



# BUCKINGHAM TOWN COUNCIL

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COMMUNICATIONS  
STRATEGY GROUP

8/1/2021

Councillor,

You are summoned to a meeting of the **Communications Strategy Group** of Buckingham Town Council to be held on **Thursday 14<sup>th</sup> January 2021 at 2pm** online via Zoom, Meeting ID 871 2899 7691.

Residents are very welcome to ask questions or speak to Councillors about any matter relevant to the meeting at the start of the meeting in the usual way. Please email [office@buckingham-tc.gov.uk](mailto:office@buckingham-tc.gov.uk) or call 01280 816426 for the password to take part.

Mr. P. Hodson  
Town Clerk

Please note that the meeting will be preceded by a Public Session in accordance with Standing Order 3.f, which will last for a maximum of 15 minutes.

## 1. Apologies for Absence

Members are asked to receive apologies from Members.

## 2. Declarations of Interest

To receive declarations of any personal or prejudicial interest under matters for consideration on this agenda in accordance with the Parish Councils (Model Code of Conduct) Order 2001.

## 3. Meeting Notes

To review and agree the notes from the last meeting Thursday 26<sup>th</sup> November 2020.

**Copy circulated previously**

## 4. Current Newsletter – Spring 2021

To review the current newsletter articles:

- Cover
- Message from the Mayor
- Annual Town Meeting
- Buckingham Survey
- Past Events
- Future Events
- Flooding
- Town Commission and Identifying Trees
- Homelessness
- Covid-19 Update
- Pontio
- Council Tax Budget Infographic
- Standing for election and voting
- Coronavirus: Important numbers

[Appendix A](#)  
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[Appendix K](#)  
**to follow**  
[Appendix L](#)  
[Appendix M](#)



Twinned with Mouvaux, France;



Neukirchen Vluyn, Germany



Members are reminded when making decisions that the Public Sector Equality Duty 2010 requires Members to have due regard to the need to: Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct that is prohibited by the Act, advance equality of opportunity between people who share a characteristic and those who don't, and to foster good relations between people who share a characteristic and those who don't.

All Committee documents can be found on the Buckingham Town Council's website. Alternatively, the Clerk can send you a copy of any minutes, reports or other information. To do this, send a request using the contact details set out above.

**5. Newsletter Review – Winter 2020**

To review the production and delivery of the previous newsletter and identify key learning points from the production process and its look, including a discussion of:

- Quality of production & content
- Delivery
- Audio version

**6. Social Media Content Planning**

To receive and discuss a report from the Communications Clerk outlining the new approach to social media content planning.

[CSG/101/20](#)

**7. Ongoing Development of Existing Websites**

- To discuss the maintenance of the website and any improvements to be made
- Tourist discuss the maintenance of the Information Centre Website and any improvements to be made

**8. Advice for attending a Council meeting**

To review and discuss advice for residents and individuals wishing to attend a Council meeting.

[Appendix N](#)

**9. Delivery of welcome packs**

To receive and discuss a verbal report from the Communications Clerk.

**10. Press Releases**

To receive and discuss a summary of the press releases authorised by Buckingham Town Council since the previous CSG meeting on Thursday 26<sup>th</sup> November 2020.

[Appendix O](#)

**11. Chair's Items**

**12. Date of Next Meeting**

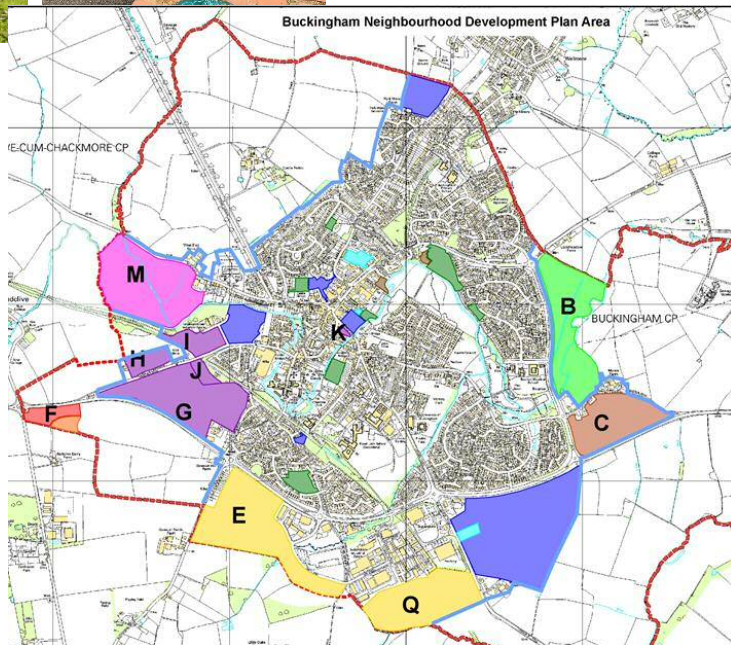
Thursday 11<sup>th</sup> March 2021 at 2pm.

To:  
Cllr. R. Ahmed  
Cllr. T. Bloomfield  
Cllr. M. Cole JP  
Cllr. G. Collins           Town Mayor  
Cllr. M. Gateley        Chair  
Cllr. J. Harvey  
Cllr. R. Newell  
Cllr. M. Smith  
Cllr. C. Strain-Clark   Vice-Chair

# Appendix A

## Front Cover

Suggested: Collage of photos that highlights 'Best of 2020', around an image of the previous town plan map.



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**Message from the Mayor**

Spring is my favourite time of the year, the lengthening days and warm spring sunshine bringing our gardens and countryside to life. It signifies a time of regrowth and hope.

We have added hope this year as the Covid -19 vaccine is taking place in our community, giving protection and helping us all to move forward from the restrictions that we have had to endure.

I urge everyone to take up the vaccination when offered. So we may all look forward to a return of normal life in our community and the world around us.

Cllr Geraldine Collins, Mayor of Buckingham.

(105 words)

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## **Annual Town Meeting**

Each year the Town Council facilitates an Annual Town Meeting at Buckingham Community Centre. This is an informal public meeting and is a chance for the town's residents to ask questions and receive updates on the Town Council and its partner organisations' activities over the previous year. Town, District and County Councillors will be in attendance to answer your queries on matters relating to Buckingham.

The event also usually includes information boards from charities and organisations that have received community grants from the Council; giving an insight in to how the money has been spent and the benefit this has brought to the town. All Buckingham residents are welcome to attend.

This year's Annual Town Meeting is to be held on Wednesday 17<sup>th</sup> March 2021 at Buckingham Community Centre; the event will open at 6.30pm, with the meeting beginning at 7pm. The evening is not structure round a formal agenda, it highlights the issues that residents want to discuss and draws on questions previously discussed through the Town Council's Annual Online Forum. The Online Forum will be hosted via the Town Council's Facebook page and residents are invited to post questions or comment under a variety of topics.

In the event that is it not possible to convene an Annual Town Meeting in person, the Council will decide to host the event online. Detail of how to access the meeting and how to submit questions in advance will be published well in advance of the meeting date.

However, if you have a question about a local issue that just can't wait, then come along to one of our weekly Committee meetings. All our Council meetings are being held online, via Zoom and are open to the public. For more information on what to expect from a Town Council meeting please visit our website at: <https://www.buckingham-tc.gov.uk/your-town-council/committees/attending-council-meeting/>

308 words





## Buckingham Town Matters- the 2021 Buckingham Survey

### *The Buckingham Survey*

It is planned [subject to ongoing Covid-19 pandemic restrictions] to conduct a survey of Buckingham residents and businesses during February and March. The Town Council would like to hear your views on Buckingham and its future.

The survey will be rolled out both online and in more traditional format. 2021 will see the National Census, but Buckingham will have its own local survey as well.

*Ongoing review* – the Aylesbury Vale area of Buckinghamshire Council still does not have an up-to-date Local Plan. The Buckinghamshire Council is undertaking consultation on the Main Modifications to the submitted Vale of Aylesbury Plan [VALP] which will end on 9<sup>th</sup> February, 2021 but the current local plan is effectively just the saved policies from 2004. The Buckingham Neighbourhood Development Plan was made in 2015; it is the most up-to-date document of the Development Plan for the area.

Your Town Council wishes to obtain local views on the future development of Buckingham with a view to refreshing the Neighbourhood Development Plan. Work has been ongoing. It is important to remember that there are limits on what can be done within the Plan, but it remains a very important planning document.

### *Flooding*

This issue has sadly been brought to the fore after the events of Christmas 2020. The residents and businesses of Buckingham have suffered major flooding in 1998; 2007 and now 2020 [and obviously previous major floods]. There is a high cost to such incidents both financially with for example increased insurance premiums, and also in human misery.

Work is already underway to build photographic databases of flood areas, recording the extent. If you have photographs of Christmas flooding please send them to [admin@buckingham-tc.gov.uk](mailto:admin@buckingham-tc.gov.uk)

It is important to note that the Neighbourhood Plan cannot go against central government planning in the form of the National Planning Policy Framework. This does place restrictions on building on areas known to flood, but such restrictions can be removed under certain circumstances.

In 2019, Buckingham Town Council declared a Climate Emergency. The Council wishes to continue to seek ways to mitigate its effects on our town.



### *Retaining Town Centre Vibrancy*

Even before lockdowns and tier restrictions, the UK's High Streets and Town Centres were facing challenges. People's expectations and habits were changing. Buckingham remains an historic *market* town. The question is what does a market town look like in the 21<sup>st</sup> century? What shops and services do you want to see in the town; what shops and services do you need? This could be retail; professional services; leisure services; health services? How could the town centre be used?

Currently the NDP promotes certain retail categories as being of greatest importance. Is that still of importance to you or do you wish to see different services encouraged? How do you shop today compared to even a year ago, let alone five years ago?



### *Affordable Housing*

We would like to know what your and your family's housing needs are now as well looking to the future in five or ten years. Do you think that Buckingham will be able to provide for those needs? What will those needs be? Will these needs change if you may be working from home more often as a result of changes from the Covid-19 pandemic?

Currently, the Buckingham Neighbourhood Plan requires 35% of substantial housing development to be provided as affordable housing. The proposal in VALP is for that figure to be 25%. Your Town Council wants to understand if that will meet the specific needs of the people of Buckingham.

2021 looks to be another year of challenges. It is understood that you may be recovering from your property being flooded; living and working within the current tier restrictions; have concerns about the future. Please do try to find the time to respond to this important local survey.

Keep a lookout on social media; in the local press and around the town for updates and the survey itself. For more information in the meantime; please contact Sheena McMurtrie on [townplan@buckingham-tc.gov.uk](mailto:townplan@buckingham-tc.gov.uk)



677 words

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## Spring Newsletter 2021

### Past Events

This year's **Remembrance Sunday** was Sunday 8<sup>th</sup> November and due to Covid19 restrictions, the annual parade organised by the Royal British Legion was unable to go ahead. A small wreath laying ceremony was organised by the Royal British Legion and took place at the Buckingham War Memorial. Wreaths were laid by invited guests and the Mayor of Buckingham Cllr Geraldine Collins laid a wreath on behalf of the people of Buckingham. Members of the public were asked to stay at home and 'Remember At Home' by observing 2 minutes silence on their doorstep. The event was livestreamed on YouTube and can still be seen by logging onto <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TFX3KzkDPMc>



As the annual **Christmas Light Switch On** was unable to take place around the Christmas tree in Buckingham town centre this year, the event was held on line and all residents were asked to switch their Christmas lights on at 7pm on Saturday 28<sup>th</sup> November for the big light switch on. A message from Buckingham Town Mayor, Cllr Geraldine Collins, The Bard of Buckingham Dean Jones and a special message from Santa were pre-recorded and shown across the Town Council's social media sites ahead of the switch on. Granta Network were booked to fly a drone over the town centre and capture the moment that the town's Christmas lights and tree were switched on at 7pm. A video was put together of the event and can be found on the Town Council's You Tube channel <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bef85llip-w>

The song to accompany the video was written and performed by Buckingham's own Dean Jones.



A **Pumpkin Letter Trail** was organised in the lead up to Halloween to ensure some safe family, friendly fun despite all of our annual autumn events being cancelled. The aim was for participants to explore the local shops and enjoy what Buckingham town centre had to offer.

To take part, you had to download the Pumpkin Trail answer sheet from the Buckingham Town Council website and then let the clues guide you around the town in search for the hidden pumpkins in local shop windows so you could reveal the secret word!

Once the answer sheet was completed, event participants had to visit The Buckingham University book shop and show their answer sheet to the shop keeper to win £1 off of any half price children's book.



Buckingham Town Council launched its first ever **Mayor's Christmas Card Competition** in 2020. Our Mayor, Cllr Geraldine Collins invited local school children to submit a design based on the theme "Christmas in Buckingham"

The community competition was a great success, we received 50 colourful and creative designs which was absolutely amazing considering there was just two weeks to enter. The three winning designs were printed and the cards were sold in the Buckingham TIC to help raise funds for the Mayor's local charities. In fact, it was so good, we plan on running the competition slightly earlier again this year!

Once again, thank you to all the children who entered, the parents who sent us their design and the teachers who encouraged the competition. We are also very grateful to our sponsor, Christina Newman of Black Dog Design – Buckingham.



In November 2020 we launched the **Buckingham's Rubbish Campaign**, an online litter picking initiative inspired by the work of @Recycle4Bucks. We received some fantastic photographs from individuals to families that are out Litter picking on a regular basis – what Litter Heroes! Our Mayor and Town Clerk had the hard job of choosing four winners and first prize went to Jo Smith and her son Alex, who regularly conduct little early morning clear ups in Chandos Park after they finish playing tennis. They take the litter home to recycle the glass bottles and cans. Alex even had time to play a little air guitar!



Alex said 'we don't want it to end up in the river or hurt any wildlife.'

The annual **Christmas Parade** did not take place in 2020. A decision had been made by the Christmas Parade Committee to cancel the event as the parade attracts a large crowd to Buckingham Town Centre and so social distancing would have been a problem.

The annual **Community Fair** which takes place in the Community Centre after the Christmas Parade in December was also cancelled due to the Government Guidelines in place at the time around indoor events.

The annual **Pancake Race** usually takes place during half term in February. Based on current Government Guidelines this year's races scheduled for Tuesday 16<sup>th</sup> February were cancelled.

753 words





## Future Events



The Town Centre & Events Committee have big plans for 2021, including a brand new summer event surprise!

We know that the year ahead might bring changes to our schedule, so for all the latest news on the events, follow [@BuckinghamTC](#) on social media or check our website calendar.

56 words

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## Flooding

On the 23<sup>rd</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup> December 2020, at the end of a difficult year for many, the River Great Ouse burst its banks amid extremely heavy rainfall, and serious flooding hit Buckingham.

Many local residents immediately jumped to the aid of their neighbours. From turning up with buckets or supplying water pumps to help clear water to opening their homes to those in need, many people did what they could to help. Buckingham Free Meals, led by 14-year-old Sulayman, coordinated free hot food and drinks and ongoing food parcels. The Bard of Buckingham, Dean Jones, launched a fundraiser to support those flooded with rebuilding their lives. The more than £19,000 raised will be held and distributed by the Town Council based on decisions made by an independent panel.

Staff from Buckingham Town Council joined those from Buckinghamshire Council and Transport for Buckinghamshire to help close roads, deliver sandbags and clear up the mess. It took over a week to sanitise and reopen play areas and the public toilets, as well as clearing large amounts of debris from across the parks. The Council's Shopmobility unit was flooded, and some equipment damaged.

The Council passed on a flood alert from the Environment Agency in the morning of 22<sup>nd</sup> December. Unfortunately, the EA's flood gauge does not appear to have been working correctly, and no Flood Warning was issued.

The Town Council are reviewing the Community Flood Action Plan. Any suggestions for changes would be gratefully received. The Council are also looking to sign up Flood Volunteers to help with future floods and other emergencies. Residents from homes NOT at risk of flooding are ideal for this role, as those directly affected are less able to immediately help others.

The Town Council now has a direct arrangement with the Bucks and Oxon Response Group (BORG) who will again be prepared to use their 4x4 vehicles to help with any future events.

318 words (Please note: originally this article was a half page space for grants. We've made some minor page layout changes to give ¾ of a page or more for a flooding article instead)



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### Town Action Commission for Trees

A report was produced by the Town Action Commission (TAC) in March 2017 due to concerns about the loss of trees, hedgerows and open spaces, largely resulting from new housing developments. The group's objective was "the protection, creation and enhancement of trees, hedgerows and green spaces in new developments". A series of meeting between interested parties, including representatives of local councils, conservation groups and other stakeholders was held and an Action Plan was devised. At a recent meeting of the Environment Committee Members reviewed a summary of progress against each action, a copy of the updated Action report can be found on the Town Council website:

<https://www.buckingham-tc.gov.uk/our-services/parks-and-green-spaces/>

Environment Committee recommended that the Buckingham Tree wardens, formed from the TAC, are asked to carry out an initial survey to identify potential tree planting locations around the town and any other prospects for schemes i.e. hedgerow restoration work in Buckingham. It is hoped this will provide the Council with plenty of new planting opportunities to explore for the future.

#### What is that tree?

In Buckingham we are blessed with a plethora of interesting and varied tree species, but how many of us know our Hawthorn from our Blackthorn, or our Hazel from our Elder? To the untrained eye a lot of trees look alike. Yet the identification of trees can be a fun way to notice the variety of nature. Where to start? The best option is to get out in the parks and woods and start observing the trees around you. You can bring a tree identification book (highly recommended) or even a smartphone app.

We've put together this simple guide to four common (small) tree species in our parks and hedgerows to help people become more connected to the treescape around them. Buckingham's green spaces have a wide variety of trees, shrubs and flowers, offering food in the form of leaves, flower nectar, berries and nuts.

Hazels were often coppiced (cut back) in the past for fence posts, walking sticks and other uses but as the need for these materials has diminished, the coppices have grown up, creating adult trees. Hazel nuts – cobnuts – are prized by many animals, especially the grey squirrel.

Hawthorn is best known for its perfumed creamy white blossoms – mayflower – which bloom in masses across the countryside for a few short weeks in May.

Blackthorn is one earliest blossoming trees offering tiny stars of white flowers to give a little spark of hope the winter will soon be over. This small tree defends itself with sharp thorns and is best known for its autumn fruit, dark purple sloes - great for gin!

Elder is valuable to wildlife and foraging humans alike. The distinctive white flower-plates are highly scented and make a delicious (elderflower) cordial. Claret-coloured berries are a favourite snack for dormice, bank voles and birds, and are good cooked in pies, preserves and wine.



483 words

## Homelessness and Covid 19

At the start of the pandemic, the government launched its “**Everyone In**” initiative. This enabled people who were sleeping rough to access beds in places such as hostels and hotels; this scheme undoubtedly saved many lives. Over 170 people were accommodated in Buckinghamshire as a result. **Next steps** funding is available to help them find more permanent accommodation. There is a recognised pathway from rough sleeping to supported accommodation to housing association tenancies.

The team from Buckinghamshire Council which covers the Aylesbury Vale area has been active in contacting rough sleepers and those in high risk groups, assisting them where possible. They have funding for rent deposit schemes and employ specialist workers to help rough sleepers to get off the streets. More one-bed units are also being made available for those ready to move on from supported accommodation. Additionally there are several charities and voluntary groups who help in different ways. When the weather is very cold there is an additional emergency initiative to ensure everyone’s safety.

What can I do if I see someone in need?

- **StreetLink:** get information from [streetlink.org.uk](https://streetlink.org.uk) or phone **0300 500 0914**. They will link you with Buckinghamshire Council’s outreach workers.
- **Buckinghamshire Council’s Housing Team** can be contacted during office hours: **01296 585168**.
- If you see anyone you believe to be under the age of 18, or are concerned about the health or welfare of anyone you see sleeping rough, please call **999**.

242 words





## Covid-19 Update

Since the last edition of this Buckingham Town Council Newsletter, the town has changed Tiers several times and in January entered a National Lockdown. Town Council services have adapted in response, with many staff continuing to work from home. Lace Hill Sports & Community Centre, the Tourist Information Centre and Shopmobility are all closed or partially closed at the time of writing.

The Tourist Information Centre has adapted by selling some stock online, including Buckingham calendars and art prints of Buckingham. <https://www.buckingham-tc.gov.uk/shop/>

Throughout the entire period of restrictions our Green Spaces Team have worked out and about in Buckingham, maintaining the safety of our parks and buildings, including clearing up after the floods on Christmas Eve. **In order to keep our team safe, we strongly request that you do not approach any members of our team while they are working.** Maintaining social distance from our staff helps keep them healthy and is really important.

If you have any questions for the team, please email [admin@buckingham-tc.gov.uk](mailto:admin@buckingham-tc.gov.uk)



167 words



### Pontio

As a small University in a close-knit town, we are always eager to be involved in community projects and try to ensure we make a positive impact. The Pontio Group (a joint committee of the University and the Town Council) was created during the summer of 2018 and great things have happened since, including numerous events such as EntFest (a unique celebration of enterprise and entrepreneurship), The Buckingham Literary Festival and the Duck Race.

Our students also know the importance of being part of a civic university. Last year they helped the local area in the fight against coronavirus by volunteering in local general practice surgeries and hospitals, as well as working with the council to conduct check-in calls with those who were shielding.

During 2021, it is our hope to continue the great work of the Pontio Group, collaborating with schools, businesses and other not for profit institutions to help support in the development skills and opportunities for all who live, study, work, play and visit in Buckingham.



172 words



## Local elections: how to stand for a seat

Elections for the Police and Crime Commissioner for the Thames Valley, Buckinghamshire Council and Buckingham Town Council, delayed from last year are due to take place on the 6<sup>th</sup> May 2021. 17 people will be elected to the Town Council and six people will be elected to represent Buckingham and surrounding parishes on the new Buckinghamshire Council. Any local resident over the age of 18 can stand (with a few exceptions).

### What is involved?

The Town Council meets formally every seven weeks, apart from during August. The Council also operates several committees; and councillors are able to select which committee(s) to take part in. The town council is consulted on a wide range of matters from planning applications to roads and the environment, and is asked to represent at other local government meetings or organisations. Councillor training is available.

Details of who is eligible stand for election are available through Buckinghamshire Council's local democracy team including election packs with guidance about standing and relevant forms.

If you might be interested in standing, or are just interested in finding out more about what the council does, visit our website for more information about attending a meeting, past minutes and agendas. Since March 2020 all Council meetings are also live streamed on our YouTube channel.

### How to vote

While we don't know exactly what the situation may be with regards to Coronavirus and restrictions in May, we do know that the lockdown announced in January did allow for residents to leave their home in order to vote in an election.

If you are concerned about voting in person, you could consider registering for a postal or proxy ballot. There is lots of information, and forms to download and complete on the Electoral Commission's website.

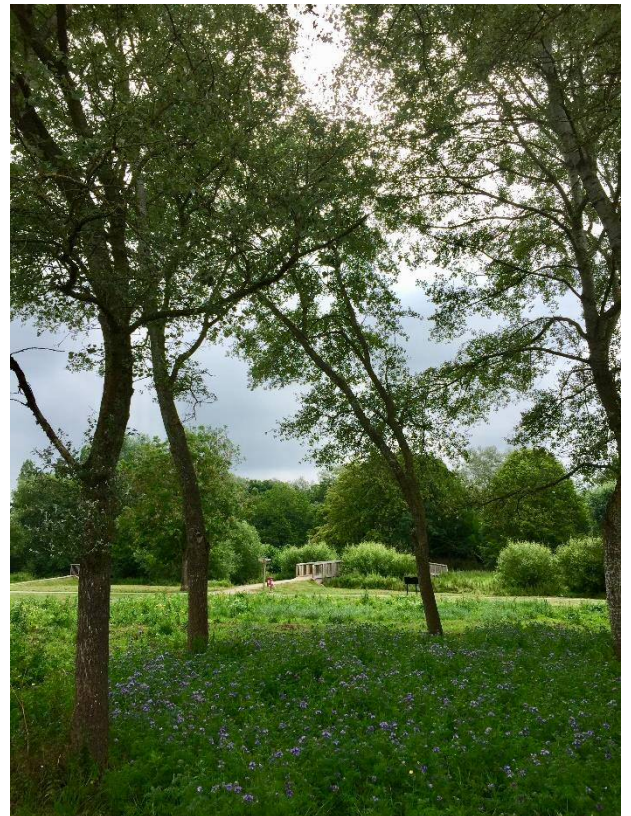
<https://www.electoralcommission.org.uk/i-am-a/voter/how-cast-your-vote>

301 words



**Back Cover**

The text on the back cover will contain all of the usual support numbers and services. Due to recent issues with flooding, the contact details of Transport for Buckinghamshire will also be added.







**BUCKINGHAM TOWN COUNCIL  
COMMUNICATIONS STRATEGY GROUP  
THURSDAY 14<sup>th</sup> JANUARY 2021**

**Contact Officer: Louise Stubbs, Communications Clerk**

**Social Media Content Plans January – March 2021**

**1. Recommendations**

- 1.1 It is **RECOMMENDED** that residents using the winter spotting sheet be encouraged to share photos of themselves completing the activity online, with five entrants receiving a #GreenBuckingham water bottle for taking part.
- 1.2 It is **RECOMMENDED** that Fiona Hancock be invited to help choose winning entries for the wildflower drawing contest. As part of the contest five winners will receive a #GreenBuckingham water bottle and the Communications Strategy Group should choose one or more of the winning entries to be printed on the cover of Summer Newsletter 2021.
- 1.3 it is **RECOMMENDED** that Members make any suggestions for online content they would like officers to consider producing to the Communications Clerk before Friday 19<sup>th</sup> February 2021.

**2. Background**

- 2.1 As most events in 2020 were cancelled due to Coronavirus restrictions, officers began to offer online only activity based content through the Town Council's social media to provide entertainment to residents while in person events were not possible.
- 2.2 As this situation continues officers are now planning further in advance to ensure online activities are as well planned and complete as possible, with clear purposes identified for each project. The most resources are dedicated to the projects we are aiming to have the most impact with.
- 2.3 Unfortunately, the rapid changes of tiers and into lockdown mean that plans discussed sometimes still need to be cancelled or changed at the last minute. Plans for online content promoting the Food Fair and #AllWrappedUp Raffle are currently cancelled or delayed.

**3. Content Plan January to March 2021**

3.1 Hero – The most important content

Annual Town Meeting proposals include:

- Images and social media posts, as part of the traditional 'online Annual Town Meeting' used to prompt questions from members of the public.

- Live stream and zoom meeting for the online event. Questions from the public presented to Members and partner organisation representatives during the live stream.

### 3.2 Hub – Content of interest to only some residents

- Pancake Race (alternative online only event plans)
- Climate change themed activities:
  - Winter nature spotting sheet. It is **RECOMMENDED** that residents using the Winter spotting sheet be encouraged to share photos of themselves completing the activity online, with five entrants receiving a #GreenBuckingham water bottle for taking part.
  - Wildflower drawing contest, inspired by the wildflower boards created by local artist Fiona Hancock. These are to be installed in Bourton Park in 2021. Child and adult entries will be accepted. It is **RECOMMENDED** that Fiona Hancock be invited to help choose winning entries for the wildflower drawing contest. As part of the contest five winners will receive a #GreenBuckingham water bottle and the Communications Strategy Group should choose one or more of the winning entries to be printed on the cover of Summer Newsletter 2021.
- General content, including opening hour changes, press releases, weather warnings and religious holidays and significant days' posts.

### 3.3 Hygiene – Content that may be of interest but that doesn't require interaction, and provides positive exposure for the town council.

- climate change themed colouring sheets, Buxplore advertising, upcoming important dates, Covid updates, newsletter sign up reminders.
- Advertising of alternative local activity options, for example geocaching, downloads of walk maps available from the Tourist Information Centre.
- Suggested holiday dates to highlight:

Holiday	Date	Religious Group
New Year's Day	Friday 1st Jan	
Chinese New Year	Friday 12th Feb	Buddhism
St. Valentine's Day	Sunday 14th Feb	Christianity
Commonwealth Day	Monday 8th Mar	
International Women's Day	Monday 8th Mar	
Easter	Sunday 4th Apr	Christianity

Ramadan	Monday 12th Apr	Islam
Earth Day	Thursday 22nd Apr	
St. George's Day	Friday 23rd Apr	
VE Day	Saturday 8th May	
Eid-al-Fitr	Thursday 13th May	Islam
Queen Elizabeth's Birthday	Sunday 13th June	
National Tree Day	Sunday 1st Aug	
VJ Day	Monday 9th Aug	
Merchant Navy Day	Friday 3rd Sept	
Halloween	Sunday 31st Oct	
Diwali	Thursday 4th Nov	Hinduism & Sikhism
Guy Fawkes Night	Friday 5th Nov	
Remembrance Day	Thursday 11th Nov	
World Kindness Day	Saturday 13th Nov	
Remembrance Sunday	Sunday 14th Nov	
International Men's Day	Friday 19th Nov	
Hanukkah	Monday 29th Nov	Judaism
Christmas Jumper Day	Saturday 11th Dec	
Christmas	Saturday 25th Dec	Christianity

#### 4. Forward Planning

- 4.1 Officers will discuss ideas for March to June content and activities at the end of February it is **RECOMMENDED** that Members make any suggestions for online content they would like Officers to consider producing to the Communications Clerk before Friday 19<sup>th</sup> February 2021.
- 4.2 Future Social Media reports will be based around reporting on the success of specific planned campaigns, with the most importance given to major, or hub, content.

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### Advice for residents and visitors attending a Council meeting

At present, members of the public interested in attending a Council meeting, including those who wish to speak during the public session are directed to this page of the Town Council website:

<https://www.buckingham-tc.gov.uk/your-town-council/committees/attending-council-meeting/>

The text available on the page reads as follows:

#### Attending a council meeting

While the idea of attending may seem daunting at first, Council meetings are a great way to learn first-hand how local decisions are made, and are probably more interesting than you might expect! This Council makes its decisions in public and is committed to community engagement and therefore warmly invites members of the public and the press to attend meetings. Our meetings are now also live streamed via [YouTube](#).

#### What to expect at a Town Council Meeting

Council meetings are a great way to learn first-hand how local decisions are made! This Council makes its decisions in public and is committed to community engagement and therefore warmly invites members of the public and the press to attend meetings and contribute within the **Public Session** at the start of its meetings. It's important to note that a Council meeting is not a public meeting but Buckingham Town Council has always welcomed the opportunity to listen to residents and address their concerns.

The first place you should start before attending a Council meeting is to take a look at the forthcoming agendas on the [Town Council's website](#) and see what subjects interest you. If you are unsure which meeting to attend then please contact the [Committee Clerk](#) to discuss your interests/concerns.

#### How to attend an online Town Council Meeting

Council meetings are held online (via Zoom) almost every Monday at 7pm at a specific web address published on the meeting's agenda. Agendas are typically posted online and within our Town Council noticeboard the Wednesday before the meeting and contain reports, appendices and links to previous minutes. Council meetings start prompt at 7pm so you may want to join the meeting a couple minutes early to inform the Chair that you wish to speak. Guidance on how to set up a Zoom account and join online meetings [can be found here](#).

#### How long do meetings last?

Meetings can vary in length depending on how long the agenda is, but generally average between two to three hours.

#### When can I speak?

The Committee Clerk or Chair will greet you and ensure the Chair knows that you wish to speak during the Public Session and which subject you intend to address. At the beginning of each meeting, 15 minutes is allocated for the Public Session, during which members of the public may address councillors on any matter relating to policy or decisions of the Town Council. The Town Councillors will not be able to enter into debate on any subject raised during the Public Session, but may consider the subject

at a later date and respond accordingly. Written questions received in advance of the meeting are encouraged but not essential.

This process may sound formal, and parts of it are, but there are also a lot of fun and light-hearted moments throughout the meeting. Council meetings are always open to the public and are a great way to learn more about how decisions to improve the Town and its facilities are made

### **Interested in becoming a councillor?**

Have you ever considered being a Councillor? It's a great way to take part in making decisions about Buckingham.

Who can be a Councillor?

Elections, usually, take place every four years; the next election is May 2021. The timescales, advertising and process of elections is governed by a statutory procedure. All candidates have to be proposed and seconded by electors of the parish.

With a few exceptions you can be a Councillor if you are:

- "18 years of age or over at the date of your nomination
- a Commonwealth citizen, a citizen of the Republic of Ireland, or a citizen of another member state of the European Community,

and either:

- be a local government elector (voter) for the area of the authority, or
- have during the whole of the 12 months preceding the day on which you are nominated as a candidate occupied as owner or tenant any land or other premises in the area of the authority, or
- have your principal or only place of work in the 12 months preceding the day on which you are nominated as a candidate in the area of the authority, or
- have lived in the area of the authority during the whole of the 12 months preceding the day on which you are nominated as candidate."

For more information read [Buckinghamshire Council's local democracy advice](#).

### **What is a co-option and how do they work?**

If an existing Councillor post becomes vacant, the vacancy is advertised for a fixed period of time and – unless ten electors have requested a poll – the vacancy is filled by co-option at a subsequent council meeting. If you are interesting in a current Town Councillor vacancy then please complete the below questionnaire and send to the following address allow with a short statement (side of A4) on why you wish to be co-opted as a Town Councillor.

Still interested in co-option? Please complete the form below and get in touch with the Town Council.

[Co-option questionnaire](#)

[Printable Version: Co-option questionnaire](#)

**email to:** [committeeclerk@Buckingham-tc.gov.uk](mailto:committeeclerk@Buckingham-tc.gov.uk)

**Post to:** Committee Clerk, Buckingham Town Council, Buckingham Centre, Verney Close, Buckingham MK18 1JP

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**Press Releases from Buckingham Town Council**

**18<sup>th</sup> November 2020 to 7<sup>th</sup> January 2021**

**PRESS RELEASE 198 – BUCKINGHAM TOWN COUNCIL CELEBRATES DECISION TO KEEP BUCKINGHAM’S LAST PUBLIC PHONE BOX**

20<sup>th</sup> November 2020 – Details of how the decision to keep the phone box was made.

**PRESS RELEASE 199 – IT’S BEGINNING TO LOOK A LOT LIKE CHRISTMAS IN BUCKINGHAM**

26<sup>th</sup> November 2020 – Additional information for residents about the plans for the Christmas Light Switch On.

**PRESS RELEASE 200 – BUCKINGHAM’S LITTER HEROES**

3<sup>rd</sup> December 2020 – Pictures and description of the winners of the Buckingham’s Rubbish litter picking contest.

**PRESS RELEASE 201 – TREE PLANTING**

4<sup>th</sup> December 2020 – National Tree Planting week article, information about tree planting projects over the last year, the planning committee’s defence of trees, and the tree warden scheme.

**PRESS RELEASE 201 – CHRISTMAS LIGHTS SWITCH ON REPORT**

4<sup>th</sup> December 2020 – Pictures and a descriptions of the Christmas Lights Switch On.

**PRESS RELEASE 202 – MAYOR’S CHRISTMAS CARDS CONTEST WINNERS**

10<sup>th</sup> December 2020 – Pictures and description of the winners of the Mayor’s Christmas Card contest.

**PRESS RELEASE 203 – BUCKINGHAM MAYOR PRESENTS SALVER TO OUTGOING MAYOR**

15<sup>th</sup> December 2020 – Photos and description of the presentation of the silver salver and past Mayor’s badge to outgoing Mayor Mark Cole JP.