Hedgerows along the track beside the rugby club. They were important foraging habitat for bats and birds.
The fields and hedgerows alongside Moreton Road were a haven for wildlife, somewhere for sheep to graze, a place for quiet walks and to experience wide open skies, beautiful sunsets all within walking distance of the town centre
The trees around the back of Clarence Park
New developments in Lace Hill, Maids Moreton and by river in town have been so densely developed that there is no green space or any soft landscaping. This is not the developers, but national planning policy requiring such density. We are at risk of creating a generation of couch potatoes and agoraphobics.
New to buckingham so not sure. The area in maids moreton
Around the bypass at the top/back of Badgers/Bourton Park and the opposite side of the road
Lace hill farmland
I care about all of the green amenities in Buckingham.
Loss of trees around lace hill
The riverside walks, particularly the trees that have been felled (under dubious means) which will increase flooding and also provide invaluable natural habitats for wildlife.
Anytime development occurs without provisions to replace or increase the greenery.
All the trees lost as part of the pointless work on a421.
Hedgrow/ trees near rugby club
Railway path and general walks are littered often
Closing of footpath (Brentwood Jubilee way) between London Road and Bletchley Road
Clarence park Development
The green belt between Buckingham and Maids Moreton.
Tingewick road riverside
All the trees that were needlessly cut down to make way for the new roundabout on a A423 by Tescoes.
moreton road
The wooded area behind Castle House could be reached at side of CAB. There were masses of crocus and good blackberries and bird nesting sites. Encroachment in moreton Avenue by properties backing onto the avenue.
Tingewick road (moreton road development was not too bad!)
Yes, trees chopped down on the Tingewick Road new estate and trees in peoples gardens.
Land at police station hill



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Moreton Road developments
Trees at the rear of Station Terrace
Area by river on Clarence Park development
Yes , the fields under Lace Hill, the land off Moreton Rd, Evan the scrub land "behind Woolies".
Footpaths on Moreton Road development and now have to walk through a housing estate, same with Lace Hill
The countryside lost to all the recent housing estates around Maids Moreton and Tescos.
The loss of land outside Tingewick to housing developments has been upsetting as that space was somewhere we walked our dogs and sledged in the snow. The lace hill development onto the fields opposite badgers and tesco is a shame as it makes our town less in the countryside and we have lost some habitats for animals who were already struggling. The estate on the Tingewick road near Westfields is another example of the overcrowding issue we are getting. Traffic in general is increasing and the roads can't cope which in turn means out green spaces are demolished to make the roads wider. Case in point the buckingham bypass has been widened and significantly reduced the land either side of the road. This was established hedgerow and shrubs but now its turfed and alien to its previous natural enhabitence.
The local tip is now a joke and we've stopped taking tree and hedge waste there anymore. We now have to burn it all.
The hedgerow along the boundary with the rugby club - they took away a huge width of hedge to make more car parking spaces - this was not the fault of the developers of the estate next door who have left green space between the houses and the boundary . The replacement hedge is very thin and narrow with now opportunity to flourish due to the hard standing which has been put down right next to the roots
The beautiful open fields on the left of the Moreton Road when driving out of Buckingham and the beautiful mature trees adjacent to the river that have been removed to make way for the monstrosity that is Clarence Park.
River banks looking neglected with less plant diversity as they have become overgrown
Railway station, Chandos / Station Road
Woodlands and valuable trees





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Q7: There are existing planning rules and legislation, such as Tree Protection orders, but how else do you think trees, hedgerows and green spaces could be enhanced?

Assets of Community Value (a Civic Voice initiative)
Increased public awareness of their importance for wildlife, such as features in local magazines, social media and events.
Protection of areas in local plan, and having residents as eyes and ears of their local area.
Management plans, more planting of local species
Educating people on their importance, not just for wildlife at a small scale but as connectors for wider habitats, which are important for pollinators and subsequently us and our ability to produce food. People need to know how much they benefit personally from protecting green spaces, otherwise they are much less likely to care. Developers should also be under much more pressure to create and enhance green spaces in their designs.
Regulate the cutting in the spring, the machinery used violently massacres the trees and hedges. It would appear no thought to the wellbeing of these sites is considered. The destructive nature of the cutting is distressing to the plants, wildlife and anyone who cares.
Proper maintenance of existing trees and the planting of new ones.
Green spaces should be adopted by local authority and maintained by them. Local community groups/community service would help maintain.
Make developers protect them as part of planning permission
Don't build over open spaces in residential areas, encourage headgrows
Don't arbitrarily cut them down before any future expansion, wait to see what is necessary. Also employ contactors who understands when plants and trees flower, and don't prune them just as they are coming into bud or flowering!
Ensure trees and hedgerows are not grubbed out when planning is granted.
Everyone involved in planning/building/ and the council should be protecting them as a matter of course.
They end up coming down because of housing developments and infrastructure developments so maybe some kind of ruling on preservations/conservations in the same way that historic/beautiful houses do. (E.g. Permission is needed to put solar panels/changes to the exterior of certain houses in conservation area or listed buildings). How about "listing" certain areas of natural beauty or wildlife conservation. Are there already rules about that?
Enhanced by planting and maintaining more of these ongoing
If there is a pressing need for any natural habitats to be removed (after the relevant wildlife surveys are carried out) they should be replaced in an area that will benefit people and wildlife to best effect. As a member of various environmental groups these matters are of great concern to me, in particular the decrease of wildlife. For example, my garden is usually full of bats flying in the evening, this year I only saw 2. I have not seen any hedgehogs this year and am sure other species are likewise diminishing.
Trimming hedges at correct times. Relaying council owned hedges. Legislation specifically to new developments- an impact assessment scheme to identify and replace/enhance existing greenery in quantifiable gas output.
Stop building housing on green field site. Stop widening roads.
Making it more a public decision when such things are to be removed/altered
people power like in sheffield
Labels and diagrams of wildlife, to raise awareness and get people interested and educated, features and sculptures
Regular planned maintenance
Have a required proportion of green space to built up space
Regular checks upkeep and management.
Green spaces for all dogs on leads.
Wild areas for exploring and dogs run free.
Raising awareness of specimen trees in parks and estates



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Better maintenance.
Local people getting together to clear litter, keep the areas around our greenery clear and not overgrown
it is possible to in some cases leave the hedgerows incorporated into the gardens of new builds and prevent them being uprooted in the planning unless a safety problem. Putting in fruiting trees or community run garden/vegetable gardens to engage folk
Set up a "reporting system" so that local people can monitor these aspects of our community. Reports need to be followed up by local authorities to ensure protection of these areas.
I don't know as it seems some companies ignore the restrictions, preferring to pay the fines.
Prosecute builders who do not take notice rules
Fines for failing to adhere to planning restrictions should be rigorously upheld and should be greater.
Have more importance in any planning process give them the same protection as listed buildings are covered by and better education of their value
By someone taking responsibility for the trees that over the years have got very big on several estates in the area, developer have gone so no one to look after them.
By imposing fines if anybody is caught vandalising, trees and throwing their rubbish around
The could be a map of trees with TPOS if interested people had a 'patch' to oversee and keep an eye out for litter, damage etc and there was a hub to report problems. Vehicles should keep to roads and not cross double yellow lines and damage verges as at No 13 Grand Junction.
Perhaps something equivalent to neighbourhood watch
Consult the 'man in charge of trees' in Milton Keynes
All trees should stay protected
Proper maintenance e.g.hedge laying
Allow areas to left more wild were its suitable. Tree protection orders are consistently being ignored, maybe I don't fully understand to process? What can you do to increase their protection?
Fence off important trees and hedgerows while the area is being developed. Greater penalties for breaches.
T.L.C. From bands of community green warriors. Adopt a space! I have a litter-picker, and wish that others "Take Up Arms".
Educating the children, getting schools involved in the conservation to help teach respect for the environment.
I would say make it illegal to build on any area of green-space. The legislation supposedly protecting these areas is complex and open to abuse by dodgy housing companies.
Regular maintenance to ensure they are free of litter, clearly marked public footpaths and bridle ways around the edges of fields and meadows. Stricter planning regulations for building on green space which is not agricultural land. More tree protection orders in built up areas to save what few trees there are left there.
Stop building houses on them!
Any change to hedgerows should require permission
By stricter regulation of building contractors to ensure they don't demolish previous trees. By preventing townscape developments like Lace Hill where there don't appear to be any green spaces or kerbside verges, just roads and pavements.
By writing in strong clauses and responsibilities to developers who would have to enhance / improve with a fine / retention if they do not
Removing ivy that is smothering so many of our trees. While it is a valuable habitat for wildlife it is gradually destroying wooded areas as weight of ivy growth can weaken trees so they are vulnerable to strong winds or flooding.
Issuing a specification for the tree wardens so they can start taking action
By local people being eyes and ears. Watching our trees and protecting parks (e.g. wardens)
Better finance for protection / maintenance levy on developers
Maintenance. Creation and maintenance of 'screen highways' for wildlife



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