

Buckinghamshire Community Update: A Year in Review

Roads and Infrastructure

In a major effort to improve the county's road network, £120 million has been invested across 2,100 miles of roads. This includes drainage works such as cleaning around Fleet Marston Bridge and implementing the Lane Rental Scheme, which helps keep traffic flowing on the major routes.

HS2 Developments

Despite some challenges, roadworks and closures related to HS2 have been mitigated over the last year. The A41 work is now nearing completion, with only minor tasks left to wrap up. The old A41 will soon be narrowed, and the realignment of Station Road is scheduled for this summer.

Development Boom

Housing developments are booming with a 42% increase in homes, mainly in North Buckinghamshire. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) continues to guide local growth, with the Littleton Green Development project now at the planning stage.

Helping Hands: Support Across the County

Our "Helping Hands" initiative remains active, providing support to residents across the county. From helping people access food through various schemes to offering energy-saving advice via the "Energy Doctor," we continue to assist those in need. We're also addressing rising energy and water costs, providing much-needed relief to vulnerable families.

Budget Breakdown

The council tax was set at 4.9% which is lower than several neighbouring councils. Of the £1.2 billion budget, 77% (£924 million) has been allocated, leaving a balance of £276 million. The funding continues to be focused on the "Magic Four":

- Children's Social Care
- Adult Social Care
- Home to School Transport
- Temporary Accommodation

Moving Forward: Key Projects

Looking ahead, we're focused on several important areas in Ashendon

- Controlling freight and addressing speeding concerns.
- Looking at options for the path from Wooton

I'd Like to Borrow: Community Support Services

Launched last year in Quainton, *I'd Like to Borrow* is Buckinghamshire's first "Library of Things" – a community-based tool and equipment lending service. It's designed to make home maintenance and improvement accessible to all, encouraging collaborative consumption, reducing waste, and lowering carbon emissions. It's all about strengthening community resources and helping people tackle projects without the need for expensive tool hire or purchases.

I'd Like A Bike

A subsidiary of *I'd Like to Borrow*, *I'd Like A Bike* refurbishes donated bikes, providing them to low-income families and individuals transitioning out of the care system. This initiative ensures that transportation is accessible to those who need it most.

I'd Like A Bus

Formerly Bernwode Bus, this service provides essential transport for rural communities. We cater to a variety of groups, including the elderly, volunteers, schools, sports clubs, and youth clubs, ensuring everyone has access to the transport they need.

North Bucks Food Drive

Part of *I'd Like to Borrow*, the North Bucks Food Drive collects food on the first Saturday of every month, with deliveries made to Aylesbury Vineyard. These collections help address food insecurity, providing support to those in need throughout the community.

Together, these projects showcase Buckinghamshire's commitment to community support, sustainable development, and improving the quality of life for all residents. Keep an eye out for more initiatives coming soon!