

Buckinghamshire Councillors Report Marsworth PC and Newsletter 14th August 2023

We need adopters for children from Black African and Caribbean communities

Buckinghamshire Council is calling for people who may be considering adoption to get in touch. Adopters are needed for all children in Bucks, but those who are looking to adopt a child or young person from Black African and Black Caribbean heritage are particularly sought after.

National evidence shows that children from black communities typically wait longer to find the right family and so spend more time in care than some other children. Data from 2021-22 shows that on average, black children and children from other ethnic minority groups wait 100 days longer to be adopted*. In a bid to encourage more people to consider adoption, the council is launching a new campaign to raise awareness.

Council receives highest award in Defence Employer Recognition Scheme

Buckinghamshire Council has been awarded 'Gold' in the 2023 Defence Employer Recognition Scheme (ERS). This is the highest level of award offered by the scheme, which is organised by the Ministry of Defence.

The ERS encourages employers to support defence and the armed forces and inspire others to do the same.

The scheme encompasses Bronze, Silver and Gold awards for employer organisations that pledge, demonstrate or advocate support to defence and the armed forces community, and align their values with the [Armed Forces Covenant](#). Examples of how Buckinghamshire Council provides extra support for local armed forces families as an employer are through measures such as:

- Guaranteeing job interviews for ex-armed forces personnel and serving reservists where they meet the essential criteria for a role
- Offering extra leave for reservists to attend training
- Providing a supportive work environment for employees who are members of the armed forces community, including facilitating a staff network

Buckinghamshire Council insists Day Travelcards must stay

Buckinghamshire Council has written to the Mayor of London insisting he immediately withdraws the proposal by Transport for London to cease sale of Day Travelcards for people travelling into and throughout London. This follows a motion

debated and overwhelmingly agreed across all political parties at its recent full Council meeting.

In his letter to Sadiq Khan, Councillor Martin Tett, Leader of Buckinghamshire Council, states:

“Currently, Day Travelcards provide unlimited travel on TfL services, including London Underground, bus, tram, Docklands Light Railway, London Overground and the Elizabeth line, and National Rail services in London. They can also be used to obtain a one third reduction in River Services fares. The proposals to remove Day Travelcards constitute an unfair, unacceptable, and expensive levy on Buckinghamshire residents who wish to travel to London. The proposals have deliberately targeted the removal of the Day Travelcard as a method to generate additional income for TfL.

It is anticipated by your own consultation that the withdrawal of Day Travelcards will result in rail operators ceasing to sell Zone 1-6 travelcards. This will add barriers and travel friction to journeys to London – running counter to evidence that passenger journeys and the use of public transport are enhanced by improving integrated ticketing not reducing it. No regard is given in the proposals for the potential loss of revenue to the London economy that may be caused by the increase in travel costs as Buckinghamshire residents risk being priced out of the nation’s capital.

Employers, retail and leisure businesses, theatres and many others may see a reduction in revenue as the people of Buckinghamshire reduce their time and/or expenditure in London.

The withdrawal of Day Travelcards also risks being discriminatory against Buckinghamshire residents with special needs or disabilities who until now have been able to buy Day Travelcards for use by those travelling with them and assisting them.”

Buckinghamshire Council awaits a response from the London Mayor's office.

Bucks Household Recycling Centres continue to get top marks from residents

Overall satisfaction with all ten of the county’s Household Recycling Centres (HRCs) is 100% according to the latest figures from the bi-annual Customer Satisfaction Survey.

The survey is carried out twice a year to gauge opinions of regular users of the sites and to ensure the facilities continue to meet the requirements of local residents.

The results show:

- 100% of those interviewed said they were satisfied overall with the HRCs (61% said they were very satisfied and 39% said they were satisfied).
- The layout of containers on site and the helpfulness of site staff also received 100% satisfaction ratings.
- The area of least satisfaction was with road signs to the site which received a 97% satisfaction rating and traffic queues which received a 98% satisfaction rating.
- Satisfaction with the range of materials which can be recycled has increased from the last survey.
- Customers in Burnham gave the highest number of 'very satisfied' ratings of all the sites.

In 2022-23, reuse tonnage was 941 tonnes in total, the equivalent weight to more than 78 double decker buses. Staff working at all HRCs also keep an eye out for items brought to the sites to see whether they can be resold and direct residents to the reuse area. Items are taken from all 10 sites and delivered to the two shops in Aston Clinton and High Wycombe. Top selling items include furniture, garden ornaments, crockery and sporting equipment – all of which can be donated directly to one of the reuse shops which are run by South Bucks Hospice.

Councillor Derek Town