

Buckinghamshire Councillors Report for May 22

Buckinghamshire Council and FCC Environment unveil bug hotel to celebrate new Household Recycling Centre contract

On 1 April FCC Environment begins a new five-year contract to manage the nine Household Recycling Centres across Buckinghamshire and to celebrate the milestone, the council and its contractor have teamed up with a local Men in Sheds group to create bespoke bug hotels to encourage insect life and diversity at all of the sites.

The sites already attract over a million visits a year and handle more than 60,000 tonnes of waste. The new contract is worth £15 million over five years rising to £28.5 million over ten years if the contract is extended. Peter Strachan, Buckinghamshire Council's Cabinet Member for Climate Change and Environment, commented: "It's been a privilege to take part in the new contract celebration and open the new bug hotel at Aston Clinton Recycling Centre. FCC Environment have consistently demonstrated their dedication to improving reuse, repair and recycling across the county. Buckinghamshire Council looks forward to building on this success over the duration of the new contract."

Steve Longdon, FCC Operations Director, said: "We have operated the facilities in Buckinghamshire since 2012 and we have worked hard during this time to deliver an exceptional service, so we are delighted to have secured the new contract to provide the ongoing management and operation of the nine Household Recycling Centres.

"The new contract will enable us to continue our relationship with Buckinghamshire Council and South Bucks Hospice to embrace new ways of working focusing on the waste prevention, repair and reuse agenda that is vital if we are to meet our Net Zero targets as a nation."

Jackie Ward, South Bucks Hospice Chief Executive Officer, said: "South Bucks Hospice are thrilled to continue operating the reuse shops at Aston Clinton and High Wycombe Recycling Centres working with FCC Environment to ensure even more of Buckinghamshire's waste is reused. The new contract not only benefits the environment but also supports the fantastic work of the hospice to provide end-of-life care and family support."

Residents have recently expressed their happiness at the level of service provided at the recycling centres. During November/December last year 2,238 visitors took part in a customer satisfaction survey. The report was conducted across the nine sites during peak and off-peak times and outlines overall customer satisfaction ratings, what items were brought to the centre, the frequency of customer visits, and key performance indicators such as site cleanliness, queuing, website information, safety advice and procedures.

100% of those interviewed said that they were either satisfied or very satisfied with the site staff and service provided at the Household Recycling Centres

Bucks Lottery celebrates two years of supporting local good causes

The Buckinghamshire Lottery is celebrating its second birthday. In the last year, it has raised over £125,000 for the local community and over £27,000 has been given away in prizes. So far more than 350 local good causes in Buckinghamshire have signed up as a fun and effective way to raise funds for their valued services in the community.

Any local charities or not-for-profit groups such as parent teacher associations and sports clubs, looking to fundraise can register free of charge at any time to take part in the Buckinghamshire Lottery.

One of the best things about the Buckinghamshire Lottery is that supporters are able to choose the good causes that matter personally to them."

We would advise other causes thinking of joining the lottery to sign up, it's free and really easy to get started. There is a huge amount of support given as well as advice and tips on fundraising.

Supporters can win weekly cash prizes of up to £25,000 for just £1 per ticket and if you enter before Saturday, 23 April 2022 you will also be in with the chance of winning the national prize, of a £1,000 B&Q gift card.

Visit our website to see which good causes you can support, and buy a ticket today online at: <https://www.buckinghamshirelottery.co.uk/>

At least 60% from each ticket sold goes directly to the cause of your choice. Unlike larger lotteries, the majority of your ticket purchase comes back into the community and the odds of winning a prize are much better, at an amazing 50:1. It really is a win-win scenario. Even if you don't win a cash prize you can be content in knowing that you are making a real difference in your local community!"

Good causes that have been supported via the Buckinghamshire Lottery include: Bucks Carers, PACE, Thames Valley Air Ambulance, BucksVision, South Bucks Riding for the Disabled, Aylesbury Homeless Action Group, Autism Bucks, Medical Detection Dogs, Rape & Sexual Abuse Support Service for south Buckinghamshire (previously known as Rape Crisis), Age UK Buckinghamshire, Bucks Search and Rescue, Cancer Care and Haematology Fund, Child Bereavement UK, Chiltern Carers, Chiltern, High Wycombe and South Bucks Cats Protection, Citizens Advice Bucks, Chilterns MS Centre, Parkinson's UK Aylesbury Branch and Thames Valley Adventure Playground.

70 Trees for 70 Years – one month to go!

It's the final countdown for the 70 Trees for 70 Years campaign – you have one month left to nominate your favourite trees and woodland in Buckinghamshire to be included in our Queen's Platinum Jubilee celebrations.

This year we have been taking part in The Queen's Green Canopy tree planting initiative, planting trees for the Jubilee to create a lasting legacy for future generations.

Alongside this, we would like to celebrate the beautiful trees and woodland we already have, so we have been inviting residents to nominate their favourites.

We have received some fantastic nominations so far, which have highlighted how important trees and woodlands are to us for our mental health, our physical health and our enjoyment of our surroundings.

Cllr Peter Strachan, Cabinet Member for Climate Change and Environment, said: "We are very lucky in Buckinghamshire to be surrounded by so much natural beauty, and as part of Her Majesty the Queen's Platinum Jubilee year, Buckinghamshire Council is looking to celebrate this with our 70 Trees for 70 Years campaign.

"The nominations we have already received have been really touching, demonstrating just how important our natural environment is to us, and how many memories are evoked by special places.

"One couple nominated a tree where they had their engagement photoshoot, and someone else nominated trees in a park where they had enjoyed picnics with friends after the first

lockdown lifted. We've also had people nominating woodlands because they have memories of walking in the woods with loved ones who have since passed away.

"Whatever the reason, if you have a tree or woodland in Buckinghamshire which you think should be recognised on our Platinum Jubilee list, please send us a photo before 1 May."

To take part, take a photo of your chosen tree or woodland, tell us where it is and why it is meaningful to you, and send it to us via social media @BucksCouncil or 70trees@buckinghamshire.gov.uk.

Nominations close on Sunday 1 May 2022.

Visit <https://www.buckinghamshire.gov.uk/news/70-trees-for-70-years/> for more information.

Buckinghamshire Adult Learning shortlisted for 2022 Family Learning Awards

The Family Learning Team at Buckinghamshire Adult Learning have been shortlisted for this year's Family Learning Award. The awards show how organisations are using imaginative, innovative and inclusive ways to deliver learning opportunities which help families in their communities.

The awards, organised by education charity Campaign for Learning, celebrate learning activities that supported families during lockdown and beyond and supported health and wellbeing.

As to be expected, some of the top priorities for organisations were focused around the significant changes to how learning is delivered beyond the pandemic, keeping families connected, boosting mental health and ensuring everyone can access opportunities to learn.

The Buckinghamshire Family Learning team developed a full, interactive online course programme during the pandemic for families, while addressing current learning needs as well as those identified or amplified by recent world events. They supported parents to access online learning as well as developing their own digital skills. All information is shared through a Google Classroom so everyone receives the same information and time for reflection. Learners use the Classroom to communicate with each other and support each other following the session.

Parents have given excellent feedback on the Family Learning courses, stating that they have helped build their confidence, reduce their social isolation, develop their language skills and realise the importance of play.

One parent said: "The courses have given me confidence to explore more play options to encourage my son's learning. It has also been great to have someone to talk over any worries I have as a parent."

The Early Years are particularly important as they lay the foundations for lifelong learning, behaviour, and health. The Family Learning in the Early Years Award shortlist recognised organisations that best demonstrated innovative approaches to delivering family learning aimed at families with children aged between 0-5. The shortlisted organisations are:

- Adult and Community Learning, Warwickshire
- Buckinghamshire Adult Learning
- Learning Unlimited
- The Whitworth Art Gallery

If you are a parent or carer of a child in the county who hasn't yet discovered our free, online Family Learning courses, then I would encourage you to see what's on offer by going to: www.adultlearningbc.ac.uk/family-learning

Council Tax £150 energy rebate payments

The £150 rebate to every household in council tax bands A to D will be paid over the next few weeks to help offset rising fuel costs. There is also a discretionary rebate which Buckinghamshire Council is paying to help householders in other Council Tax bands who are on specific benefits.

If you [pay your Council Tax by direct debit](#) you will receive your rebate faster and direct into your bank account.

The Council Tax team will be sending out details on how to provide your bank details if don't pay by direct debit to ensure you receive your payment.

Chiltern Beechwood Special Area of Conservation - CBSAC

CBSAC or Ashridge Estate/Woods as we locally refer to the area of the Chilterns including the Ivinghoe Hills and Wendover Woods. These areas are suffering significant damage as a result of increasing leisure usage. This has become ever more a problem over the past 6 or 7 years and even more so as a result of Covid 19 encouraging outdoor activities.

The Chiltern Beechwoods (Ashridge) are adversely impacted by ramblers, joggers, bikers and visitors. Obviously increased local population will increase the adverse impact so measures are to be taken to mitigate this.

2 500m exclusion zones have been identified by Dacorum's Local Plan and endorsed by Natural England. Both zones extend into Bucks. These do not impact Cheddington but will impact areas close to Tring. There is a presumption against **any** net increase of new homes within these 500 metres of the Special Area of Conservation.

Further, 12.6 kilometres and 1.7 kilometres Zones of Influence have been created which extend **throughout** the Ivinghoe Ward. The Habitats Regulations are clear that development proposals in the zones of influence must not give rise to adverse effects on the integrity of the Special Area of Conservation either alone or in combination with other plans or development proposals. If it is likely, or even where it is uncertain that a significant adverse effect will occur, then measures must be secured to either avoid or mitigate the impact. If it is not possible to avoid or mitigate an adverse impact, then planning permission will be refused. This will cause delays to all applications for additional housing, especially large scale, but should not affect extensions or replacement houses.

Any new application for development in Ivinghoe will now have to incorporate mitigation measures, clearly that will take time and prove difficult.

Further information can be found on the Buckinghamshire Council and Dacorum Borough Council Web sites, this included maps and FAQs.

Helping to give taxi drivers the keys to success with their English language skills

From September 2022, anyone who renews a taxi licence in Buckinghamshire will need to pass an English language test to ensure all drivers can speak and understand English at an appropriate level. Taxi drivers are in a unique and ideal position to spot and report safeguarding issues by being able to identify when a passenger is being pressured into doing something or is being taken somewhere against their will.

Previously, all taxi drivers needed to have a good standard of English, but this was not always assessed in an independent test. Now, the government has introduced new requirements, which mean anyone renewing a licence will need to show that they have a standard of English that enables them to

identify potential exploitation to protect children and vulnerable adults. If drivers do not pass the test, they will not be able to renew their licence.

In Buckinghamshire, taxi licences are renewed every three years, so those who had a licence issued or renewed three years ago will be the first drivers who need to pass the assessment from September 2022. Drivers who have already passed the test or hold an equivalent qualification do not need to take the test.

Queen's Award for Enterprise - Buckinghamshire winners announced Six businesses recognised

Six businesses in Buckinghamshire have today, (Thursday 21st April), been awarded a Queen's Award for Enterprise (QAE).

The awards are the most prestigious awards for UK business. They are designed to recognise and encourage outstanding achievements in the fields of Innovation, International Trade, Sustainable Development and Promoting Opportunity (through social mobility).

The 2022 award winners in Buckinghamshire were successful in two categories: International Trade and Innovation.

Five of the six businesses received their award in the International Trade Category which recognises substantial growth in overseas earnings and in commercial success (for their business size and sector) through either outstanding achievement over three years or continuous achievement over six years.

- Medical Research Network Ltd, Milton Keynes
- Turville Valley Wines (Rafine Ltd), Haddenham
- M&M Supplies (UK) PLC, Milton Keynes
- Focusrite Audio Engineering Ltd, High Wycombe
- G&L Scientific Limited, Marlow

In the Innovation category achievements are assessed for: invention, design or production of goods; performance of services; marketing and distribution; or, after-sale support of goods or services, that have realised outstanding commercial success over two years or continuous commercial success over five years.

The award has been given to:

- Dawson Group Plc, Milton Keynes

Councillor Derek Town