

Buckinghamshire Councillors Report for Marsworth PC - 13th November 2023

Have your say on Buckinghamshire polling arrangements

Buckinghamshire Council has launched a consultation asking residents for feedback on polling districts and polling places across the county.

The council is required by law to review polling arrangements periodically. This will ensure polling places are convenient and accessible to voters for forthcoming polls, such as the election of the Police and Crime Commissioner for Thames Valley on 2 May 2024 and the next UK Parliamentary election, when that is called.

Most polling districts, polling places and polling stations will remain unchanged.

However, some changes are required due to venue availability or new boundaries arising from recent reviews.

Residents are encouraged to share feedback by 11:59pm on 4 December 2023 on the following:

- Accessibility of current polling places
- Suitability of venues used as polling places
- Proposed polling districts
- Comments can be submitted via an online survey, email, post, or printed paper survey. Full details are available at: www.buckinghamshire.gov.uk/polling-review
- The revised polling arrangements will be published on 1 February 2024. This allows time for any changes to be made before the next scheduled elections in the county – including the election of the Police and Crime Commissioner for Thames Valley on 2 May 2024.

Bucks History Festival returns to celebrate our history and heritage

Buckinghamshire History Festival returns on Wednesday 1 November for its eighth annual celebration of the county's history and cultural heritage.

The festival, which is coordinated by Buckinghamshire Archives, sees the Archives Team come together with partner organisations to present a huge range of things to see and do throughout November, bringing our past to life and uncovering the often untold stories of Buckinghamshire people and places from across the years.

Council's Energy Doctor scheme now offering water-saving devices

Buckinghamshire Council is pleased to announce that its Energy Doctor scheme is now able to offer new water-saving devices to help low-income households save money on their water and energy bills.

The Energy Doctor scheme provides a range of resource-saving measures to eligible households. These now include:

- aerating shower heads
- 4-minute shower timers
- cistern water displacement bags for use in non-dual flush toilets

Using an aerated shower head or shower timer is estimated to save £50 in terms of household annual water and energy costs. The cistern water displacement bags displace around 1 litre of water every flush – which can achieve savings of approximately 4,800 litres per year.

Car owner receives hefty fine when her vehicle is linked to fly-tip

A woman whose car was filmed in a fly-tipping incident in Castlefield, High Wycombe, has been fined and ordered to pay a hefty contribution to clear up costs, leaving her more than £2,000 out of pocket.

Mary Nolan Purcell, aged 57, from Greenlands in Princess Risborough, pleaded guilty to the charge of illegal dumping when she appeared at High Wycombe Magistrates Court on Wednesday 18 October 2023.

The court heard that on Tuesday 28 December 2021, wooden cabinets were found dumped in Longland Way in Castlefield, Buckinghamshire. A camera belonging to a local resident recorded the suspect's vehicle arriving at the location during the day. The passenger of the vehicle was filmed going to the back of the vehicle, opening the rear doors and dumping waste onto the ground. The vehicle then drove away leaving the waste behind.

The vehicle was traced back to a Mary Nolan Purcell. Miss Purcell attended an interview at the Council office in Aylesbury, where she admitted to the vehicle being hers, however she denied any knowledge of the dumping.

In cases like this, the law requires the owner of a vehicle to exercise 'all due diligence' to avoid their vehicle being used to dump waste illegally. If they have not done so, they are viewed as having 'knowingly caused' the illegal deposit of waste and they are held responsible in law for the fly-tip offence.

Magistrates fined Miss Purcell £300 and ordered her to pay a contribution of £1,800 towards the Council's clean up and investigation costs. A victim surcharge of £34 was also levied – making a total to pay of £2,134.

Council wins award for adoption and fostering

Buckinghamshire Council has won an award at the prestigious Social Worker of the Year awards. The silver award in the Digital Transformation category was given to

the council for its work in developing a series of online tools to help people thinking about adoption, fostering or special guardianship.

The Social Worker of the Year Awards promote positive stories from the profession and give recognition to those improving the lives of the people they support. There are a total of 18 categories and each is judged by an independent panel of social workers, people with lived experience, and senior figures from the world of social work.

Buckinghamshire Council's [Adoption Ready](#) and [Fostering Ready](#) tools are easy to use online applications that allow those who may be contemplating adoption or fostering, to check their eligibility and suitability, to find out more about the process and to plan and prepare ahead. Alongside these tools, the council has also created a [Guardians' Guide](#), a website full of practical guides and expert support for special guardians

Food waste - Don't bin it – Recycle it!

Buckinghamshire Council is asking residents to think twice before throwing food waste in the bin and to recycle it instead.

Currently around a third of the waste thrown in the regular rubbish bin in Buckinghamshire is food waste. This equates to around 28,000 tonnes of food every year, an average of 2kg per household per week. It is enough to fill Big Ben more than one and a half times each year. Not only does this cost local taxpayers more than £600,000 a year in disposal costs, disposing of food waste in this way also damages the environment as it produces double the amount of carbon emissions compared to recycling food waste.

As part of a renewed drive to encourage more people to recycle their food waste, over the next few weeks the council will be delivering leaflets, putting stickers on rubbish bins, and letting people know about the many benefits of food recycling. Attention is particularly being focused on areas where there is more scope to increase food recycling rates.

Councillor Derek Town