



# BUCKINGHAM TOWN COUNCIL

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COMMUNICATIONS  
STRATEGY GROUP

24/11/2022

Councillor,

You are summoned to a meeting of the **Communications Strategy Group** of Buckingham Town Council to be held on **Thursday 1<sup>st</sup> December 2022 at 1pm** at the Town Council Chamber, Cornwall's Meadow, Buckingham.

Residents are very welcome to ask questions or speak to Councillors about any matter relevant to the meeting at the start of the meeting. Residents may attend in person or address the meeting virtually over Zoom. Please email [committeeclerk@buckingham-tc.gov.uk](mailto:committeeclerk@buckingham-tc.gov.uk) or call 01280 816426 for the password to take part if you wish to speak over Zoom.

The meeting can be watched live on the Town Council's YouTube channel here:  
<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC89BUTwVpjAOEldSlfcZC9Q/>

Ms. Claire Molyneux  
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 and accept apologies from Members

**2. Declarations of Interest**

To receive declarations of any personal or prejudicial interest under consideration on this agenda in accordance with the Localism Act 2011 Sections 26-34 & Schedule 4.

**3. Meeting Notes**

To review and agree the notes from the last meeting held on Thursday 13<sup>th</sup> October 2022.

**Copy circulated previously**

**4. Future Newsletter – Spring 2023**

To decide what we want to achieve with our next newsletter and outline the content.

**5. Audio Newsletter**

To decide who should record the audio copy of the Spring 2023 newsletter.

[Appendix A](#)



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.

**6. Ongoing Development of Existing Websites**

To discuss the maintenance of the website and any improvements to be made.

- [www.buckingham-tc.gov.uk](http://www.buckingham-tc.gov.uk)
- [www.discoverbuckingham.uk](http://www.discoverbuckingham.uk)

**7. Communications Strategy Group Budget Review**

To receive and discuss a report from the Deputy Town Clerk

[CSG/111/22](#)

**8. Press Releases**

To note and discuss a summary of the press releases authorised by Buckingham Town Council since the previous CSG meeting on Thursday 13<sup>th</sup> October 2022.

[Appendix B](#)

**9. NALC Local Councils and Communications Strategies**

To note and discuss the Buckingham Town Council presentation slides from the NALC Local Councils & Communications Strategies Online Event.

[Appendix C](#)

**10. Chair's Items**

**11. Date of Next Meeting**

Thursday 19<sup>th</sup> January 2023 at 1pm.

To:

Cllr. R. Ahmed

Cllr. M. Gateley (Town Mayor)

Cllr. J. Harvey (Chair)

Cllr. M. Try (Vice-Chair)

**Spring Newsletter 2023 Article Ideas**

Please note: 1 page = maximum 350 words, less with pictures. Each edition is a total of 16 pages.

Distribution of this edition will be from 06/03/2023.

**Usual Pages:**

Title	Page(s)	Content suggestions
Front Cover	1	Spring Event Picture
Message from your Mayor	1	As usual
Past events	1 page	Christmas Lights Switch On, Christmas Parade, Community Fair and Holocaust Memorial Day
Current events	1 page	Pancake Race, Mayors Civic Service and Food Fair
Future events	2 pages	Commonwealth Day Flag Raising, Annual Town Meeting, Spring Fair, Lace Hill Easter Event, May Day, Celebrate Buckingham Day, Music in the Market, Fringe Week, Family Fun Day
Your views count	¼ page	As usual
Councillors details	1 page	As usual
Events Diary	1 page	Spring Picture. Dates until July

Total = 8 ¼ pages

**Spring articles required:**

Title	Page(s)	Content suggestions
Annual Town Meeting	1	Details of the event including date, location, time and how to get involved.
Council Tax & Precept Infographic	1	Infographic showing budget of council tax and precept from 22/23.

Total = 10 ¼ pages

**Spring articles suggested:**

Title	Page(s)	Content suggestions
Neighbourhood Plan	1 page	Update on the new Neighbourhood Plan or next steps
Cemetery Consultation	1 page	If timing is suitable
Bridge Repairs Update	1 page	Update on Bourton Bridge repairs.
Youth Council	1 page	Update on the new Youth Council.
Volunteering at Events	3/4 page	Details of events you can volunteer at and how to get involved.
Trading at BTC Events	1 page	List of years events, types of traders are needed and how to book.

Total space available = 5 ¾ pages

**BUCKINGHAM TOWN COUNCIL  
COMMUNICATIONS STRATEGY GROUP**

**Thursday 1<sup>st</sup> December 2022**

Contact Officer: Louise Stubbs, Deputy Town Clerk

**Communications Strategy Group Annual Budget Review**

**1. Recommendations**

1.1. It is recommended that the Committee recommend the budget changes listed and the ear-marked reserves proposed, to the Resources Committee.

**2. Background:**

2.1. This budget is to run from 1st April 2023 until 31st March 2024, so the end point is nearly 16 months away. During volatile times when inflation is very variable it is hard to predict so far into the future. Therefore, this draft budget has been reviewed in individual detail rather than just using a general percentage increase.

2.2. If a budget line is heavily reliant on paper or software we have added a greater percentage as we anticipate these costs rising higher than others.

2.3. The Communications Strategy Group has been asked by Resources to report on options for reducing the cost of the newsletter.

**3. Proposed significant changes to the Communications Strategy Working Group Budget for 2023 – 2024**

3.1. Without changes to the work produced, the required budget for 2023 – 2024 would be £7,000 for newsletters, £2,000 for the social media manager and £3,000 for the website. A total of £9,000 for budget **102/4032 Publicity** and £3,000 for **102/4041 Website**.

<b>Centre</b>	<b>Code</b>	<b>Item</b>	<b>2022 2023</b>	<b>2023 2024</b>	<b>% change 2022 - 2023</b>	<b>Explanation</b>
102	4032	PUBLICITY newsletter	£6,598	£5,207	-34%	Reduce circulation from four to three editions of the 16 page newsletter a year.
102	4032	PUBLICITY social media manager	£1,188	£515	-57%	Reduce social media manager software package to fewer users.

102	4041	WEBSITE	£5,532	£3,000	-46%	Decreased costs once website redesign complete.
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#### 4. Ear Marked Reserves

- 4.1. It is proposed that any underspend in the following codes is transferred to relevant ear-marked reserves.

Centre	Code	Item
102	4041	Website

#### 5. What do the budget lines include?

- 5.1. **Publicity 102/4032** pays for:
- 5.1.1. The design, print and circulation of the newsletter
- 5.1.2. Council social media manager software.
- 5.2. **Website 102/4041** pays for website costs including but not limited to maintenance, support, plug ins and licenses.
- 5.3. Ear marked reserve **Tourism Leaflets 901/9030** pays for new leaflets and welcome packs.
- 5.4. Ear marked reserve **Website 901/9005** pays for future website design, build or additional plug ins required through the year.

#### 6. All options to reduce costs which have been considered:

- 6.1. In order to ensure we reach as many residents as possible, it is necessary for the Council to continue using a number of communication methods, including printed newsletters, social media and the website.
- 6.2. There is no longer a requirement to publish four print newsletters a year for The Quality Gold Award accreditation, with community engagement through a variety of means emphasised. This means there are a number of different options which have been considered by Officers.
- 6.3. Continue with four newsletters a year, but reduce the size or change the type of newsletter, or look for sponsorship or advertising to subsidise the cost**
- 6.3.1. Savings investigated that make no or very limited difference to the print cost include – black and white printing, different paper types, different delivery options.

6.3.2. Savings that would make a difference but would degrade the quality of product too much to be recommended include:

- 6.3.2.1. Reducing size of newsletter. To make a significant difference in costs the newsletter would have to be reduced to a single A4 sheet, and this does not hold enough council news to be worth the cost of printing and delivering.
- 6.3.2.2. Seeking sponsorship or advertising. To compete with the cost of a business printing and delivering its own quarterly newsletter, sponsorship amounts would have to be kept very small, likely multiple sponsorships, which would require large amounts of space in the newsletter to be given up to promote the businesses, reducing space for council news significantly. This option would also require a substantial amount of officer time (and therefore additional staffing costs) to secure and manage the sponsorships or advertising over the future period.

**6.4. Reduce the social media manager package to a one user account:**

- 6.4.1. Reducing the social media manager package to a one user account is possible due to staff changes since it was originally set up.

**6.5. Reduce to three, 16 page, newsletters a year.**

- 6.5.1. Savings could be made by maintaining the 16 page newsletter but reducing our distribution to only two or three a year, rather than four. Each edition is expected to cost approximately £1736 in 2023, and more in 2024.
- 6.5.2. This is the best option. Three, 16 page, editions would still give a large amount of space for print news about the Council for residents that aren't online, but reduces delivery costs and the impact of the rise in paper costs.

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**Press Releases from Buckingham Town Council**

**30<sup>th</sup> September – 18<sup>th</sup> November 2022**

*Please note 'published' refers to publication in the local newspaper. All press releases are published on the Town Council website and promoted on social media.*

**PRESS RELEASE 341 – Grant awarded to Buckingham's Railway Walk Conservation Group**

Published 14/10/2022

**PRESS RELEASE 342 – Time for the Charter Fair**

Published 14/10/2022

**PRESS RELEASE 342 – Art in the Market back for Autumn**

This press release was not published.

**PRESS RELEASE 343 – Post Charter Fair**

Published 19/10/2022

**PRESS RELEASE 345 – Draft county plan supports Buckingham affordable housing trigger**

Published 03/11/2022

**PRESS RELEASE 346 – Falling leaves created autumnal atmosphere at Art in the Market**

Published 9/11/2022.

**PRESS RELEASE 347 – Remember, Remember the 5<sup>th</sup> of November**

Published 03/11/2022

**PRESS RELEASE 348 – Spectacular display lights up Buckingham**

Published 09/11/2022

**PRESS RELEASE 349 – Repairs to Buckingham Town Centre**

Published 16/11/2022.

**PRESS RELEASE 350 – Buckingham Marks Remembrance Sunday with poignant parade and service**

Published 16/11/2022.

**PRESS RELEASE 351 – Santa's Reindeer making a stop in Buckingham for Christmas Lights Switch On**

Published 23/11/2022.

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# Communication is the heart of good public service



Cllr Jon Harvey,  
Buckingham Town Council

# Brief Bio & Background

- Moved to Buckingham in 2007, which is a beautiful market town of about 15k population, with country's 4th longest river running through - The Great Ouse.
- Became a Town Councillor in June 2011
- Currently chair the TC's "Communications Strategy Group" (sub committee of the Resources Committee) and have chaired this for much of the last ten years
- Ardent believer in good comms (see for example my blogs about being Town Mayor of two years which were uploaded more than ¼ million times:  
<http://themayorofbuckingham.blogspot.com/>)
- Also a leadership & organisational development adviser / coach / facilitator & children's book writer.
- Independent

# My objectives today

- Persuade you to **visit** (if not move to) Buckingham - I mean you *really* should!  
The people and our place are lovely.
- Make the case that every parish/town council should be **thinking strategically** about how it communicates with its residents, for it to function well as the first level of government
- Argue for adequate **resources** to be invested in comms
- Help you think through what are the **essential ingredients** or features of strategic communication for a parish/town council.

**Buckingham TownMatters**  
Summer issue 2022

Message from your Mayor • Grant recipients • Future events  
What the Town Council achieved 2021-2022 • New: swan sculpture trail

### A MESSAGE FROM YOUR MAYOR



It has been a great honour to serve as 256th Mayor of Buckingham during the last year, and to have been elected by my fellow Councillors to continue for a second year. It was amazing to be the fantastic Celebrate Buckingham Day in Bourton Park, followed by events, such as the lighting of the Beacon at the Parish Church, a social Civic Service and street parties. This was a significant time for our nation: a time to come together and give thanks for our Queen and her dedicated service over so many years. In 1972 she said in a broadcast "I set out to work for tolerance and understanding among our world and our nation have been transformed in 70 years later. Although our need for more tolerance and understanding remains."

The rainbow is a symbol of hope, and as we raised a Rainbow flag for the first time in Buckingham on June 6th as part of Pride month, we were reminded to consider again how we can be more inclusive and considerate of everyone, without exception. The restarting of our Equality, Community Diversity, and Inclusion Working Group is another step in the community have experienced through no fault of their own.

Over the last year as Mayor, I have been able to visit many of our local schools and community groups. These serve and enrich our town, making Buckingham a great place in which to live, work and study. We were able to recognise some of those people and groups which make a difference to our daily lives through awards and grants at Mayor-making in June.

I am conscious also of so many serious issues in our world, which impact on the lives of local charities which seek to help people who are struggling financially. Details of these are on the next page.

In response to the ongoing war, a Buckingham Support for Ukraine group has been established. This group is enabling our Ukrainian guests and hosts to come together and help each other. A recent example of this was a Question and Answer session, featuring representatives from the Swan Practice, Citizens Advice and Buckinghamshire Council, together with an interpreter. Thanks to everyone involved.

As I write this, we are experiencing record high temperatures, a reminder that we are amid a climate crisis. Buckingham Town Council's Climate Emergency Plan is a high priority for us. We must all do what we can to reduce our carbon footprint for the sake of our planet and everyone. Small steps really can make a difference.

When I lit the beacon for the Jubilee, and I saw the light shining in the darkening sky, I reflected on how our Queen has lit up our lives over the last 70 years. We will follow her example and do what we can to bring light and hope to our community and beyond.

**Margaret Gateley**  
Cllr. Margaret Gateley, Mayor of Buckingham



### Buckingham TownMatters

Autumn issue 2022



See how lovely our town is...

### MAYOR MAKING/CIVIC AWARDS



The Mayor Making event is an annual ceremony held at the Church of the Holy Trinity, Bourton Park, Buckingham, on Friday 16th June 2022.

Three community awards were given to:

- Henry Freeman** - for 20 years of service to the town, as well as being a Councillor involved with horticultural activities involving the community centre and the Old Guild Hall.
- Chris Adams** for all his work in setting up and managing the Buckingham Support for Ukraine group.
- Ms. Mary Clark** for her dedication to the community.
- Ms. Jenny Smith** for her services to the community.
- Ms. Jenny Smith** for her services to the community.

**Best of Buckingham**  
Buckingham, who served on the week for 10 years.

**Area and Sports Award**  
Buckingham Community Centre for its contribution to the local community through providing and enhancing the environment.

**Natural Environment and Climate Change Award**  
Buckingham Community Centre for its contribution to the local community through providing and enhancing the environment.

### BUCKINGHAM TOWN COUNCILLORS

Cllr. Margaret Gateley - Mayor	01295 876 133	Cllr. Howard Mather	01295 833 438
Cllr. Alan Chester - Treasurer	01295 876 445	Cllr. Lou Clougherty	01295 833 436
Cllr. Eddie Rowland	01295 130255	Cllr. Ian Collier	01295 833 434
Cllr. David Gals	01295 834 000	Cllr. Colin Riggs	01295 833 432
Cllr. Graham Gills	01295 834 000	Cllr. Robin Sheehy	01295 834 000
Cllr. Ian Harvey	01295 833 998	Cllr. Martin By	01295 834 000
Cllr. Ian Sheehy	01295 833 777	Cllr. Bob Wilson	01295 834 000
Cllr. Andy Hunt	01295 834 562	Cllr. Alan Rowland - Town Clerk	01295 834 000

an Clerk we spent it

### YOUR VIEWS COUNT

As a member of the public, it is important that you let Buckingham Town Council know how you feel about the way we run our town. We would like to hear from you about the way we run our town. We would like to hear from you about the way we run our town. We would like to hear from you about the way we run our town.

**Just a Reminder:** All council members are open to the public, but we would be pleased to meet you at your own home.

You can contact us by phone, email or in person. We would be pleased to meet you at your own home.

**Town Council Office, Buckingham Centre, Swaney Close, Buckingham, MK18 1TP**  
Email: [office@buckingham-tc.gov.uk](mailto:office@buckingham-tc.gov.uk)  
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Follow us on social media: [Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/buckingham-tc), [Instagram](https://www.instagram.com/buckingham-tc), [YouTube](https://www.youtube.com/buckingham-tc), [LinkedIn](https://www.linkedin.com/buckingham-tc), [TikTok](https://www.tiktok.com/buckingham-tc), [YouTube](https://www.youtube.com/buckingham-tc)

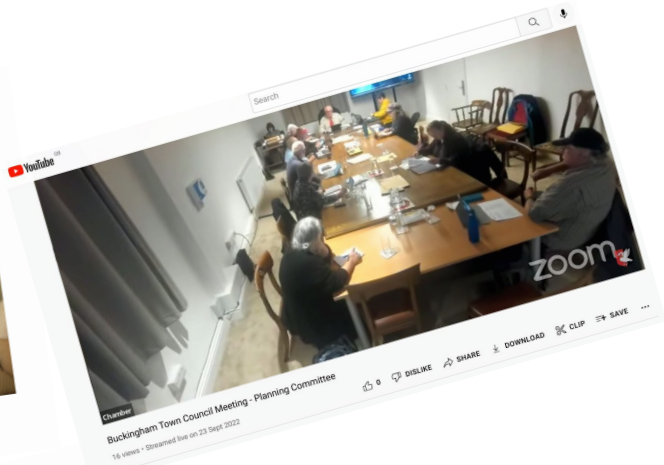
Core TC publications are here (including this quarterly newsletter):  
<https://www.buckingham-tc.gov.uk/your-town-council/publications-2/>

Many channels - press releases too.

## Buckingham Town Matters

Downloadable versions of our quarterly council newsletter. From 2018, as well as the pdf version, we will have the previous three editions available as an audio version. Audio versions from Spring 2018 onwards are available from the Town Council office by request.

	SPRING	SUMMER	AUTUMN	WINTER
2022	PDF Audio	PDF Audio	PDF Audio	PDF Audio
2021	PDF			



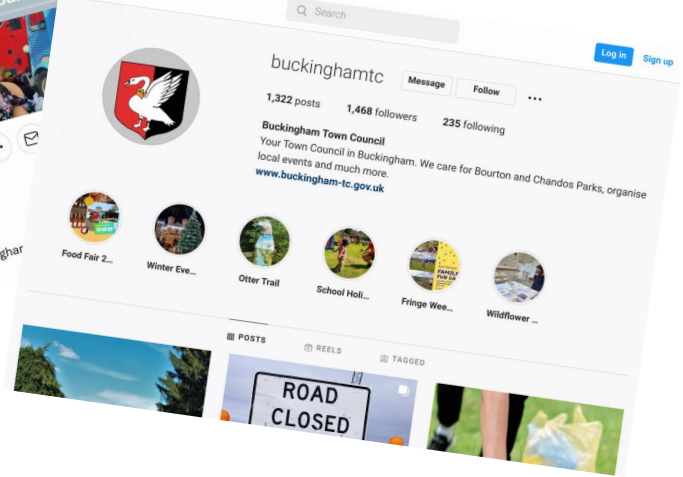
facebook



- Home
- Explore
- Notifications
- Messages
- Bookmarks
- Lists
- Profile
- More



Instagram





# Latest news!

## Latest News



### News

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**Grant awarded to Buckingham's Railway Walk Conservation Group**

5th October 2022

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**Road Closures & Parking Orders for Charter Fairs: 14th & 15th and 21st & 22nd October 2022**

4th October 2022

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**Mayor's Christmas Card Competition 2022**

4th October 2022

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**Great River Great Ouse hosts its first annual River Rinse**

28th September 2022

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**Tourist Information Centre/Shopmobility Assistant Vacancy**

28th September 2022

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**Grants available for Buckingham community groups 2023**

28th September 2022

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Remember to build solid relationships with local media over time - *positive symbiosis!*

## Thinking and acting *strategically* means...

- Always been focused on your goal - what effect is your parish/town council seeking to have on the world? What **outcomes** are you working towards?
- Conceptualising your council as an '**Asset Based Commissioning**' agent of local transformation - leading / marshalling / orchestrating / facilitating / nurturing / developing *all* local resources to achieve your outcomes
- Recognising that the **communication reach and influence** that your council has is a key *asset* to be shaped and deployed in this effort
- Vitally using open / two way communication as one of your key tools to bring about increasing amounts of **co-production & co-design** of the efforts / activities / services needed to achieve your goals
- Being a council that is increasingly known for **working with its local community** (not merely providing services 'to' in a transactional way...)

# Strategic Communication action includes having:

- Clear aims and objectives, with clear **priorities**
- A **range** of methods & channels in recognition of there being many different 'audiences'
- **Skilled people** and enough resources to make this all happen
- Sufficient **confidence** and support from the whole council and the local residents towards the approaches being taken
- **Avoiding any dependency** on other bodies or commercial interests
- **Evaluation** of impact and a scientific approach
- An **openness** towards trying out new ideas
- **Policies & processes** where required (such as banners & noticeboards, community engagement, complaints, Fol, media, newsletter, petitions, photography etc: <https://www.buckingham-tc.gov.uk/your-town-council/policies/> )



# But as always - *start where you are at!*

Planning grid suggested by BTC Deputy Town Clerk, Louise Stubbs:

	<b>Newsletter</b>	<b>Facebook</b>	<b>Other medium...</b>
<b>Objectives?</b> (why you're using it) e.g. deliver customer service			
<b>Key audience?</b> (who do you want to reach) - Age - Location - Motivations - Community (of interest?)...			
<b>Tactics?</b> (how you're using it) Content / Messaging / Frequency...			
<b>Key measurements?</b> (what will success look like?)			

# Visit Buckingham!

- <https://www.buckingham-tc.gov.uk/visiting-buckingham/your-visit/>  
Buckingham is an **ideal place** to visit for a day, drop in for an hour or two while en-route to other tourist locations, or to stay longer while using it as a base to visit the many attractions nearby and/or enjoy walking the extensive footpath network.
- ***The Hidden Treasures of Buckingham*** - which grew out of series of articles in the newsletter - is a tour of the town designed to intrigue and delight  
<https://www.buckingham-tc.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/03/HiddenTreasuresWEB.pdf>

Thank you for listening - all questions / comments welcome

- Cllr Jon Harvey
- [jharvey@cllr.buckingham-tc.gov.uk](mailto:jharvey@cllr.buckingham-tc.gov.uk)
- [@CllrJonSHarvey](https://twitter.com/CllrJonSHarvey) & [@JonSHarvey](https://twitter.com/JonSHarvey) on Twitter
- Pic of me (taken by a member of the TC team) taking part in an 'Art in the Market' event. *Don't you want to be part of this fab town...?*

