



# Buckingham TownMatters

Winter issue 2023



Message from your Mayor • What the Town Council achieved 2022-2023  
Future Events • We have listened – revised Cemetery and Allotments plan

# A MESSAGE FROM YOUR MAYOR



Dear neighbours,

As I am writing this, the days are closing in and we are moving into autumn. I hope that you will all be warm and comfortable in the coming cold months. I have been deeply touched by the support of different individuals and groups who have raised money for my two Mayor's charities: the Buckingham Food Bank and Jedidiah. It makes me feel really honoured to be the Mayor of such a supportive and generous town. If you need any help with heating, bills, home essentials, purchasing food or you know

anybody who does, information on how to access support is available on Buckinghamshire Council's website: [www.buckinghamshire.gov.uk/cost-of-living/](http://www.buckinghamshire.gov.uk/cost-of-living/).

Autumn is also the time for many of our most beloved events and celebrations. By the time you read this, we will have enjoyed the excitement of the Charter Fair in October and of Bonfire & Fireworks Night in early November. The more solemn commemorations of Remembrance Sunday on 12th November will have given us an opportunity to remember collectively those who lost their lives in two World Wars and in armed conflicts since. We are then looking forward to getting into the Christmas spirit with the switching on of the Christmas lights on Thursday 23rd November, and of course to our annual Christmas Parade on Saturday 16th December.

I look forward to meeting many of you over the coming months at our events or in town council meetings, which are always open to the public and where members of the public can speak during the first 15 minutes. This is a valuable way in which the town council can learn about the things that concern you.

*Anja Schaefer*

**Cllr. Anja Schaefer, Mayor of Buckingham**

# YOU ARE INVITED TO THE BNDP CONSULTATION



## BUCKINGHAM

NEIGHBOURHOOD  
DEVELOPMENT PLAN

Sat 25th Nov	10am - 2pm	Buckingham Community Centre
Mon 4th Dec	10am - 12 noon	Cornwalls Meadow, outside Waitrose
Tues 12th Dec	10am - 2pm	Buckingham Market
Sat 16th Dec	11.30am - 3pm	Buckingham Community Centre @ Community Fair



SCAN THIS QR CODE  
WITH YOUR PHONE  
CAMERA TO FIND OUT  
MORE



The new neighbourhood plan is still in development and we want to hear your views.

A scenarios consultation is taking place from 25th November to 18th December. Future Scenarios are not a suggested Neighbourhood Plan or policy, but starting points for discussion about Buckingham's possible future, based on months of research about Buckingham and how it might develop over the next twenty years.

While you can take part online, attending a drop in session is a great opportunity to ask questions and learn more about each scenario.



## SPOTLIGHT ON LACE HILL SPORTS & COMMUNITY CENTRE



Lace Hill Sports and Community Centre is a vibrant facility offering a wide variety of weekly classes, activities, and

annual community events for Buckingham residents. Two main rooms are available to hire, including a sports hall and a committee room, two sports pitches, an outdoor play park and a multi-use games area. Both rooms are regularly used for private functions, baby

and toddler groups, Judo, Karate, Kumon, fitness and dance sessions, Badminton, meetings, training, Yoga, Pilates, and more!

If you're looking for event space to host an activity of your own or celebrate a special occasion, contact the Town Centre & External Services Manager to enquire about availability via [lacehillcentre@buckingham-tc.gov.uk](mailto:lacehillcentre@buckingham-tc.gov.uk). For more information and to see a current timetable of what's on, visit: [www.buckingham-tc.gov.uk/town-council-services/venues-for-hire/lace-hill-centre/](http://www.buckingham-tc.gov.uk/town-council-services/venues-for-hire/lace-hill-centre/)

You can also keep up to date on recent news and announcements by following @LaceHillCentre on Facebook and Instagram.



# WHAT THE TOWN COUNCIL ACHIEVED 2022-2023

## Environment Committee

It has been another busy year for our staff looking after our local surroundings.

Having only been in post as Chair of the Environment Committee for a few months, the previous chair, our current Mayor, Cllr Schaefer must take credit for steering this committee for much of the year, I have much to learn.

Lee and his team have done a fantastic job looking after it all, including our cemetery, surveying all the memorials, our parks and green spaces, play areas and equipment, wildflower meadows and trees.



One of our bridges has been repaired, another's long-term future investigated, and the team have been key players in our annual river rinse, with the Stowe Sub Aqua club's invaluable work in the actual river.

With current and new green spaces to look after, the plans for the new cemetery and allotments seemingly within touching distance as I write and plans for further improvements to our network of paths and other facilities, the next 12 months fill me with hope and excitement.

**Councillor Fran Davies**  
**Chair, Environment Committee**

## Planning Committee

The Planning Committee has had one of its busiest years, dealing with not only planning applications from developers, businesses and



Image ©  
Granta Networks Solutions

residents but also working on the revision of the Buckingham Neighbourhood Development Plan (BNDP). Residents are being consulted before the Committee presents a draft to the Full Council in the New Year.

The Buckingham Neighbourhood Development Plan working group, comprised of councillors, representatives of the Buckingham Society, and other interested parties, has held almost 20 meetings since January and has also held public and developer consultation events.

The BNDP enshrines the town's planning policies, giving residents a say in what development they want and where. More housing will be forced on us in North Bucks as the government demands increased housebuilding throughout the country.

But along with the Vale of Aylesbury Local Plan, the BNDP can demand more and better infrastructure to support an increasing population and provide a design vision appropriate for our town.

My thanks to my fellow councillors, our Planning Clerk, and our Deputy Town Clerk, who have been working hard on all the above over the past year.

**Councillor Mark Cole JP**  
**Chair, Planning Committee**

## Town Centre and Events Committee



It has been another extremely busy year with so many events taking place which have been supported by community groups and external partners whom we work with closely such as Music in the Market, Bandjam and our Fringe Week. These events mainly took place in the town centre which helps further support local businesses. An unexpected pleasure this year was welcoming over 400 motorcyclists from the National Chopper Club at Bandjam. Town Council officers worked with the group to ensure they had a good experience in Buckingham and I'm sure their presence boosted the local economy.

A few other highlights of the year were having two successful River Rinses which were supported by members of the Stowe Sub Aqua Club and holding Celebrate Buckingham Day in Bourton Park with many charities and community groups in attendance. The Town Centre and Events Committee will also be funding the Christmas Lights Switch On and Christmas Parade events again this year from their budget. I also hope that you have visited the Charter Fair which is always a favourite event.

I would like to thank everyone who works with us throughout the year to organise events – your support and positive partnerships are equally valued by all parties.

**Councillor Robin Stuchbury**  
**Chair, Town Centre and Events Committee**

## Resources Committee

The Resources Committee works hard to make sure the Town Council spends public money carefully and thoughtfully. Each year the Town Clerk presents every Committee and Working Group with income and expenditure budgets, allowing all Councillors to ask questions or raise concerns. The budgets are then presented to the Resources Committee before being recommended to Full Council at our Precept Meeting.

We know that investing in our local economy and tourism is vital which is why we buy local products, produce, and services where possible. We are always pleased to see new businesses coming to town or current companies expanding because this opens employment opportunities, saves commuting time and money, and can allow for more leisure or family time.

We saw a rise in grant applications this year and we awarded money to many groups and clubs such as those working with the elderly, young carers, youth clubs, sports facilities, organisations that give legal, housing, and benefits advice, and many more.

Accountability, transparency, and a thriving town benefit everyone: visitors, residents, and those who work here.

**Councillor Lisa O'Donoghue**  
**Chair, Resources Committee**





# PAST EVENTS PAST EVENTS



River Rinse 1



River Rinse 2



Charter Fair



Halloween Disco

# CURRENT EVENTS CURRENT EVENTS

**Bonfire & Fireworks** will light up the paddock in Bourton Park on Saturday 4th November 2023 from 6pm. Expect various local vendors and entertainment at this totally free event. Titanium Fireworks will provide the fireworks display.



On Sunday 12th November 2023, the **Remembrance Parade** will form up on Market Hill and march from there at 10:30am to the War Memorial at St. Peter and St. Paul's Church. After the service, the parade will march back to Market Hill.



The **Winter Fair** is back at Lace Hill Sports & Community Centre on Sunday 19th November from 2pm-4pm. Come along for a festive afternoon and meet local creatives selling handmade seasonal gifts and products.

Join us at our annual **Christmas Lights Switch On** in Buckingham Town Centre from 4pm on Thursday 23rd November 2023. Expect to see lots of beautiful lights, market stalls in the cattlepens selling Christmas goods, and food vendors. On the stage, there will be live entertainment from the Great Horwood Silver Band, Stagecoach and The Buckingham School who will be singing songs from Frozen.





# FUTURE EVENTS FUTURE EVENTS

Come along to Buckingham Community Centre to visit the **Community Fair** on Saturday 16th December 2023 from 11:30am-2pm. This event provides a vehicle for local groups, societies, and charities to raise funds by selling Christmas cards, knitted items, plants and much more.

The annual **Christmas Parade** will also be taking place on Saturday 16th December 2023 and will wind its way through the streets of Buckingham from 10:45am, forming up on Chandos Road. Floats, groups on foot and marching bands will make their way through the town centre and then back to Chandos Road. A road closure organised by Buckingham Town Council will be in place during the parade. The theme for this year's Christmas Parade is 'Pantomimes'.



The **Pancake Race** is a long-established event open to everyone and consists of four races with different categories for children, adults and team relays. Small prizes will be given to all participants of the children's races and a small trophy for the winners. The event will be held on the green outside St Peter & St Paul's Church, Castle Street, Buckingham on Thursday 15th February 2024 at 11am. The event is announced by the Town Crier and opened by the Mayor.



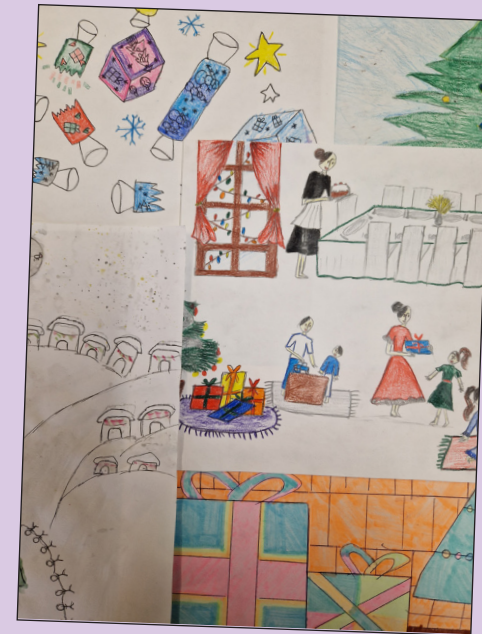
The **Food Fair** will be in the community centre on Saturday 24th February 2024 from 10am showcasing lots of great stalls from local producers. If you would like a stall at the event please email [admin@buckingham-tc.gov.uk](mailto:admin@buckingham-tc.gov.uk) or call 01280 816 426.



# CHRISTMAS CARD COMPETITION

After the wonderful success of last year's Christmas Card Contest, children from all the schools in Buckingham were invited by the Mayor of Buckingham, Cllr. Anja Schaefer, to submit their best designs for a Buckingham Christmas Card!

The card contest was proudly sponsored by local business BCQ. This fantastic supporter covered all the project costs so that all the money from card sales goes to the Mayor's charities, Jedidiah and Buckingham Food Bank - Thank you! The winners of this competition get the chance to flick the switch at our Christmas Lights Switch On event on Thursday 23rd November. Packs of Christmas cards featuring the winning designs are still available to purchase from the Tourist Information Centre and monies raised will go towards the Mayor's charities.



# ANNUAL TOWN MEETING



The Annual Town Meeting is not a council meeting, but a meeting where electors can raise issues and have their say on anything they consider important to the people of Buckingham.

There will be local services stalls to browse, offering information on what is available locally and how these services can be accessed. Topical/current issues will be addressed, and local practitioners will be invited to listen to concerns and ideas and to provide responses.

Buckingham's Annual Town Meeting will be held in the Spring. The provisional date is Thursday 18th April 2024. The meeting will take place in the Community Centre from 6:30pm and all residents of Buckingham are invited to join us, to share ideas about how Buckingham could improve now and in the future.

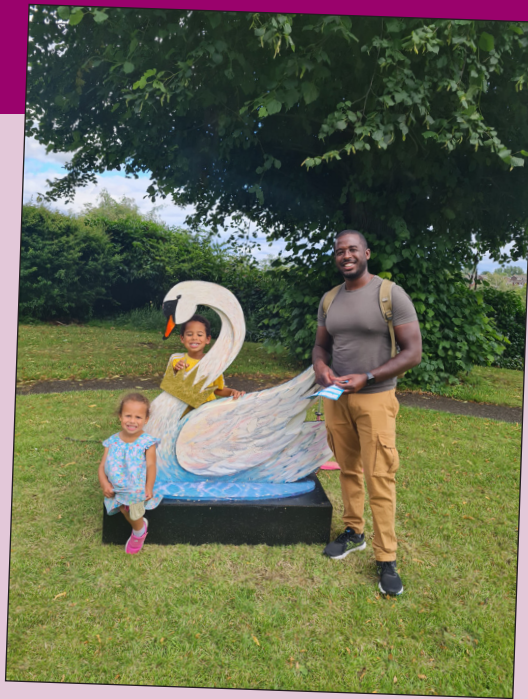
Residents will be invited to submit questions in the weeks running up to the meeting and we hope to see many electors attending the Annual Town Meeting in 2024.



# SWAN TRAIL

Our dazzling display of ten selfie-sized swan sculptures was a source of culture, pride and joy this summer. The sculptures were dotted around Buckingham's well-known landmarks, parks, and streets, creating weeks of fun for swan spotters. The Swan Trail provided a free, cultural activity for families, friends, and tourists to enjoy as well as making art accessible to all.

Brightening up everyone's visits to the town, the swan trail also encouraged people to discover parts of Buckingham they have never seen before. Despite the Great British Summer, the trail was a remarkable success, it saw more than 3,500 visitors and 7,875,000 steps taken by explorers! Here is some feedback from trail participants: 'We really enjoyed the trail'; 'It has shown us parts of Buckingham we have never been to before', 'The swans were beautiful.' Following the trail's end, the sculptures were displayed one final time at The Old Gaol where bidders were invited to make their best bids online at auction to own their own swan. The money raised at the auction will now be split equally between the Mayor's Charities and a similar future event.



Public art is a fun way to bring communities together, but we couldn't do it without you! Let's take a moment to express our gratitude and thank the artists, sponsors, and hosts for making this community event possible and everyone who visited the trail. Especially Zen Seeta Doodles Artist, Jill Blakey Art, Little Magpie Art, Ashley King Illustration, Buckingham Primary School, George Grenville Academy, Lace Hill Academy, Buckingham Youth Clubs, Padbury CE School, Buckingham Ford, Heritage & Sons, The Buckingham Society, The Grand Junction, Gilroy Steel Solicitors, Thrive Chiropractic Healthcare Clinic, Florence Nightingale Hospice Charity, Beachborough School, the Buckingham & Villages Community Board, Finca El Monte, The Centre at Verney Close, Chandos Park Bowls Club, Buckingham Old Gaol Museum, and The Old Town Hall Villiers Hotel.

# WE HAVE LISTENED – REVISED CEMETERY AND ALLOTMENTS PLAN

Last year we reported that the cemetery will run out of space in 2024. An earlier consultation supported building a new cemetery and allotments off the Tingewick Road roundabout but offered less support for the size and cost of the original proposals.

Having listened to your feedback and scaled the project back a revised consultation has just ended which included delivering information to every home in the parish.

The result of the revised cemetery and allotments consultation was 87% in favour of having a new cemetery and allotments site, and 76% in favour of increasing the precept to meet the repayments.

This smaller project will cost approximately £1.25 million with repayments of around

£72,000 a year (an additional 47p a year for a band D property) and includes:

- 746 burial plots, including traditional, lawn, and children's burials, with a wooded area for ashes. This should last for about 80 years.
- 30 allotments (average 25m<sup>2</sup>).
- Car parking for 30 vehicles, including disabled bays.
- Wildflower and tree planting, and appropriate landscaping.

Work is expected to start early next year.



# FRIENDS OF THE UNIVERSITY OF BUCKINGHAM

The Friends of The University of Buckingham are made up of local people, independent of the university, who want to support the university and help students have the best possible experience.

## Student mental health and more

Friends' activities are mainly targeted at supporting student mental health and students who are experiencing financial difficulties.



The Friends bring a mobile zoo to the university, the next visit being Tuesday 14th November. Students also visit an equestrian centre for

calming pony interaction sessions. Students also benefit from group 'Coffee and Chat' sessions, English language tuition, lifestyle skills tuition, and more.

## Friends Members

Income is mainly from membership subscriptions. New members say they join because of the entertaining university talks, the Friends programme of social events and to have a closer connection to their university.

The Friends Annual Dinner is on Thursday 23rd November and a wine-tasting evening is planned for February 2024. Within the last two years, over 100 Buckingham area residents have joined the Friends. You too are welcome to join, visit: <https://www.friendsuob.uk/membership>.



# MOWING TO PRESERVE WILDFLOWERS



No Mow May is an environmental initiative that encourages people to stop mowing their lawns during the month of May, providing wildflowers and pollinators a chance to thrive. The Town Council has adopted alternative strategies to promote biodiversity and support pollinators to be able to actively participate in this campaign.

The bypass and Bourton Park's wildflower meadow can serve as biodiversity hotspots while allowing most public spaces to be regularly maintained. The Town Council, under devolved services, is responsible for mowing all grassed Highway verges across Buckingham and has done so for many years to a single mower's width. The larger sections of the verge are left to grow naturally with wildflowers offering numerous benefits to both the environment and the well-being of wildflower populations.

Since 2017, the Town Council has increased meadow and wildflower areas in Buckingham to over 10,250 square meters to improve biodiversity – that is over 2.5 acres which is equivalent to two and half football pitches and has the potential to be home to millions of insects.

# BOURTON PARK BRIDGE REPAIRS UPDATE

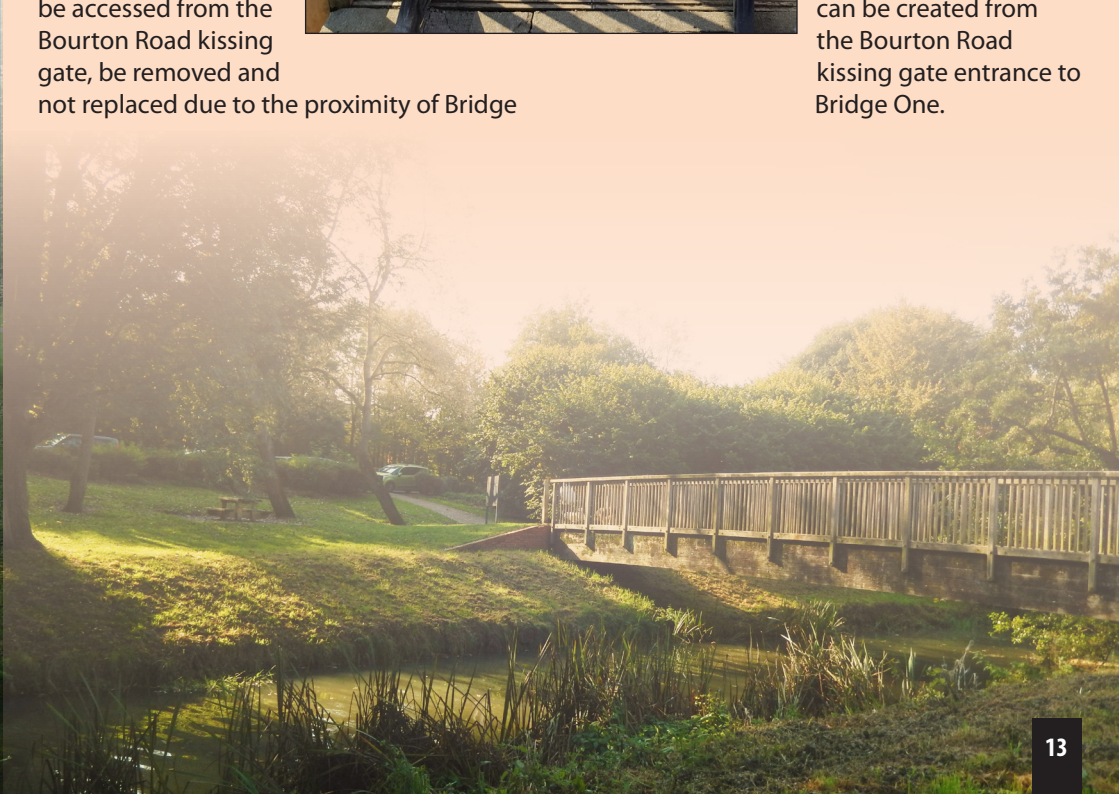
The repair work to four of Bourton Park's footbridges is now complete. The 18-month-long project included repairs to steel and structural timbers, replacement handrails, balustrades, spindles, and decking.

At the Environment Committee on Monday 19th December 2022, members agreed with a Structural Engineer's recommendation that Bridge Two, which can be accessed from the Bourton Road kissing gate, be removed and not replaced due to the proximity of Bridge



One, located closest to the car park, which already crosses the River Great Ouse.

The Town Council's Greenspaces Team inspects the park's footbridges on a weekly basis and any safety hazards are dealt with immediately, or the relevant bridge is closed until the necessary repairs are made. The Town Council aims to keep Bridge Two open and operational until a new section of footpath can be created from the Bourton Road kissing gate entrance to Bridge One.





# WINTER SAFETY

Winter is almost upon us again. We're sure many residents are looking forward to 2024, but before we get there, here are some tips to help you prepare for the colder months.

**At home** – Make sure you keep warm. Extra insulation can help keep your home warm; Citizens Advice may be able to support you with accessing financial help including the Green Homes Grant or Warm Homes Discount. Check you're on the best fuel tariff. You can talk to an energy adviser via the consumer helpline on 0808 223 1133. If you're struggling with energy debt, consider contacting your supplier as they may have ways in which to help pay your debt down. For more information, visit [www.citizensadvice.org.uk/consumer/energy/energy-supply/get-help-paying-your-bills/struggling-to-pay-your-energy-bills/](http://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/consumer/energy/energy-supply/get-help-paying-your-bills/struggling-to-pay-your-energy-bills/).

**Bad weather** – Keep a torch handy in case of power cuts. Salt from grit bins can be used to salt roads, paths and public areas only. It may be useful to get some extra salt or grit to keep your paths clear at home. Use a wide shovel to clear snow off your drive and around where you live.



**On the road** – Ensure your car tyres are OK for icy roads, and the anti-freeze is topped-up with a winter mix. Keep blankets, Hi-Viz waistcoats, drinking water, pre-packaged food like cereal bars and a snow shovel in your boot for emergencies. And if you have a mobile phone, remember to keep it charged in case you get stranded.

**Be a good neighbour** – Have you talked with your neighbours, especially the more vulnerable ones, about how you can help each other out in the winter months? Remember to keep in contact with your relatives and show community support as it makes a big difference to those struggling or feeling lonely.

# BUCKINGHAM TOWN COUNCILLORS

<b>Cllr. Anja Schaefer</b> – Mayor	01280 816 426	Cllr. Howard Mordue	01280 815 418
<b>Cllr. Ade Osibogun</b> – Deputy Mayor	01280 816 954	Cllr. Lisa O'Donoghue	07906 408 646
Cllr. Robina Ahmed	01280 816 426	Cllr. Anthony Ralph	07968 108 304
Cllr. Mark Cole JP	01280 816 005	Cllr. Robin Stuchbury	07752 394 162
Cllr. Geraldine Collins	01280 823 006	Cllr. Martin Try	01280 816 202
Cllr. Fran Davies	07976 558 609	Cllr. Ryan Willett	07889 284 495
Cllr. Margaret Gateley	01280 816 317		
Cllr. Jon Harvey	01280 812 711		
Cllr. Andy Mahi	01280 816 562	<b>Town Clerk</b> – Claire Molyneux	01280 816 426

## USEFUL NUMBERS

Buckingham Town Council	01280 816 426	Domestic Violence Helpline	0808 2000 247
Buckingham Cemetery	01280 816 801	Thames Valley Police	101
Buckingham Shopmobility	07738 314 027	NHS Urgent Care	111
Lace Hill Sports & Community Centre	01280 812 872	National Power Cut Helpline	105
Buckingham Community Hall	01280 823 584	National Gas Helpline	0800 11 11
Buckingham Tourist Information Centre	01280 823 020	Crimestoppers	0800 555 111
Buckinghamshire Council	0300 131 6000	Floodline	0345 988 1188
Transport for Buckinghamshire	01296 382 416	ChildLine	0800 111 999
Citizens Advice Aylesbury Vale	0344 245 1289	Samaritans	01908 667 777
		StreetLink (rough sleeping)	0300 500 0914
		Fraud	0300 123 2040
		Bank Fraud Hotline	159

## 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

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

You can email us at or just drop us a line at the addresses opposite.

We look forward to hearing from you:

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

**Email:** [office@buckingham-tc.gov.uk](mailto:office@buckingham-tc.gov.uk) or **visit:** [www.buckingham-tc.gov.uk](http://www.buckingham-tc.gov.uk)

**Call:** 01280 816 426 (Please phone for appointments)

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This is delivered to approx. 6,500 homes and businesses. It is also available on our website as a PDF and an audio version. Please contact the Town Council if you would like to request a large print copy.

*Please note, events organised by Buckingham Town Council may be photographed and these photographs may be published.*



# 2023/24 EVENTS DIARY



Please find further details inside or online: [www.buckingham-tc.gov.uk/town-matters/events/](http://www.buckingham-tc.gov.uk/town-matters/events/)

<b>NOVEMBER</b>	Christmas Lights Switch On X ♡	Thurs 23rd (4pm-7pm)	Buckingham Town Centre
<b>DECEMBER</b>	Christmas Parade Community Fair X ♡	Sat 16th (10:30am-12:30pm) Sat 16th (11:30am-2pm)	Buckingham Town Centre Buckingham Community Centre
<b>2024</b>			
<b>FEBRUARY</b>	Pancake Race Food Fair X ♡	Thurs 15th (11am-12pm) Sat 24th (10am-3pm)	Green outside St Peter and St Paul's Church Buckingham Community Centre
<b>MARCH</b>	Commonwealth Day Flag Raising	Mon 11th (10am)	Outside Council Chamber
<b>APRIL</b>	Annual Town Meeting	TBC	Buckingham Community Centre

For volunteering opportunities, visit our website: [www.buckingham-tc.gov.uk/get-involved/volunteering/](http://www.buckingham-tc.gov.uk/get-involved/volunteering/) or call the office on 01280 816 426 for more information.

- Key to spaces available:**
- Food & Drinks Traders X
  - Crafts & Goods Traders 🛒
  - Local Charities, Voluntary & Community Groups ♡

