

Buckinghamshire Councillors Report Marsworth PC and Newsletter 10th July 2023

Council pledges commitment to providing high quality education for all children in Bucks

Whatever their starting point, children and young people have the right to access the best quality education and teaching to help them grow, learn and develop so they are able to realise their full potential. That is the commitment Buckinghamshire Council is making to all children and families in the county as it launches its new Education Strategy.

The Education Strategy sets out five key priorities:

- Access to and availability of high-quality educational places
- Preparing young learners to reach their potential as adults
- Collaborative school improvement to raise standards
- Embedding a climate of inclusion
- Supporting the emotional health and wellbeing of all children and young people

It follows on from the previous Education & Skills Strategy which focused on the development of a programme of continuous improvement in education provision in Buckinghamshire. The new strategy builds on the achievements made and focuses on areas where more work needs to be done. In compiling the strategy, the council worked closely with schools and other education providers and consulted with parents, carers and other key stakeholders.

One of the key elements of the strategy is ensuring that every child is able to access the right educational placement and teaching for them, and that vulnerable children and young people are given the support they need to overcome challenges and achieve the same outcomes as their peers.

Buckinghamshire Culture Open Weekend – a first view of ‘what’s on’!

We are excited about the amazing projects that are planned for Open Weekend and you can now have a first look of what will be happening 27 to 30 July 2023 on the [Visit Buckinghamshire website](#).

Everyone is invited to enjoy creative projects, performances, workshops, exhibitions and much more taking place across the county over a long weekend.

Confirmed activities for this year include – but are not limited to – a special opera performance of ‘Revolting Rhymes’ at the Roald Dahl Museum in Great Missenden, giant bug hotels building at Langley Country Park, a creative workshops organised by Chesham Library resulting in joint 'One World' through 'Many Stories' display, a festival of Marlow's colourful history at Marlow Museum, an inclusive workshops organised by ‘Sing Your Pain Away’(online and in person), a workshop for a giant

sculpture out of recycled material at Chiltern Open Air Museum, an online writing workshop and a session of musical forest bathing.

Other activities include craft workshops, dance performances and classes, textile workshops, exhibitions, free theatre performances, concerts, choir sessions for families – but there is so much more!

Find out 'what's on' and make plans for an exciting weekend. Everything will be easily searchable in one place on the [Visit Buckinghamshire website](#).

Bucks resident pays the price for fly-tipping

A man from Gerrards Cross has learned the hard way that crime doesn't pay after being caught fly-tipping and faced with a hefty fine.

Jonathas Da Rocha Souza, aged 45, pleaded guilty to the charge of illegal dumping when he appeared at High Wycombe Magistrates Court on 7 June 2023.

The court was informed that on 12 May 2022, an enforcement officer working for Buckinghamshire Council, discovered a pile of illegally dumped waste in a lay-by on Layters Green Lane, Chalfont St Peter in Buckinghamshire. After further investigation, the source of the waste was identified and the suspected person responsible was reported to the local authority. Mr Souza was later interviewed by Council Enforcement Officers. During the interview, Mr Souza confessed to accepting £30 to remove the waste which he later illegally dumped.

Magistrates fined Mr Souza £1,384 and ordered him to pay clean-up and prosecution costs of £1,010.62. A victim surcharge of £138 was also levied – making a total to pay of £2,532.62

Supporting adopters every step of the way

Are you thinking about adoption? Making the decision to adopt can be a big step but Buckinghamshire Council will be with you every step of the way. That is the message the council is sending out to prospective adopters in Bucks as part of a month-long focus on adoption.

There are children of all ages and backgrounds who are waiting to be adopted and to start their new life with a new family. New adopters are always needed who can open up their homes and hearts to give these children the love and support they need to grow and thrive.

For more information on adopting in Buckinghamshire visit the website: www.buckinghamshire.gov.uk/adoption

Play Streets scheme encourages children to discover the joys of outdoor play

Children across Buckinghamshire are being given the opportunity to discover the joys of playing safely outside their homes as part of the Play Streets scheme.

The free scheme invites neighbours to apply for permission to close their road for a few hours at a time so that communities can come together, and children can meet up and have fun outdoors.

Following the successful launch last year, particular focus is being placed on encouraging communities within the targeted areas outlined in the council's Opportunity Bucks programme, in High Wycombe, Aylesbury and Chesham, to take advantage of the scheme, but communities all across the county can take part.

Electoral Registration – are your details up to date?

Buckinghamshire residents are being urged to ensure their electoral registration details are up to date through the annual canvass.

All residents will be contacted during July and August, and will receive an email or a letter from Buckinghamshire Council asking to confirm that the names of people listed as eligible to vote in their household are correct.

Being on the electoral register means that you can have your say and vote in future elections – plus it can also help with your credit rating. All you need to do is to read the email or letter carefully and follow the instructions on how to respond, if necessary. It's very quick and easy!

If you're not currently registered, your name will not appear on the messages we send. If you want to register this can be done as part of the canvass (a follow-up step is required).

The easiest way to register is online at: www.gov.uk/register-to-vote

Aylesbury Arm canal towpath benefits from £800k improvements

The Aylesbury Arm, a spur of the Grand Union Canal originally completed in 1815, has seen a significant improvement in its towpath condition, thanks to an £800k investment. The towpath improvements are on the section between locks 15 and 16, resulting in improved conditions for walking, cycling and wheeling.

The Aylesbury Arm canal towpath improvements – which have been made possible thanks to a £621,846 grant from the Housing Infrastructure Fund (HIF) from Homes England and £178,154 of funding from Section 106 developer contributions – are part of wider plans for active travel improvements in Aylesbury and form a main

spine route between the town centre and the new developments of Kingsbrook and Woodlands.

Improvements for walking, cycling and wheeling include:

- widening the towpath to 7 feet
- resurfacing the towpath
- improving accessibility onto the towpath
- installing new signs along the route

The improvements aim to encourage active travel, improve people's health, and reduce carbon and air pollution.

The new route forms part of the council's aspirations for a 'Aylesbury-Tring-Wendover Canal Triangle' project and the wider Aylesbury Garden Town initiative.

Celebrating 70 years of safer school crossings

Over the years, thousands of children across Buckinghamshire have enjoyed a safer journey walking to school, thanks predominantly, to the efforts of the county's much loved school crossing patrollers who this week celebrate their 70th anniversary.

Buckinghamshire currently has around 50 school crossing patrollers, commonly known as lollipop men and women due to the iconic circular signs on poles they carry when on duty, working across all parts of the county. Every morning and evening during term time, come rain or shine, they are out, guiding children, parents and carers safely across the road to and from school.

Many of the current school crossing patrollers have been doing the job for years, enjoying the special role they play in their local communities. Between them they have totted up more than 500 years of service, helping multiple generations of families. Several now help the children of the children they first helped cross the road on their way to school and some of the longest servicing school crossing patrollers are guiding the grandchildren of the children they first helped.

To celebrate the 70-year milestone and to say thank you to all school crossing patrollers, past and present, Buckinghamshire Council hosted a special event in High Wycombe today (Thursday 29 June).

The national school crossing patrol service was officially created by the School Crossing Patrol Act in 1953. The first SCPs wore white coats and peaked hats. Over the years the clothing has changed to more weather-proof, hi-vis jackets and hats, but the popular lollipop signs have remained, relatively unchanged and become synonymous with the popular and much-loved image of school crossing patrollers countrywide.

Buckinghamshire's school crossing patrollers collectively have many interesting and amusing tales to tell of their time in the job. One patroller in Buckingham recalls once guiding a horse and rider safely across the road amidst the schoolchildren. Another proudly relays how they lost three stone in weight when first starting in post, simply by all the walking he does on his patrol site. Christine Walker is the county's longest service patroller, clocking up 45 years. She received a British Empire Medal (BEM) in 2021 for her long service to road safety and has attended two Royal Garden

Parties. All the patrollers build up a unique relationship with local families. One school crossing patroller called Mario is affectionally known as Super Mario by the children who greet him fondly every day. One thing all the patrollers clearly have in common is their love of the job with all of them saying how rewarding they find the role

Join the plastic pollution solution revolution!

Buckinghamshire residents are being urged to become part of the plastic pollution solution and see how far they can go in reducing their use of single use plastic during the global, month-long initiative, Plastic Free July.

With awareness of the problems plastic pollution is having on our planet at an all-time high, Buckinghamshire Council is taking the opportunity to remind residents of the many local initiatives aimed at reducing all types of waste and showing the many simple things all of us can do to make a difference.

One of the easiest ways to start, is to take a look at Buckinghamshire Recycles [Zero Waste Map](#). This handy tool provides an online directory for all the local places where you can reduce your waste including re-use shops, community fridges and upcycling schemes as well as listing all recycling points around the county and details of the household recycling centres.

Another way to make a change, for those with babies and toddlers, is to switch from using disposable nappies to reusable cloth nappies. Disposable nappies are made from plastic, paper pulp and a variety of chemicals and glue. Babies have around 5,000 nappy changes up to potty training, which is a lot of nappies to put in the bin. Cloth nappies can be 40% better for the environment, even with the extra washing machine cycles. Find out more information about the [Buckinghamshire Nappy Scheme](#) online.

Last September, Buckinghamshire Recycles introduced its new [Reduce Single Use Plastic](#) schools initiative which encourages schools to sign up to a pledge to reduce single use plastics within school. Haddenham Community Infant School became the first school to achieve a gold award for its efforts. Currently aimed at primary schools, the scheme will be opened up to secondary schools from September.

There are numerous, easy ways we can all try to reduce single use plastics and waste:

- Use refillable water bottles and coffee cups
- Avoid using bathroom and cleaning products in single-use containers – there are lots of places you can refill existing bottles again and again. Check out the [Zero Waste Map](#) for locations
- Consider using more environmentally friendly sanitary products
- Make use of reusable bags when shopping

And where it is impossible not to use some plastics, make sure you recycle as much as you can. Check our [Waste Wizard](#) tool to find out what you can recycle and where

Find out more about [Plastic Free July](#) online

Summer Reading Challenge 2023, 'Ready, Set, Read' is kicking off at your local library this weekend

This summer, children in Buckinghamshire, aged 4-11, are being invited to visit their local library to join a superstar team and their marvellous mascots by getting involved in the annual Summer Reading Challenge.

This year's challenge launches on Saturday 8 July and runs through to Saturday 16 September. The theme centres on the power of play, sport, games and physical activity with the children taking part, encouraged to keep their minds and bodies active over the summer break. Over the course of the ten-week period, children are encouraged to read six books of their choice and follow the adventures of the themed Ready, Set, Read characters on their summer adventure.

Through activity challenge cards from the Youth Sport Trust, and an exciting, themed book collection, the Summer Reading Challenge aims to keep imaginations moving over the school holiday. By participating in the challenge, children will have the opportunity to explore new reading material, develop skills, and discover new interests. The characters in this year's challenge are brought to life by children's author and illustrator Loretta Schauer. The children taking part navigate a fictional summer obstacle course and track their reading as they go, rewarded by free incentives along the way, including stickers.

Libraries across Buckinghamshire will be hosting a range of additional activities and events for children and families throughout the school holidays, many of which are free. This includes a poetry workshop with Simon Mole across several libraries. The acclaimed children's author will perform his well-loved picture book 'I love my bike' followed by some fun games to unlock children's creative powers.

To take part in the Summer Reading Challenge simply pop into your local library. More information including details of linked events can be found online: [Summer Reading Challenge 2023 | Buckinghamshire Council](#)

Visit bit.ly/BucksSummerReadingChallengeEvents to find details of events and activities in libraries across Buckinghamshire.

Watch our trailer: [Ready, Set, Read! Summer Reading Challenge 2023 | Bucks Libraries](#)

Enthusiastic older children, aged 14+, who are passionate about reading are also being sought to take on the role of a Young Volunteer for the Summer Reading Challenge. The role involves encouraging children to complete the challenge, listening to the children talk about the books they have been reading and taking part in related activities. It is a great opportunity to get some volunteering experience and learn new skills. To find out more about becoming a Young Volunteer email library@buckinghamshire.gov.uk

Councillor Derek Town