

Edlesborough Parish Council - Buckinghamshire Councillors Report for 21st November 2024

Start your journey to adoption this National Adoption Week

If you are interested in adoption, now could be the perfect time to start your adoption journey. National Adoption Week runs until Sunday 27 October. During the week, Buckinghamshire Council's adoption team will be sharing stories and information on adoption and encouraging those who may be thinking about it to get in touch.

The theme of this year's national awareness week is 'The Journey' and highlights that the journey to a family is not always traditional. Anita Cranmer, Buckinghamshire Council's Cabinet Member for Children's Services and Education explained: "As we know, families today come in all shapes and sizes. They include single parents, blended and extended families. Adoptive families are part of this same modern mix."

National figures show that the number of people coming forward to adopt is falling. The latest data shows there has been a 22 per cent increase in the number of children ready for adoption but not yet matched with an adoptive family in England in 2023-4, compared to the previous year. With fewer potential adopters coming forward, believed to largely be a result of the cost-of-living crisis, this means that nearly half (47 per cent) of all children face delays of over 18 months to move in with an adoptive family.

Skills Bootcamps – unleash your potential!

Buckinghamshire Council is offering a fantastic and free opportunity to all residents who are interested in learning a new skill – which could pave the way to a new job, a promotion or a career change.

Funded by the government's Department for Education, the council's Skills Bootcamps are flexible training courses for adults aged 19 or over, leading to either an interview or employment at the end. Designed with employers, specifically for in-demand jobs in Buckinghamshire, these Bootcamps involve 60 to 100 hours of free learning on a flexible basis, so participants can study around any existing work commitments they already have.

There is also a really diverse range of courses on offer, from creative industries in TV and film production, to construction, to leadership and management courses. There are 19 Bootcamps to choose from and anyone over the age of 19 is eligible so long as they meet eligibility requirements such as having the right to work in the UK and live in England.

The courses launched earlier this year and are fully up and running; participants can register an interest and enrol at any time that the course is running.

For more information and to enrol, go to www.buckinghamshire.gov.uk/skills-bootcamps

Welcoming Spaces in Bucks: Stay warm, stay connected, stay supported

As the winter months approach, Buckinghamshire Council is announcing its Welcoming Spaces offer – warm, free, safe, and supportive environments available to all residents. These spaces are designed to provide a safe space where individuals can stay warm, save on heating costs, and access a range of beneficial services.

Welcoming Spaces offer:

- **Warmth and comfort:** Escape the cold and enjoy a cosy atmosphere.
- **Cost savings:** Reduce your heating bills by spending time in a heated space.
- **Health and wellbeing:** Look after your physical and mental health with a supportive environment.
- **Support and advice:** Access valuable support and advice on a variety of topics.
- **Connectivity:** Free Wi-Fi to stay connected with loved ones and access online resources.

You can also find out more, by visiting: [buckinghamshire.gov.uk/welcoming-spaces](https://www.buckinghamshire.gov.uk/welcoming-spaces) or calling **0300 131 6000** (Monday to Thursday 9am to 5:30pm, Friday 9am to 5pm.)

First £500 fixed penalty notice issued to motorist caught littering on dashcam

A woman caught by another driver's dashcam, throwing litter from her vehicle, has become the first person to be issued with a fixed penalty notice at the new, higher rate of £500.

On Monday 9 September 2024, on Friarage Road in Aylesbury, a vehicle was recorded littering by a dashcam belonging to another driver. This dashcam footage was crucial for the investigation, as it clearly captured the offence, including the vehicle's registration number and an image of the litter being thrown from the driver's side window.

Buckinghamshire Council's Litter Enforcement Team investigated the incident and subsequently contacted the registered vehicle keeper. After further investigation, a woman admitted to littering while driving her vehicle.

The woman was offered a £500 Fixed Penalty Notice to discharge her liability for prosecution regarding the littering offence. If the penalty had not been paid within 14 days, the case would have been referred to the council's legal team for prosecution.

Council launches extra support to help adults stay independent for longer

Buckinghamshire Council is launching a range of new online resources designed to help adults who need some extra support to maintain their independence for as long as possible.

The council supports more than 5,000 adults at any one time, with varying degrees of extra help, including providing care packages to those who need it. Our overarching aim is to provide the right care to allow people to maintain their independence for as long as possible, and for our residents to feel that they are managing and directing their own care needs.

The improved website content makes it easier for people to get online information and advice about their adult social care needs. We have also listened to and worked with carers to introduce new online support for them too.

The new-look [Care Advice Bucks website](#) includes content that outlines how a resident goes through the care assessment process, how individuals can arrange and pay for their care and guidance on what home support and equipment is available, as well as some helpful health and wellbeing advice.

Alongside this, the council has also improved the online resources available to carers in Buckinghamshire too, joining up for the first time with '[Mobilise](#)', providers of specialist online support for people who are caring for others including family, friends or neighbours who could not manage without this unpaid support because of a disability, illness or vulnerability. 'Mobilise' offers Buckinghamshire carers free access to online information and resources, support sessions, one to one support from a dedicated carers coach and access to a network of other carers to provide invaluable support and a listening ear.

We are also offering free fact sheets that have been co-designed with residents, and an online care directory that helps our residents to find professional health and care services, equipment and resources, such as:

- home care services
- housing and residential equipment
- living aids

New Family Hub Network set to provide more help and advice for local residents

Families will soon benefit from easy to access help and advice in their local communities, with the launch this week of Buckinghamshire's Family Hub Network (FHN). The FHN brings together professionals and community groups to help families and residents get the help and advice they need at the earliest opportunity.

The FHN covers Aylesbury Vale, Chiltern & South Bucks and Wycombe areas, involving a wide variety of local and county-wide organisations including

Buckinghamshire Council, Buckinghamshire Healthcare NHS Trust, Oxford Health Foundation NHS Trust, education providers, social enterprises and voluntary, community and faith groups.

The role of the network is to support families visiting network sites where possible or signpost to a relevant organisation when other support is needed. The aim is to direct families to the support that best meets their individual circumstances, using local network connections and knowledge to match needs with the wide range of services and providers available in the area.

Councillor Derek Town