



Buckingham Town Council

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office@buckingham-tc.gov.uk

Town Clerk: Claire Molyneux

ENVIRONMENT
COMMITTEE

Wednesday, 08 April 2026

Councillor,

You are summoned to a meeting of the Environment Committee of Buckingham Town Council which will be held on Monday 13th April 2026 at 7pm in the Council Chamber, Cornwalls Meadow, Buckingham.

Please note that the meeting will be preceded by a Public Session in accordance with Standing Orders 3.e, 3.f, and 3.g, which will last for a maximum of 15 minutes. A member of the public shall not speak for more than 3 minutes. Members of the public can attend the meeting in person. If you would like to address the meeting virtually, please email committeeclerk@buckingham-tc.gov.uk or call 01280 816426 for details.

The meeting can be watched live on the Town Council's YouTube channel here:

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC89BUTwVpjAOEIdSlfcZC9Q/>

Claire Molyneux
Town Clerk

AGENDA

1. Apologies for absence

Members are asked to receive apologies for absence.

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. Minutes

To agree the minutes of the Environment Committee meeting held on Monday 16 February 2026.

[Copy previously circulated](#)

4. Budgets

To receive the latest figures.

[Appendix A](#)



Twinned with Mouvaux, France;

Neukirchen-Vluyn, Germany



Valmadrera, Italy



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. Policy development

Recommendations from the Environment Working Group held on 20 March 2026:

5.1. Land Hire Agreement

To receive the report presented to the Environment Working Group.
To discuss and agree the Land Hire Agreement policy.

[E/152/25](#)
[Appendix B](#)

5.2. Dark Skies Policy

To discuss and agree the draft Dark Skies Policy.

[Appendix C](#)

6. Railway walk update

To receive a written update from the Buckinghamshire Council Principal Project Manager.

[Additional information](#).

[Appendix D](#)

7. Action report

To receive the report and note the updated information.

[Appendix E](#)

8. Buckingham Community Wildlife and Climate Emergency Group

To receive the notes of a meeting held on 25 February 2026.

[Appendix F](#)

9. News releases

10. Chair's announcements – for information only

11. Date of next meeting: Monday 8th June 2026

To Committee Members:

Cllr. T. Allen

Cllr. F. Davies

Cllr. L. Draper

Cllr. J. Harvey

Cllr. H. Haydock

Cllr. A. Mahi

Cllr. R. Newall

Cllr. Ruth Newell

Town Mayor

Chair

Vice Chair

Cllr. L. O'Donoghue

Cllr. R. Poppe

Cllr. A. Schaefer

Cllr. S. Singh

Cllr. R. Stuchbury

Detailed Income & Expenditure by Budget Heading 31/03/2026

Month No: 12

Committee Report

	Actual Year To Date	Current Annual Bud	Variance Annual Total	Committed Expenditure	Funds Available	% Spent	Transfer to/from EMR	Explanation
<u>ENVIRONMENT</u>								
<u>201 Environment EXPENDITURE</u>								
3995 NI Environment	23,041	26,112	3,071		3,071	88.2%		
3996 Pensions ERS Environment	48,574	62,851	14,277		14,277	77.3%		
4004 Salaries environment	205,352	253,650	48,298		48,298	81.0%		
<u>202 Roundabouts INCOME</u>								
1051 Roundabout no. 1	1,061	2,881	1,820			36.8%		Part year sponsorship only
1052 Roundabout no. 2	1,535	1,535	0			100.0%		
1053 Roundabout no. 3	2,520	2,520	0			100.0%		
1054 Roundabout no. 4	3,211	3,211	0			100.0%		
1056 Roundabout no. 6	3,422	3,422	0			100.0%		
1057 Roundabout no. 7	1,746	1,746	0			100.0%		
<u>202 Roundabouts EXPENDITURE</u>								
4108 Roundabout	1,428	2,000	572	55	517	74.1%		
<u>203 Maintenance EXPENDITURE</u>								
4082 Bourton Road Allotments	2,350	2,350	0		0	100.0%		
<u>205 Grounds maintenance EXPENDITURE</u>								
4033 Waste disposal	5,312	6,081	769		769	87.4%		
4035 Machinery	2,973	2,973	0		0	100.0%		
4036 Fuel (Mower)	1,635	1,900	265		265	86.1%		
4037 Sundries	1,249	3,251	2,002	1,269	734	77.4%		
4063 Vehicle hire and running costs	4,150	7,242	3,092	834	2,257	68.8%		
<u>248 Depot EXPENDITURE</u>								
4013 Equipment purchase	588	5,462	4,874		4,874	10.8%		
4055 Alarm	581	600	19		19	96.8%		
4225 Rates	5,240	4,928	(312)		(312)	106.3%	312	EMR to cover
4601 Repairs & maintenance fund	804	900	96		96	89.4%		
4602 Electricity	1,447	1,660	213		213	87.2%		
4603 Water	141	635	494		494	22.2%		
<u>249 C Meadow Toilets/Shopmobility INCOME</u>								
1085 Shopmobility income	331	245	(86)			135.1%		

	Actual Year To Date	Current Annual Bud	Variance Annual Total	Committed Expenditure	Funds Available	% Spent	Transfer to/from EMR	Explanation
<u>249 C Meadow Toilets/Shopmobility EXPENDITURE</u>								
4602 Electricity	0	600	600		600	0.0%		
4603 Water	1,653	600	(1,053)		(1,053)	275.5%		Unknown cost at precept
4608 Shopmobility	804	1,000	196	32	164	83.6%		
4612 Contractor charge	11,631	11,774	143		143	98.8%		
4709 Maintenance	661	1,000	339	500	(161)	116.1%		Unexpected repairs / replacements
<u>250 Lace Hill INCOME</u>								
1026 Lace Hill Community Centre	32,402	42,000	9,598			77.1%		
1027 Solar income	0	150	150			0.0%		
<u>250 Lace Hill EXPENDITURE</u>								
4050 Lace Hill playing fields	0	555	555		555	0.0%		
4118 Solar panels	0	400	400		400	0.0%		
4158 Lace Hill gas	4,161	5,112	951		951	81.4%		
4159 Lace Hill electricity	4,758	7,202	2,445		2,445	66.1%		
4160 Lace Hill water	183	1,124	941		941	16.3%		
4161 Lace Hill Repair & Maintenance	4,172	4,800	628	796	(169)	103.5%		
4162 Lace Hill Planned Maintenance	4,894	8,200	3,306	873	2,433	70.3%		
4164 Lace Hill equipment	1,542	3,200	1,658	501	1,157	63.9%		
4225 Rates	10,354	0	(10,354)		(10,354)	0.0%		Underspend to cover
<u>251 Chandos Park INCOME</u>								
1030 Bowls income	644	644	0			100.0%		
1035 Tennis Court Rent	799	799	0			100.0%		
<u>251 Chandos Park EXPENDITURE</u>								
4601 Repairs & maintenance fund	188	4,088	3,900	6,466	(2,566)	162.8%		New bins ordered
4602 Electricity	684	800	116		116	85.5%		
4603 Water	1,036	2,535	1,499		1,499	40.9%		
4606 Bowls Club Maintenance	308	2,120	1,812	142	1,670	21.2%		
<u>252 Bourton Park EXPENDITURE</u>								
4601 Repairs & maintenance fund	38,342	11,000	(27,342)	4,913	(32,255)	393.2%	30,747	EMR to cover

	Actual Year To Date	Current Annual Bud	Variance Annual Total	Committed Expenditure	Funds Available	% Spent	Transfer to/from EMR	Explanation
<u>253 Cemeteries INCOME</u>								
1041 Burial fees	25,830	27,729	1,899			93.2%		
<u>253 Cemeteries EXPENDITURE</u>								
4225 Rates	3,026	2,494	(532)		(532)	121.3%	532	EMR to cover
4265 Cemetery Maintenance	6,421	3,500	(2,921)		(2,921)	183.5%		Replacement tress and shrubs to be split with 262/4285
4601 Repairs & maintenance fund	3,502	5,000	1,498	184	1,314	73.7%		
4602 Electricity	613	1,035	422		422	59.2%		
4617 Memorial testing	1,811	2,253	442		442	80.4%		
4619 Cemeteries Development	47,464	57,544	10,080	1,952	8,127	85.9%		
4620 Expenses for burial duties	5,023	5,785	762		762	86.8%		
<u>254 Chandos Park toilets EXPENDITURE</u>								
4612 Contractor charge	11,516	11,774	258		258	97.8%		
4709 Maintenance	1,187	2,000	813		813	59.4%		
<u>255 Railway Walk & Castle Hill EXPENDITURE</u>								
4709 Maintenance	0	1,180	1,180		1,180	0.0%		
<u>256 Storage Premises EXPENDITURE</u>								
4066 Grenville garage rent	607	650	43		43	93.4%		
<u>258 Cemetery Lodge INCOME</u>								
1061 Cemetery Lodge rental income	10,099	12,099	2,000			83.5%		
<u>258 Cemetery Lodge EXPENDITURE</u>								
4034 PWLB repayments inc. interest	4,702	4,702	(0)		(0)	100.0%		
4609 Cemetery Lodge maintenance	2,638	3,375	737		737	78.2%		
<u>260 CCTV EXPENDITURE</u>								
4100 CCTV maintenance	2,567	4,000	1,433		1,433	64.2%		
<u>261 Community Centre INCOME</u>								
1078 New Homes Bonus	23,983	0	(23,983)			0.0%		
<u>261 Community Centre EXPENDITURE</u>								
4085 Structural repairs	25,877	19,910	(5,967)	234	(6,201)	131.1%	2,410	EMR to cover
4091 Chamber	1,299	1,150	(149)		(149)	112.9%		

	Actual Year To Date	Current Annual Bud	Variance Annual Total	Committed Expenditure	Funds Available	% Spent	Transfer to/from EMR	Explanation
<u>262 Parks General EXPENDITURE</u>								
4101 Seats and bins	0	2,000	2,000	2,000	0	100.0%		
4102 Dog bins	3,946	4,660	714		714	84.7%		
4106 Play area maintenance	3,596	14,000	10,404	5,777	4,627	66.9%		
4112 Environment Equipment	7,747	11,050	3,303	2,164	1,138	89.7%		
4122 Tree works	4,920	36,760	31,840	21,810	10,030	72.7%		
4168 Defibrillators	968	560	(408)		(408)	172.9%	717	EMR to cover
4275 Play area replacement fund	0	10,500	10,500		10,500	0.0%		
4276 Conservation Volunteers	600	2,240	1,640		1,640	26.8%		
4280 Machinery Repair / Replace	0	2,500	2,500		2,500	0.0%		
4281 Vehicle Repair / Replace	0	2,500	2,500		2,500	0.0%		
4284 Biodiversity Audit	0	2,000	2,000		2,000	0.0%		
<u>264 Tingewick Road Cemetery INCOME</u>								
1109 PWLB Income New Cemetery	1,173,099	0	(1,173,099)			0.0%		*
<u>264 Tingewick Road Cemetery EXPENDITURE</u>								
4282 New Cemetery PWLB Repayments	33,321	33,321	(0)		(0)	100.0%		
4285 New Cemetery PWLB Expenditure	1,058,900	0	(1,058,900)	84,332	(1,143,231)	0.0%		*
Grand Totals:- Income	1,280,682	98,981	(1,181,701)			1293.9%		
Expenditure	1,622,488	697,148	(925,340)	134,836	(1,060,175)	252.1%		
Net Income over Expenditure	(341,806)	(598,167)	(256,361)					

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Earmarked Reserves (NOT YET FINALISED FOR YEAR ENDING 2025/2026)

Account	Opening Balance	Income	Expenditure	Closing Balance
326 EMR CEMETERY DEVELOPMENT	44,596.49	8,010.09	4,506.58	48,100.00
328 EMR FLOOD RELIEF FUND	826.00	0.00	0.00	826.00
329 EMR WAR MEMORIAL	600.00	0.00	600.00	0.00
333 EMR PLAY AREA REPLACEMENT	57,932.00	10,000.00	0.00	67,932.00
335 EMR GREEN SPACES DEVELOPMENT	8,916.00	5,862.00	0.00	14,778.00
337 EMR BRIDGE REPAIRS	44,640.00	28,587.37	63,974.16	9,253.21
339 EMR DEPOT EQUIPMENT	7,850.00	3,150.00	0.00	11,000.00
340 EMR AEDS	850.00	0.00	717.00	133.00
341 EMR LHSCC REPAIRS & MAINT	25,000.00	3,000.00	0.00	28,000.00
342 EMR CEMETERY LODGE REPAIRS	500.00	0.00	500.00	0.00
343 EMR BOWLS PAVILION REPAIRS	2,493.00	0.00	0.00	2,493.00
344 EMR MAKING GOOD/BOUNDARY REP	45,000.00	0.00	0.00	45,000.00
353 EMR WILDLIFE CONSERVATION VOLU	1,461.00	2,571.00	300.00	3,732.00
354 EMR MACHINERY REPLACE & REPAIR	9,949.00	2,500.00	0.00	12,449.00
355 EMR BUILDINGS REPLACE & REPAIR	6,500.00	2,410.00	4,820.00	4,090.00
357 EMR VEHICLE REPLACEMENT & REPA	3,445.00	3,898.00	0.00	7,343.00

Buckingham Town Council
Environment Policies working Group
Friday 20th March 2026.

Contact Officer: Estates Manager

Land Hire Agreement

1. Recommendations

1.1. That Members note the current list of events held within Town Council–owned parks and green spaces.

1.2. That Members review, provide comments on, and recommend next steps regarding the draft Land Hire Agreement and accompanying draft fees structure.

2. Background

2.1. At the Working Group meeting held on 14th November 2025, Members examined Buckinghamshire Council’s existing framework and public guidance for hiring parks and green spaces. This review informed the need for Buckingham Town Council to develop a clear, consistent, and fair approach to land hire across its own sites.

2.2. Following discussion, Members agreed that the next stage of work (to be brought forward to the March 2026 meeting) should include:

- A summary of event types regularly taking place in Town Council parks.
- A list of recurring hirers and associated event categories.
- A set of principles to underpin a new Town Council Land Hire Agreement, specifically:
 - That small classes and community-oriented sessions should remain free of charge.
 - That larger events or those of a commercial nature should incur hire fees.
 - That the fees framework should clearly distinguish between charitable/community benefit activities and commercial operations.
- Recognition that one-off events may require a different charging approach to regular bookings.
- That events with 20 or more attendees are considered chargeable.
- That regular hirers attracting fewer than 15–20 attendees, and who do not require exclusive access, should not be charged, although Public Liability Insurance must still be provided.
- That commercial lessons are not permitted within designated children’s play areas, Multi-Use Games Areas (MUGAs), or the Pump Track.

3. Information

3.1 Draft Land Hire Agreement

The attached draft Land Hire Agreement incorporates all principles previously discussed by Members. The document is also informed by a review of comparable policies adopted by neighbouring town and parish councils, ensuring that Buckingham's approach is aligned with regional practice.

3.2 Draft Fees Structure

The proposed fees structure has been developed to complement the policy and to attempt a balance between community support and cost recovery. Fee levels have been benchmarked against those of nearby councils to ensure proportionality and competitiveness.

3.3 Event List

A current list of events and regular bookings held across Town Council parks and green spaces is provided for Members' information. This list is accurate as of Autumn 2025.

	<p>Buckingham Town Council</p> <p>Town Council Land Hire Policy</p>	<p>Date Agreed: tbc Minute Number: tbc Prepared by: Version:</p>
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1. Policy Statement

Buckingham Town Council (“the Council”) manages parks, open spaces and amenity land on behalf of the community. The Council supports responsible use of its land where activities:

- Benefit residents and visitors
- Protect public safety
- Safeguard the environment and biodiversity
- Prevent damage to Council assets
- Minimise disturbance to neighbouring properties

This policy sets out the framework under which Council-owned land may be used, hired or licensed, and clarifies when charges will apply.

2. Purpose and Scope

This policy applies to:

- Parks and recreation grounds owned by Buckingham Town Council
- Town Council-managed green spaces
- Temporary use of Council land for events, classes, markets or activities

This policy does not apply to:

- Lace Hill sports pitches (separately licensed)
- Long-term leases
- Allotments
- Buildings or indoor venues (separate hire policies apply)

3. Categories of Use

For charging and assessment purposes, land use is categorised as follows:

3.1 Community and Small-Scale Use (Non-Chargeable)

The following will normally **not be charged**, subject to prior notification and approval:

- Informal community gatherings

- Small regular classes with fewer than 15–20 attendees
- Activities that do not require exclusive use of space
- No commercial sales element

Conditions:

- Public Liability Insurance (minimum £5 million) must be provided.
- The activity must **not exclude** general public access.
- The Council reserves the right to review attendance levels.

If attendance regularly exceeds 20 participants, the activity will become chargeable.

3.2 Chargeable Use

Charges will apply where all three conditions apply:

- Events involve **20 or more attendees at any one time**
- The activity is commercial in nature
- The hirer is charging participants

Fees will distinguish between:

- **Charity / Community Benefit Events** (reduced rate)
- **Commercial Events or Lessons** (commercial rate)

Conditions:

- Public Liability Insurance (minimum £5 million) must be provided.
- The Council reserves the right to review attendance levels.

The Council's Schedule of Fees and Charges will set out applicable rates.

3.3 One-Off vs Regular Bookings

The Council distinguishes between:

One-Off Events

- Festivals, tournaments, markets, promotional events
- Assessed individually under the Event Classification Framework (Appendix A)

Regular Bookings

- Ongoing weekly or seasonal classes
- Subject to annual or seasonal agreement

- Reviewed periodically to ensure attendance and use remain within agreed thresholds
- Regular hirers must maintain valid Public Liability Insurance (minimum £5 million) at all times.

4. Prohibited and Restricted Uses

4.1 Commercial Lessons in Designated Activity Areas

Commercial coaching or lessons are **not permitted** in:

- Children's play areas
- Multi-Use Games Areas (MUGAs)
- The Pump Track (when constructed)

These areas are provided for free public recreational use and must remain accessible to all.

4.2 General Restrictions

The Council reserves the right to refuse applications that:

- Cause unreasonable disruption
- Risk environmental damage
- Conflict with the character or intended purpose of the site
- Pose reputational or safety concerns

5. Application Process

5.1 Submission

All requests must be made using the Council's Land Hire Application Form.

Applications must normally be received:

- At least 12 weeks prior to small or medium events
- 6 months for large-scale events

Regular class providers must apply before commencing activity.

5.2 Documentation

Depending on scale and risk, applicants will be required to provide:

- Completed application form
- Public Liability Insurance (minimum £5 million)
- Risk Assessment

- Event Management Plan (where applicable)
- Site Plan
- Traffic Management Plan (if required)
- Relevant licences (e.g. Temporary Event Notice)
- Safeguarding arrangements

The Council reserves the right to request additional documentation.

6. Fees and Deposits

Hire fees are set annually by the Council.

Fees may vary depending on:

- Community/charitable or commercial status
- One-off or regular booking
- Duration and frequency
- Attendance numbers
- Requirement for exclusive use
- Infrastructure and vehicle access

A refundable damage deposit may be required.

The Council reserves the right to recover costs for reinstatement, cleaning or repairs.

7. Conditions of Hire

7.1 Health and Safety

Hirers are responsible for compliance with all relevant legislation. The Council accepts no liability for injury or loss arising from the activity, except where caused by Council negligence.

7.2 Protection of Land

Hirers must:

- Prevent damage to grass, trees and infrastructure
- Use protective matting where necessary
- Remove all litter and equipment
- Leave the site in a clean and safe condition

7.3 Noise and Disturbance

The Council may impose:

- Restrictions on timings

- Limits on amplified sound and lighting
- Curfews

7.4 Vehicles

Vehicle access is by prior agreement only. Vehicles must not access grassed areas without permission.

7.5 Alcohol and Licensable Activities

Appropriate licences must be obtained and evidenced to the Council.

7.6 Biodiversity Protection

Activities must not damage ecologically sensitive areas. The Council may restrict use during certain seasons or weather conditions.

8. Commercial Use

Commercial events and lessons may be permitted where they:

- Are compatible with the character of the site
- Do not unreasonably restrict public access
- Provide identifiable community benefit

Higher fees will apply to commercial activity.

Appendix A – Event Classification Framework

Category	Attendance (at any one time)	Characteristics	Notice Period
Small Event	Up to 300	Limited infrastructure, low risk, no road closures	12 weeks
Medium Event	300–1,000	Amplified sound, temporary structures, possible licensing	12 weeks
Large Event	Over 1,000	Significant infrastructure, traffic management, multi-agency coordination	6 months

Additional Notes:

- Events with 20+ attendees are chargeable.
- Regular hirers exceeding agreed attendance thresholds will be reclassified.

- High-risk elements (fireworks, inflatables, motorised activity) may result in escalation regardless of attendance.
- Annual events require fresh approval each year.

Buckingham Town Council – Land Hire Fee Matrix

Event / Activity Type	Attendance	Frequency	Use Type	Fee / Notes
Small Community Class	Up to 15–20	Regular (weekly / seasonal)	Community / Charity	Free (PLI required; no exclusive access)
Small Community Event	20–300	One-off	Community / Charity	Nominal fee: £25–£50 (covers admin and minimal site wear)
Small Commercial Class / Event	20–300	One-off	Commercial	£50–£150 per session, depending on impact & site
Medium Community Event	301–1,000	One-off	Community / Charity	£100–£250 (depending on infrastructure required)
Medium Commercial Event	301–1,000	One-off	Commercial	£250–£600 (plus charges for utilities, infrastructure, or exclusive access)
Large Community Event	1,001+	One-off	Community / Charity	Assessed individually – typically £300–£1,000; deposit required
Large Commercial Event	1,001+	One-off	Commercial	Assessed individually – typically £1,000+; deposit and full risk management required
Regular Commercial Lessons (<15–20 attendees)	<15–20	Weekly / Seasonal	Commercial	Free, PLI required; fees apply if attendance >20 or exclusive access is needed
Regular Commercial Lessons (20+ attendees)	20+	Weekly / Seasonal	Commercial	£50–£100 per session (depending on site and impact)
Prohibited Commercial Lessons	Any	Any	Commercial	Not permitted in Play Areas, MUGAs, or Pump Track

Additional Notes:**1. Deposits:**

- a. Small events: £50
- b. Medium events: £150
- c. Large events: £500+ (refundable if no damage or extra costs incurred)

2. Infrastructure & Services Charges:

- a. Use of electricity, water, staging, or fencing may incur additional costs.
- b. Vehicle access beyond agreed areas will be charged separately.

3. Insurance Requirement:

- a. Minimum Public Liability Insurance: £5 million for all bookings.

4. Charity / Community Discount:

- a. Events raising funds for charitable purposes may qualify for reduced rates at the Council's discretion.

5. Booking Classification:


- a. Events exceeding agreed attendance thresholds or adding exclusive access may be reclassified and become chargeable.

6. Application Fees:

- a. Small events: Included in hire fee
- b. Medium/Large events: £25–£50 admin fee (non-refundable)

Regular hirers of Town Council owned land

Organisation	Status	Activity	Park	Location	Day(s)	Time (inc. setup etc)	Agreement & Insurance on File	Estimated Attendance
Park Run	Charity/Community	Running Group	Bourton	Whole of Bourton Park	Saturday mornings	9:00 – 10:00 am	Yes	300+
Kimberly Cox	Commercial	Dog Training	Bourton	Large Dog Paddock	Thursday, Friday, Saturday	9:30 – 11:30 am	Yes	10–15
JM Fitness	Commercial	Fitness Bootcamp	Bourton	Greenspaces adjacent to MUGA	Tuesdays and Thursdays	7:30 – 9:30 pm	Yes	10-15
Yoga with Collette	Commercial	Yoga / Park Run	Chandos	Greenspaces adjacent to play area	Sunday mornings	9:00 – 10:00 am	Yes	5-10
Junior Park Run	Charity/Community	Junior Running	Bourton	Bourton Park	Sunday mornings	8:30 – 9:45 am	Yes	50–80

	<p>Buckingham Town Council</p> <p>Dark Skies Policy</p>	<p>Date Agreed: Minute Number: Prepared by: Version:</p>
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1. Policy Statement

Buckingham lies within a rural setting where dark skies remain an important part of the town's character, heritage, biodiversity and community wellbeing. The Town Council recognises that excessive or poorly designed artificial lighting can cause skyglow, glare and light trespass, leading to:

- Loss of visibility of the night sky
- Harm to wildlife and biodiversity
- Impacts on human health and wellbeing
- Unnecessary energy consumption and carbon emissions

Buckingham Town Council is committed to promoting responsible outdoor lighting that balances safety and accessibility with environmental stewardship and the protection of dark skies.

This policy sets out the principles that will guide lighting across Town Council landholdings, facilities and decision-making processes.

2. Purpose and Scope

This policy applies to:

- All lighting owned, managed or installed by Buckingham Town Council
- New lighting proposals on Town Council land
- Replacement and upgrade programmes
- Temporary lighting for events

This policy does not override statutory lighting requirements relating to highways (managed by Buckinghamshire Council) or emergency services. This policy does not apply to any planning applications that Buckingham Town Council are consulted on by the planning authority. The Buckingham Neighbourhood Development Plan (2025-2045) references lighting within its Design code and relevant policies. ([link to BNDP](#))

3. Policy Objectives

The Town Council will:

- Protect and enhance Buckingham's dark skies and rural character

- Reduce light pollution across Town Council-managed land
- Support biodiversity by minimising artificial light impacts
- Improve energy efficiency and reduce carbon emissions
- Ensure lighting is installed only where necessary for safety, accessibility or operational purposes
- Promote responsible lighting practices within the wider community

4. Principles of Responsible Outdoor Lighting

All Town Council lighting will follow these principles:

4.1 Necessary

Lighting will only be installed where it serves a clear purpose, such as safety, accessibility or security. Decorative or permanent floodlighting will generally be avoided unless a clear community benefit is demonstrated.

4.2 Directed

Lighting will be carefully directed to the area requiring illumination.

- Full cut-off or shielded fittings will be used wherever practicable.
- Upward light spill and intrusion into neighbouring properties will be minimised.

4.3 Minimal

Lighting will be no brighter than required. Over-illumination will not be supported.

4.4 Controlled

Lighting will operate only when required and will incorporate controls such as:

- Timers
- Motion sensors
- Dimming regimes
- Photocells

4.5 Warm-Coloured

Where practicable, lighting will use warm colour temperatures (3000K or lower). Blue-rich lighting will be avoided due to its increased contribution to skyglow and ecological disruption.

5. Council-Owned Lighting and Phased Replacement

The Town Council manages lighting in parks, cemeteries, open spaces, community buildings and other landholdings.

5.1 Audit and Review

The Council will maintain an inventory of its lighting assets and periodically review them to assess:

- Continued necessity
- Energy efficiency
- Compliance with this policy
- Ecological impact

5.2 Phased Sustainable Replacement Programme

Subject to available budgets, the Council will implement a phased programme of lighting improvement across its landholdings. This will prioritise:

- Replacement of outdated or inefficient fittings
- Installation of shielded, downward-facing luminaires
- Transition to energy-efficient LED fittings (warm-coloured)
- Introduction of adaptive controls such as timers and motion sensors

Upgrades will be incorporated into routine maintenance and capital works programmes to ensure gradual and financially responsible improvement.

5.3 Removal of Redundant Lighting

Where lighting no longer serves a clear operational or safety purpose, its removal will be considered.

6. Security Lighting

The Council recognises the need for security lighting at:

- Council buildings
- Storage compounds
- Public conveniences
- Other vulnerable locations

Security lighting will:

- Be motion-activated wherever possible
- Use shielded, warm-coloured fittings
- Be directed only to the area requiring surveillance
- Avoid constant dusk-to-dawn operation unless clearly justified

Security needs will be balanced carefully against environmental impact.

7. Town Council Owned Sports Pitch Lighting (Exception)

Sports pitch lighting on Town Council owned/controlled land is recognised as an exception to this policy due to its role in supporting organised sport, health and community participation.

Where sports lighting exists or is proposed, the Council will ensure that:

- Lighting is professionally designed and appropriately specified
- Glare and light spill are minimised
- Operational hours are clearly defined and restricted
- Lighting is not used outside booked or organised activities
- Modern, energy-efficient systems are utilised

All proposals will seek to minimise environmental and residential impact.

8. Biodiversity and Environmental Protection

Artificial light at night can adversely affect bats, insects, birds and other nocturnal species.

The Council will:

- Avoid installing lighting near hedgerows, tree lines, watercourses and sensitive habitats unless essential
- Seek ecological advice where appropriate
- Support the retention of “dark corridors” to allow wildlife movement
- Align lighting decisions with the Council’s Biodiversity Policy

9. Planning and Community Leadership

In its role as a statutory consultee, the Council will:

- Encourage applicants to demonstrate compliance with relevant policies in the Buckingham Neighbourhood Development Plan as well as national and local plan policies.

The Council will also promote awareness of responsible lighting practices through its website, newsletters and community engagement.

10. Energy Efficiency and Climate Responsibility

Reducing unnecessary lighting supports the Council’s climate commitments. The Council will:

- Improve energy efficiency across its estate
- Reduce unnecessary illumination
- Encourage low-energy lighting solutions
- Highlight the link between reduced lighting, lower emissions and cost savings

Following a lengthy assessment and slightly delayed, but positive response from Active Travel England (ATE), they have accepted the updated railway walk proposals. I have attached the general arrangement plans for the whole route for your information. Note these are still subject to change at this time as the designers finalise.

In summary, the following changes have been made to the scheme since the public consultation last year:

- Agreement with ATE that the section through the Buckingham University car park is now outside of the scope of this project
- Removal of the proposed A421 toucan crossing following consultation and specifically engagement with Planning and Highways Development colleagues regarding development impacts and future A421 corridor capacity.
- To maintain ATE's objectives for onward connectivity, we are instead proposing minor widening to the existing A421 shared-use path and a revised informal crossing over Meadway, linking the Railway Walk to the A413/Tesco roundabout crossings. These proposals don't require a further public consultation but will be set out in the upcoming Leader decision report on the next steps for the scheme.
- Extension of the funding deadline to March 2027.

The next steps will now focus on finalising the design for all aspects to put together a detailed cost estimate and tender pack ready for a contractor to begin pricing for the construction works.

The responses from last year's public consultation and engagement with stakeholders will be fed into the Leader report along with the forecast budget. We expect to publish this from May subject to the design being finalised and remaining within budget. If necessary adjusting the scope further and or value engineering to deliver what we can. We then anticipate works could likely start in the summer subject to budget and leader approval.

Definitive Map Modification Order (DMMO)

The route modification order is still with the Definitive Map Team. There is no update on the matter, as they are having to prioritise their own workload and resources. I don't anticipate seeing a substantive update until late Summer at the earliest.

The scheme has prioritised what we could deliver under existing Council and Town Council rights and ownership and creating a cycle path which will legally permit cycling use on the newly surfaced path sections. At the moment the footpath scope does not include the university section, due to the challenges of land ownership/planning requirements/future development. Whereas the DMMO, if it is implemented, would be for a bridleway status along the whole length.

Principal Project Manager

Transport Infrastructure and Delivery, Communities Directorate

No.	Committee	Minute No.	Action	Action Required	Update	Deadline
1	Environment	884/18	Compliments and Complaints Log	Members AGREED the report be brought back to Environment Committee in six months time in the same format.		Due on June Agenda
2	Environment	319/20	Lace Hill Doors/walls	AGREED for a report regarding an additional external fire exit door is brought back to the next committee meeting.	This project will need to be restarted. The walls in the Sports will need to be completed first.	Paused
3	Environment	302/24 7/10/24	Motion: Cllr. Harvey	"This Committee agrees to create a Seating Strategy - to take stock of existing provision and to consider how best to improve the availability of public benches (etc.) where there is need and demand, and to take into account previous decisions about seating and benches made by this Council."		Awaits updates
4	Environment	408/24 25/11/24	Motion: Cllr. Gateley	In order to take the issue of No Idling Zones outside primary schools further, I propose that Buckingham Town Council Members carry out a survey to ascertain the scale of the problem, and how to proceed thereafter.		Members have been liaising with the MP on a multiagency strategy.
5	Environment	668/24 7/4/25	Railway Walk Conservation Group	We will look at our conservation groups after the summer and see how we can support them.		Actions in progress
6	Environment	70/25 9/6/25	Buckingham Primary School	AGREED to respond to BPS, accepting their invitation to visit the site and offer to write to BC in support of their application if that is what they would like us to do.		Booked for April 22nd
7	Environment	75/25 09/6/25	Working Group	Members agree to form a working group to examine various matters in our parks and green spaces and to set relevant policies.		Recommendations on agenda.
8	Environment	Public Sess. 24/11/25	Swan Practice	To bring a report to Committee following the publication of the Neighbourhood Framework.		Awaits framework publication

Notes of a meeting of the Buckingham Community Wildlife and Climate Emergency Group held on Zoom on 25 February 2026 at 6pm.

We aim to learn from one another and record Wildlife and Climate Emergency activities in Buckingham and it is shared with the Town Council Environment Committee.

Present – Athina Beckett, Heather Haydock, Michael Hunt, Fiona Kelner, Ruth Newell (Chair and notes), Nina Stockhill.

Apologies – Robert Brignall, Simon Bumstead, Emma Foster, Ian Orton, Lee Phillips.

1. Apologies and welcome

Apologies were received from those noted.

2. Notes of meeting held on 15 October 2025

Circulated shortly before the meeting, defer agreement to next meeting.

3. Matters Arising

Any would be covered under the relevant agenda item.

4. Bourton Park, Chandos Park, Railway Walk – Nina Stockhill

Not much had happened over autumn and winter, general Maintenance and repairs in Bourton Park, and flooding in Bourton Park.

Wildlife reassess planting Tingewick road vandalism and had to reinstate large trees and hornbeam hedging at cemetery,

Waiting list for allotments and committee member for committee. 4 people residents willing to do that.

Meetings with new steering group, marking plots sizes etcetera water onsite
Sustainable transport trees to remove and crown reduction, environment committee trees.

5. Buckingham Canal Society – Athina Beckett

Flooding not affecting canal the Thursday volunteer sessions had more volunteers and Sundays were good with young people volunteering for D of E who bring their parents. The hedge was being replanted on the offside, himalayan balsam was present further down the river and would be removed in the spring. The canal was being kept looking good.

Athina mentioned the planned water transfer scheme from midlands to down here, and it was expected to impact reservoirs at the Cosgrove end.

The Canal Society AGM would be held on 18 April 2026 at the Buckingham Community Centre with a Waterway photographer as speaker and refreshments.

The Annual Canal Festival would be held again at Cosgrove on the third weekend in July 2026 together with crafts in the village hall.

6. Buckingham Railway Walk Conservation Group – Nina/ Lucy/ Heather

It was noted that TCV were no longer being paid to lead the group and Katherine Miskin was therefore no longer part of the group. The Town Council were looking to revive the volunteer group, and looking to make it happen with insurance, first aid, tools and a volunteer management plan that fitted the works needed within the Town Council's management plan. Members agreed it had worked well with volunteer leadership, and monthly plan of works.

The tools were in the Council's store (contact Jenny Manning for code) and it was hoped monthly working groups would start again in a couple of months. Secure storage of tools near to the site would be ideal, preferably in an outside shed / building behind the University old creamery building that could be accessed at weekends without the need for the University security team. Michael confirmed that a full range of required tools were available.

ACTION Lee Phillips/ Nina Stockhill

7. Buckingham Riverfly Monitoring and River Wardens - Simon Bumstead

7.1 Riverfly Surveys

From a Riverfly Survey perspective, the river has just been too high this winter to go in the water.

The last survey the group undertook was back on 28 November making this the longest period we have gone, since we started surveys back in August 2021, of being unable to survey. We thought last winter was bad but this year has been a lot worse. Hopefully things will improve as we move into the spring so we can get back out there surveying.

Water Quality

Water Quality Score (WQS) - Poor scores are below 15 and scores indicating good water quality are above 35.

Silt & Flow

Silt & Flow Score (SFS) - Scores below 15 indicate sites badly impacted by low flows and siltation, whereas scores above 40 indicate rivers not badly impacted by siltation or low flows.

1.1 Chandos Park – ARMI trigger score of 6

Only one survey has been completed since the last report on 15 October 2025.

Date	ARMI Score	Water Quality Score	Silt & Flow Score	Notes
31 Oct 25	8	29	28	
12 Month Average	10.2	26.1	28.1	based on 10 surveys

Since we have been surveying this site (August 2021) we have completed 43 Surveys and never had a trigger level breach.

1.2 Bourton Park - ARMI trigger score of 6

Two surveys have been completed since the last report on 15 October 2025.

Date	ARMI Score	Water Quality Score	Silt & Flow Score	Notes
17 Oct 25	10	29	33	
28 Nov 25	7	23	24	
12 Month average	9.5			based on 7 surveys
9 Month average		23.0	26.2	based on 7 surveys

Since we have been surveying this site (July 2023) we have completed 23 Surveys and never had a trigger level breach.

1.3 Rectory Farm – Tingewick

We plan to carry out another survey in the Spring 2026.

Last survey on 12 September 2025 scored 7 on the ARMI index with a Water Quality Score of 13 and Silt & Flow score of 19.

Rectory Farm, owned by George Eaton, is known for its conservation efforts and educational visits for schools.

2. Water Quality Testing

Nitrate Monitoring Training Workshop organised by the UBOCP.

Both Richard Cobb and Simon Bumstead attended the workshop held on 25th November, 10am-3.30pm, at the Working Woodlands Centre, Bedfordshire.

This training was led by John Findley of the EA. As part of the course, we were provided with a new Hanna Nitrate checker to allow us to sample for Nitrates. Initially we plan to monitor Nitrate levels at our two survey sites in Buckingham though we will probably add other locations in our area to include the Padbury Brook.

We are now able to measure Ammonia, Phosphate, Nitrate and Dissolved Oxygen (DO) levels at our two survey sites. The lowest DO reading since we started taking readings has been 8.0mg/l which is fine.

Date	Ammonia NH3-N		Phosphate		Nitrate NO3	
	Test 1	Test 2	Test 1	Test 2	Test 1	Test 2
Chandos Park						
12 Jul 25	0.02	0.01	0.4	0.53		
28 Jul 25	0.09	0.10	0.46	0.36		
6 Sep 25	0.05	0.04	0.39	0.44		
2 Oct 25	0.08	0.06	0.40	0.39		
31 Oct 25	0.00	0.00	0.30	0.29		
Bourton Park						
21 Aug 25	0.08	0.06	0.47	0.41		
19 Sep 25	0.05	0.02	0.51	0.49		

18 Oct 25	0.01	0.11	0.36	0.42		
28 Nov 25	0.03	0.06	0.18	0.19	19.1	20.3
22 Feb 26	0.07	0.01	0.13	0.15	12.3	12.7

All measurements are in mg/l (ppm)

Ammonia Nitrogen (NH₃-N) - Zero is ideal – Cyprinids can tolerate up to 0.2mg/l.

Phosphate measurements are in the range 0.39 to 0.53 mg/l - EA will advise shortly on this. Early days on measuring Nitrates.

3 Walkover Surveys

3.1 The 7 RWs, with a designated river stretch, carry out Quarterly Surveys. These are reported through the Upper and Bedford Ouse Catchment Partnership website.

However, a new App is being developed by Upper Bedford Ouse Catchment Partnership (UBOCP) to make reporting easier. This App roll-out appears stalled so RWs need to continue with the current method of reporting surveys through the UBOCP website.

4. Recruitment & Training

4.1 We have had a few enquiries from people (six in total) registering an interest and wishing to get involved with the RW group. They will be invited to attend our upcoming Riverfly Surveys to introduce them to what we get up to and see review how they can help.

4.2 Volunteer River Warden Walkdown Survey Training / refresher Training event.

This was held on the 8th of December led by Jon Balaam of UBOCP, was held at the Town Council Chambers in Buckingham. A special thank you to both Lee Phillips who helped organise this and to the BTC for allowing us to use the BTC Chamber room.

This was well supported session with ten people attending. The course allowed three new Buckingham River Wardens to be trained and served as a useful refresher course for those already carrying out Walkdown surveys. Also, we can now conduct baseline surveys for any new stretches of river we wish to include in our scope of monitoring.

5 Other Items

5.1 Funding

For 2025-26 the BTC awarded the group a grant of £300. We thank the BTC for their on-going support for the group. With this grant money we have purchased calibration kits, testing chemicals for the meters, replacement batteries and a pair of waders for RW John Walters. We have also submitted a grant application for 2026 -27 for £300 essentially again for replacement consumables and calibration test kits for our Hanna meters.

5.2 Revised Riverfly Methodology monitoring for Lakes

Nothing to report following a pilot of the process at Willen Lake in February 2024.

This is being developed by Freshwater Biological Association, Natural England and the EA.

8 Buckingham Society – Ian Orton

The Society is very pleased about the amount of new tree planting that has taken place in the green heartlands over the winter along with the measures taken to protect the new plantings from damage from mammals etcetera. We hope that there is a plan in place for ongoing maintenance.

Once the weather improves the Society will continue with its efforts to rejuvenate the big flower bed outside the Community Centre with new plantings as well as ongoing maintenance.

Ian will put forward a number of possible projects to the Society's executive committee that builds on our experience with the flower bed covering other areas in the town' such as the Old Churchyard. Local residents used to help look after the Old Churchyard. For a variety of reasons their activities have lapsed, however, and the Old Churchyard has suffered as a consequence. I am pleased to note, however, that at least one member of the public has not only removed much of the ivy that had spread over some of the tombs but has also planted daffodils and snowdrops. It would be great if we could build on this example of civic duty.

The Old Churchyard contains a very important collection of trees including a fine silver or weeping lime, a weeping ash, sequoias, and yews as well as one or two interesting pines, one of which (the one at the Church Street entrance) has received some much-needed maintenance.

Ian will report back to the Wildlife Group Committee on the response to my proposals along with any suggested action that could engage the Society and similar minded groups within the town such as the tree wardens.

9. Climate Café – Fiona Kelner

Fiona reported new name **Buckingham Environmental Action Network** and had applied for grant for carbon literacy training for schools etcetera.

The monthly meeting had a good core group and was going well, and had been working on a constitution, bank account and a business plan. Plan to grow and get more people involved. Heather contacted community board regarding bicycle stands, to improve the offer of bicycle storage and an event regarding the opening of the new cycle route.

Active travel - some had met with our MP to share concerns about cars outside schools and were working on a survey and looking for air quality monitors.

9 Feedback Global (Gleaning Networks Bucks) – Rebecca Nutley

No report.

10 Repair Café – Robert Brignall

There isn't much to report from the Repair Cafe - it continues in its usual operation,

and indeed has seen a significant uptake in visitors in 2026, which is encouraging.

11 Tree Wardens – Michael, Ruth

Michael commented on the Cycleway way upgrade along the Railway and Scenic Walk, more consultation. Going to active travel England concerning the gradient of the slope up to the Tingewick road. Michael had concerns about the impact of the solar studs on wildlife. He was concerned about the magnificent Lime at the Westfields End and that should be protected.

Michael was concerned about the triangle area marked J in the Bucks Local Plan between Westfields and St Rumbolds, it was very important for wildlife as previously discussed and Michael was keeping a record of species and informing the Ecologists at Buckinghamshire. It was important that it remained as a wildlife area.

Michael was concerned about the condition of trees on the London Road, and would check that we did not lose too many of the 90foot trees in the storms.

Michael continues to research, take photographs and comments on tree works notified by Katharine to the tree wardens. He advised that most are common sense maintenance that was required. We also need to ensure there are no tree or hedge works undertaken in the nesting season starting in March. Ruth hoped that an event could be held this year for our tree wardens, several of whom are experts, so a walk or training event with the involvement of the Town Council.

The tree planting of 800 trees in the Heartland by Buckinghamshire Council was welcomed. Michael also welcomed and noted the success of the line of Poplars on Lace Hill as a windbreak and Pinus nigra. It was also noted that it was 10 years since the orchard trees had been planted next to Bertie's walk including Medlar and Quince the flowers in April were well worth looking out for.

Nina added that a female black poplar had been replanted to replace the mayor's tree that had died. They would also be planted in the new cemetery, as such an important tree in our area. Michael noted that the Elms were currently in flower there.

12 Buckinghamshire Council – Emma Foster

In terms of updates there is not much from my end the only thing Emma would mention is that the Council has recently engaged in public consultation on the next phase of the local plan- [The Local Plan for Buckinghamshire | Buckinghamshire Council](#). Please do provide comments, particularly as suitable housing allocation sites are found within the parish. Emma has provided comments as a resident of Buckinghamshire for some of the local development, some positive and negative.

Michael added that the wildlife corridor at Verney Park was important and he send records of wildlife to Buckinghamshire Council.

Heather added that Emma had enabled the Buckingham Edible woodland group to plant lots of wildflower seeds last weekend, in the area by the river that had been covered by the layer of soil/mud from the Skate Park, and had been reassured that the

soil and seeds would remain in place.

13 Any other business

None.

14 Dates and times of next meetings at 6pm on 17 June 2026, 14 October 2026.

All were thanked for all they were doing for wildlife, nature conservation and the climate emergency in Buckingham.

The meeting closed at 6.38 p.m.

Ruth Newell
25 February 2026