

EVENTS DIARY

2013



Buckingham TownMatters

Spring 2013

APRIL

Thu 11th Family Fun Day
Sun 21st North Bucks Spring Fair

MAY

Wed 1st May Day
Sun 26th Spring Music Festival

JUNE

Sat 15th – Sat 23rd Buckingham Fringe Week;
Summer Events Week

AUGUST

Thu 1st Family Fun Day
Thu 22nd Family Fun Day
Sun 25th BandJam
Wed 28th Family Fun Day

SEPTEMBER

Sun 15th River Rinse 1

OCTOBER

Sun 6th River Rinse 2
Sat 12th Charter Fair
Sat 19th Charter Fair

NOVEMBER

Sat 2nd Bonfire & Fireworks
Buckingham Acoustic
in the Market
Sun 10th Remembrance Day Parade
Sat 30th Christmas Lights & Carols
Continental Market
Sat 14th Community Fair
Christmas Parade

Please find further details inside or online:
www.buckingham-tc.gov.uk/events/events.html



**in this
issue**

**flood action
for Buckingham**

events

**new bus route
for the villages**

**the changing
face of
Buckingham**

**help tackling
fuel poverty**

Thoroughly MODERN
Traditional
BUCKINGHAM



Photo: www.freeimages.co.uk

A Message from Mayor Ruth

and protect our lovely green spaces. Watch these pages and local newspapers for more ways you can be involved and offer your views in coming weeks.

Don't forget the Town Council's **comedy nights** on Sunday evenings in the Old Town Hall at Villiers Hotel every quarter. The last one in January was enjoyed by all. Another MK Dons Buckingham Big Day match is planned against Preston North End on Saturday 2nd March. This is now an annual feature of the MK18 calendar with big savings for you on ticket prices. Make a note for next year! These events are in addition to the usual range of musical and other entertainments regularly organised by your Town Council – a full list of events appears on the back page of this edition of Buckingham Town Matters.

In 2013 why not save on travelling costs and time by supporting our shops, markets, cafes, pubs, restaurants and businesses to keep Buckingham the thriving market town we all want to be able to enjoy.

I had a sad Christmas following the death of my mother **Mrs W Newell** (known by many local families as a Chemistry and Games teacher at the Royal Latin School) on 8th December, only 11 weeks after my father's death. However I do hope that you had a peaceful Christmas, and wish everyone living and working in Buckingham a very happy, healthy and contented 2013.

Ruth Newell

January 2013



Bringing the villages to town

We are delighted to announce that everyone living in the outlying villages around Buckingham can now access our shops and other facilities on Saturdays.

The 135 bus service comprises five routes covering **(a) Hogshaw, The Claydons and Padbury; (b) Water Stratford, Barton Hartshorn, Chetwode and Preston Bissett; (c) Thornton, Beachampton, Nash, Whaddon and Thornborough; (d) Calvert Green, Charndon, Marsh Gibbon, Poundon, Twyford and Hillesden; and (e) Shalstone, Biddlesden, Dadford, Chackmore, Leckhampstead, The Lillingstones and Akeley.**

If you have friends and family living in these villages please let them know. These are circular routes giving users a couple of hours in which to do their shopping and have a coffee before returning home. Timetables are available from the Visitor Information Centre in the Old Gaol, or the Library. Fares are payable but bus passes will be honoured.

This service was “championed” by local representatives and the County Council Localities Manager, who secured a Local Area Forum (LAF) subsidy for the service in its first year. The LAF is a County Council grouping of town/parish councils, plus other agencies and organisations active in the wider Buckingham area. If the service is well received, it could be continued in further years providing that any running-cost shortfall can be met by further subsidies, possibly made up of contributions from the town and parish councils receiving the service, and Buckingham traders.

This is a long-awaited addition to the economic infrastructure of North Bucks, providing what is seen to be an essential step in the removal of disadvantage to those who might otherwise be isolated – there are many who cannot easily get to the shops without relying on friends and neighbours, or paying expensive taxi fares.



It was lovely to see the new additional Christmas lights, and such a good turn-out for the **Christmas Parade** followed by the **Charities Fair** in the community centre last December. Thank you to all those involved in the organisation of events in the Town, our Council Officers, and especially the volunteer Councillors and townspeople. We are very lucky to have so many people who volunteer for the benefit of others in the community and I want to thank each and every one for volunteering in whatever way they have during 2012, from helping others to nature conservation work and everything in between, and send you all best wishes for that continuing in 2013.

I hope that many of you will have taken the opportunity to have your say in our **neighbourhood development plan** in terms of what you want to see Buckingham's development of housing, retail and industry, so that our plan reflects what we want for the Town



Christmas Parade

The 28th annual Christmas parade was held on Saturday 15th December. The theme was '**Christmas Around the Commonwealth**'. The weather was sunny but cold and as in previous years a large crowd lined the street to watch the floats, walkers and marching bands go by. The parade assembles in Chandos Road and parades down to the old Cattle Pens and then back to Chandos Road.

Buckingham Town Council would like to thank the organisers and members of the public that gave up their Saturday morning and acted as marshals. We would also like to thank the residents

of Addington Road who once again helped by removing their vehicles from their street, to allow the easy flow of traffic up and down Addington Road whilst the parade was on.

After the Christmas parade was over, people were able to go into the Community Centre to the annual **Community Fair**. Stall holders are made up of charities, local groups and societies, such as **Cancer Research, Guides, Brain Tumour Research** and **Buckingham Canal Society**. Mulled wine was provided by the **Wine Circle** and mince pies by the **CAB**.

UP & COMING EVENTS 2013

Wed 1st May Traditional **May Day celebrations** to be held on the green outside St Peter & St Paul Church, Buckingham.

Sun 26th May Annual **Music In The Market** event, Bull Ring, Buckingham. An afternoon of music provided by the Buckingham Acoustic Club.

June 15th-22nd **Buckingham Fringe Week**. A week of entertainment for everyone of any age to enjoy. Confirmed will be a Comedy Night – come along and enjoy new comedians and a hilarious compere, definitely worth a watch and spend your evening laughing. Also this year there will be a Children's event – bring your family along for a relaxing day full of fun & enjoyment.

More information on this year's events will be available nearer the time.

Comedy Night Review

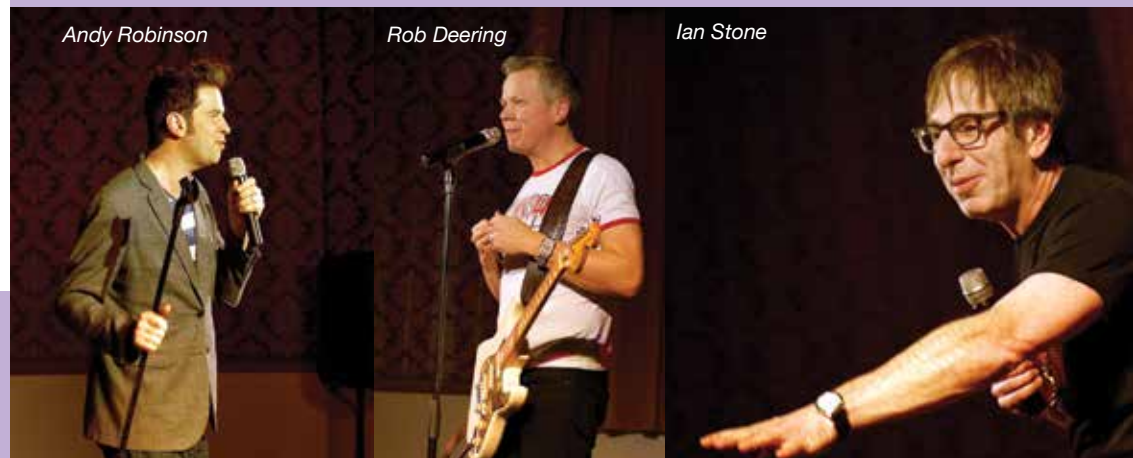
The first Comedy Night for 2013 was held on Sunday 27th January at the Old Town Hall and, despite a week of snow and ice, and the two headline acts having to cancel at the last minute due to unforeseen circumstances, was a hit with the audience.

MC Andy Robinson warmed the audience up ready for **Rob Deering** and his guitar. Rob with his witty humour and big grin sang lines from songs of George Michael, Queen, and Lynyrd Skynyrd. As Rob is going to be taking part in the London Marathon this year, he was keen to talk about jogging and the effects of jogging.

Headline act **Ian Stone** enjoyed some friendly banter with the audience, and covered topics ranging from whether or not the people in Buckingham were 'posh' to the Levinson Enquiry and his old history teacher.

The Town Centre and Events Committee would like to thank the public for their continued support of the Comedy Nights, and also thank **Richard** and **Linda Watkins** for providing staging and lighting and Villiers Hotel for continuing to allow us to host the event in the Old Town Hall.

Photos: Brian Simonds



Family Fun Day

This year, we are going to be participating in **AVDC's Play Around The Parishes** which is a play scheme for children and families.

The events will be run during the Easter and Summer holidays and, once the dates have been agreed, more information will be available on our website www.buckingham-tc.gov.uk

Council Tax / Precept



There were a number of huge challenges facing the Town Council when setting the precept (the part of your Council Tax that goes to the Town Council) for the coming year.

The Council Tax base (the number of houses in Buckingham which are 'taxable') has decreased again. Last year it was 4,434 and now it is 4,393. This means that for each house to pay the same amount of tax, the Council had to find money from savings, reserves or increased Council Tax. Over the last two years the tax base has been reduced, even though 241 houses have been built in the town. If the exemptions for Council Tax had not happened, rather than seeing the precept income go down by £8,822, the amount the Town Council would have collected would have gone up by approximately £29,000.

In addition to this, Central Government has decided to reduce the cost of benefits that Billing Authorities (in our case Aylesbury Vale District Council) will receive. It will now be the case that Central Government will only pay 90% of the funding to cover the cost of providing support to those on Council Tax benefits. This has resulted in a massive drop in the Council tax base: a reduction of nearly 10%. Although this grant is available for the next year there is no guarantee that in future years the grant will be there. All this means the Town Council had to take some tough decisions about the budget.

While prices are rising, the Town Council would have to find £55,634 to ensure that each house would be paying the same Council Tax as in the previous year. This is out of a precept income of last year of £538,546. In other words an amount equivalent to 10.3% saving was required for the Town Council's precept to stay the same.

At the Town Council meeting on 21 January, the decision was taken to make large cost savings (but without damaging frontline services) this year so that there was no precept rise. We will be using the coming months to take a strategic look at our financial position so that we are fully prepared for next year's budgetary pressures, whatever they may be then.

The Changing Face of Buckingham... part 6

Here is yet another chance for you to be involved in shaping the future of our Town.

The development of our Neighbourhood Plan is stepping up another gear. We've started to collect, analyse and produce a whole range of ideas for how the town should evolve over the next 20 years. Inside are some questions for you.



The Changing Face of Buckingham... part 6

Following on from the questionnaire in our previous issue we have now had over 100 pieces of feedback on the Neighbourhood Development Plan.

As a result of the responses the Town Council held a consultation workshop in the Community Centre on the 22nd February with stakeholders to focus on the potential re-development of the Town Centre.

This gave stakeholders the opportunity to come along and give their opinions on the Town Centre of Buckingham and their thoughts on what improvements should be made.

The Town Council is also in the process of discussing with various groups in the town what their needs will be in the future, be this sports facilities or schools and doctors. Various meetings have already

been held with more scheduled to take place. This will allow the plan to factor in increases in service provision if identified.

Over the coming weeks we will be starting to write policies for inclusion into the Buckingham Neighbourhood Development Plan with the aim of making Buckingham a better place. This is your chance to have a real say in how Buckingham should develop and

grow in the next 20 years.

Meanwhile below, here are the questions from our last edition again: we are still keen to receive your views using this medium as well.

You can also fill in the survey online at <http://www.buckingham-tc.gov.uk>

1

In your opinion, which would be the most preferable way of allocating Buckingham's 700 homes?

- a All together on one large site (with all associated facilities/infrastructure a 'village within a town')
- b Split across two or three moderately sized sites (with fewer associated facilities/infrastructure – along the lines of Linden Village or Badgers)
- c Split across multiple small sites (with minimal associated facilities – new houses 'absorbed' within the existing town)
- d Other

2

How should we extend employment development?

- a at the existing industrial parks
- b plan for new employment development elsewhere?
- c Other

3

There are several infrastructure options the plan could seek to influence, which of the following do you consider most appropriate?

- a A large forest/woodlands project
- b A western extension of the bypass linking to the Brackley Road or beyond
- c The restoration and integration of the Buckingham Canal into town
- d Other

4

What do you hope to see on a map of Buckingham in 20 years?

What else would you like to say? What other issues are important for you?
What else might the Town Council consult people about?

Comments

Please get in contact with us:

**Buckingham Town Council Buckingham Centre Verney Close
Buckingham MK18 1JP
T: 01280 816 426 E: office@buckingham-tc.gov.uk**

Helping you tackle fuel poverty



As part of our continuing work to assist townspeople who are experiencing fuel poverty, a few months ago we wrote to a range of gas and electricity providers. We asked each of them to submit a 100 word description of the service they offer to people and families on low incomes. We promised to publish what they sent us. Two companies (only) responded:



Co-operative Energy supplies gas and electricity with one simple tariff which is consistently competitive. And we have promised not to increase our prices this winter (until 15 April 2013 at the earliest and possibly longer depending on market conditions at that time). We have won Which? awards in the last two years for our fair and transparent approach. We keep things very simple: a single unit rate for every kWh you consume and, unlike the big suppliers, we charge the same whether you pay by direct debit or quarterly credit. As you would expect from the Co-op, we are owned by our customers who share in our profits. **0800 093 7511 (www.cooperativeenergy.coop)**



SSE offers help to vulnerable, low income customers. Customers who are chronically sick, disabled or of pensionable age can join our free Careline, which offers a range of services such as Knock and Wait (to let our staff know you need extra time to answer the door), gas safety checks and talking bills. SSE also offers the Warm Home Discount scheme to qualifying customers. Any SSE customer can request a tariff and payment plan check at any time, to ensure the customer is on the best tariff for them. If you'd like to contact SSE, please call on **0845 026 0654 (www.sse.com/Home)**

Help with oil costs

We understand that most people in Buckingham with central heating use either electricity or gas. However there may be some of our readers (or friends of our readers) who will be interested in the county wide scheme to provide lower cost oil. Community Impact Bucks (www.communityimpactbucks.org.uk/index.php) is a charity which supports other charities, community groups and social enterprises in Buckinghamshire. They have organised an oil bulk buying scheme. You can access details here: tinyurl.com/buckbulkoil

Citizens Advice Bureau

Just to mention again, the CAB is there to help you manage your bills (and almost anything else in life if you need such help). You can call them on **01280 816787** or drop in at their office on Market Hill. The Town Council is pleased to have granted our local CAB £5000 this year to help them with their essential work for townspeople.

Shannon Wheeler - Chair



Jordan Mayer - Vice Chair



YOUTH COUNCIL

2012 was a busy year for the Youth Council, with the recruitment of three new Youth Councillors, participation in the Twinning trip to Mouvaux, and the planning of the Under 18s night in October 2012 which was unfortunately cancelled.

For the new year the Youth Council is looking at various events such as a skateboard competition and, if all goes well, a talent show, which will be more of an Open Mic thing - so it is open to all those wishing to perform. Details will be available through the pages of this magazine so watch this space, and if you want to get involved, contact the Youth Council, details are below.

Recently the Youth Council has turned its attention to leisure facilities for young people and looks to pressure Aylesbury Vale District Council to improve both the Swan Pool, its facilities, and the services available to young people such as gym time and general pool times. At present there are very limited services available and the Youth Council feels that

this should change, with pool sessions for young people when schools close and gym time on a more convenient schedule. Obviously consultation would be needed as to the viability of this and the demand that may exist for young people, so if you feel strongly about this issue, get in touch, the details are below!

The Youth Council takes its role seriously and is looking to take up any cause that may be important to young people. If you feel that you have a project or issue that may benefit from the involvement of the Youth Council and its Members they can be contacted via their Facebook Page, (just search for the Buckingham Town Youth Council), or via Twitter @BuckinghamYouth or via the email address **BuckinghamTownYouthCouncil@gmail.com** – they are waiting to hear from you.

The Youth Council is also planning its own website, which will hold details of Members and events and projects that are being considered. The Youth Council wants to do so much, but they need more members to help with planning these events and share the weight of organising. If you feel you have anything to offer, even if you don't want to join, we're always looking for volunteers. Get in touch and get involved!

The Youth Council represents part of the commitment that Buckingham Town Council makes to the young people of our parish to make sure that their voices are heard and influence the direction of the town. We also know how important it is that young people are given the space to have fun, make friends and grow up into the amazing adults they will become. Therefore the Town Council has also granted £750 to Project Street Life and £20,000 to the Buckingham Youth Club over the last two years in order to support both of these important services for local young people.

Floodaction4Buckingham

Flooding in Buckingham happens on a regular basis.

Local Councils and the Environment Agency have done a great deal to help house holders of Buckingham since the last two major flood events in 1998 and 2007 through a grant which has helped to increase the flood resilience of their properties. In addition, a local group of volunteers has formed a flood action group (FA4B) to monitor issues with the river, drainage and, during a time of flood, to assist residents as necessary.

FA4B believe that the best way to reduce the effect of flooding is to have both a town and personal flood plan. In the event of a flood, it is very likely that plans will be put into action in the middle of the night. So, it is important to know where your flood defences are stored and ensure they are maintained and work effectively. On July 6th 2013, FA4B together with the Environment Agency, Emergency Services and the National Flood Forum will be holding a dry run event in the centre of town to promote the Buckingham Flood Plan and to encourage householders to prepare and practice their personal flood plan.



This personal plan will be different for all of us but some things are common, for example move all valuable and portable items upstairs, especially personal items such as photographs etc. If you wish to find out more about writing a flood plan please contact FA4B.



During the recent flood warnings, people already on the FA4B list have said they were reassured by the regular update and information sent to them. If you have not yet signed up, please send an email to floodaction4buckingham@yahoo.co.uk and mark your email: "Add Me To Your List".

Remember July 6th 2013 – put it in your diary now!



New Play Area in Bourton Park

You may have noticed a new play area appear in Bourton Park recently; this new area will provide an exciting new play opportunity for the young people of Buckingham for many years to come.

The Town Council conducted a consultation with schools in Buckingham to find out what local children wanted from the new play area and as a result the new area will include a Zip wire, Basket Swing, a spinning dish, a central 'Tree House' play-house with a tube slide and scramble net and an adventure trail. The equipment will be made of natural timber to help the equipment fit in with the surrounding trees.

The children who were asked what they wanted to see in the new play area didn't forget the parents either, one of the things they asked for was a comfortable area for mums and dads to sit, so the new area will have a specially designed seating area for the parents as well.

This area was installed by the Town Council with funding also coming from both Section 106 funding (property development contributions) and WREN (Waste Recycling Environmental Ltd) which is a not-for-profit business that helps people who live close to landfill sites by awarding grants for community, conservation and heritage projects.



Cllr. Mike Smith, Chairman of Buckingham Town Council's Environment, Property & Health Committee, said "This project not only provides some much-needed improvements to a long-standing play area, but it incorporates some additional facilities thanks to the generous WREN funding. I am particularly delighted that the project will now incorporate some play equipment that our young people particularly wanted". www.wren.org.uk



New staff

Claire Bolton has joined the Town Council as the new **Committee Clerk**, taking the minutes at Town Council meetings and typing up the agendas.

Buckingham Town Councillors

BUCKINGHAM NORTH

Cllr. Paddy Collins	01280 823 006
Cllr. Jon Harvey	01280 812 711
Cllr. Derrick Isham	01280 813 770
Cllr. Rob Lehmann	01280 817 331
Cllr. Andy Mahi	01280 816 562
Cllr. Howard Mordue	01280 815 418
Cllr. Ms. Ruth Newell - Mayor	01280 815 229
Cllr. Martin Try	01280 816 202
Cllr. Christine Strain-Clark	01280 816 832

BUCKINGHAM SOUTH

Cllr. Terry Bloomfield	01280 815 336
Cllr. Hedley Cadd	01280 814 112
Cllr. Mrs Geraldine Collins	01280 823 006
Cllr. Paul Hiron	01280 812 072
Cllr. Mrs Lisa O'Donoghue	01280 824 624
Cllr. Mike Smith	01280 822 215
Cllr. Robin Stuchbury	01280 824 285
Cllr. Warren Whyte	01280 820 531

Mr Christopher Wayman (Town Clerk) 01280 816 426

OTHER USEFUL NUMBERS

Buckinghamshire County Council	0845 3 70 80 90
Highways on Call	0845 2 30 28 82
Aylesbury Vale District Council	01296 58 58 58
Buckingham Winslow & District Citizens Advice Bureau	01280 81 67 07
Buckingham Tourist Information Centre	01280 82 30 20
Buckingham Community Centre	01280 82 35 84

Your views count

Buckingham Town Matters is produced by Buckingham Town Council in order to provide you with a taste of what keeps Councillors and staff busy. But this is also an invitation for you to tell us what you think of what we do and what you think we should be doing. We are all working together to make Buckingham an even better place, so please let us know:

- what you think we should carry on doing
- what you think we should stop doing, or do less of
- what you think we should start doing, or do a lot more of

You can email us at or just drop us a line at the address below. We look forward to hearing from you.

Town Council Office, Buckingham Centre, Verney Close, Buckingham, MK18 1JP

Email: office@buckingham-tc.gov.uk



Follow us on Facebook: www.facebook.com/pages/Buckingham-Town-Council/222358454517086

Just a reminder... all Town Council meetings are open to the public. You are invited to come along and give us your views

This is delivered to approximately 5,800 homes