



Amersham & Villages Community Board agenda

Date: Thursday 15 February 2024

Time: 6.30 pm

Venue: Large Barn Hall, Amersham Community Centre, Chiltern Avenue, Amersham
HP6 5AH, [Amersham Community Centre - Google Maps](#)

BC Councillors:

M Dormer (Chairman), T Butcher, M Flys (Vice-Chairman), G Harris, C Jones, D King, R Matthews, S Rouse, M Tett, L Walsh and J Waters

Town/Parish Councils and other organisations:

Amersham, Chesham Bois, Little Chalfont, Coleshill

If you would like to attend a meeting, but need extra help to do so, for example because of a disability, please contact us as early as possible, so that we can try to put the right support in place.

For further information please contact: Lizzie Wright (Community Board Manager) on 01296 382376, email amersham@buckinghamshire.gov.uk.

Item No	Item	Time	Page No
1	Networking	18:15	
2	Chairman's Welcome	18:30	
3	Apologies for Absence/ Declarations of Interest/ Minutes of last meeting	18:35	3 - 6
4	Local Updates <ul style="list-style-type: none">Questions from members of the public can be submitted in advance of the meeting to Amersham@Buckinghamshire.gov.ukUpdates from Town & Parish CouncilsBuckinghamshire Council updates	18:40	7 - 12

5	Workshop/Tabled discussion <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Priorities on a page / SWOT • Project ideas • Partner organisations 	18:45	
6	Meeting Summary and Close	19:45	
7	Date of Next Meeting and Close TBC	20:00	



Amersham & Villages Community Board minutes

Minutes of the meeting of the Amersham & Villages Community Board held on Thursday 2 November 2023 in MS Teams, commencing at 7.30 pm and concluding at 9.00 pm.

BC Councillors present

M Dormer (Chairman) and J Waters

Others in attendance

L Wright, Fay Ewing, R Goodes, Mr P Clarke, Rachel Dineley, Ms D Hulme, Mr P Matza, D Pinkney, MS D C Read, Fiona Broadbent, Marieke Bosman, Susan Masters, Helen Edwards, Shreeyansh Sarkar, Vinny Patel, Sophie Wilkinson (Bucks Healthcare NHS Trust) and David Winterburn

Apologies

T Butcher, M Flys, C Jackson, C Jones, J Barnes, R Newall, D Watson, C Scott and M Roberts

Agenda Item

1 Chairman's Welcome

Cllr Mark Dormer welcomed everyone to the meeting and reminded everyone of the meeting etiquette

2 Apologies/Declarations of Interest and Minutes of the last meeting

Mark Flys (Buckinghamshire Council)
 Tim Butcher (Buckinghamshire Council)
 Caroline Jones (Buckinghamshire Council)
 Carl Jackson (Buckinghamshire Council)
 Mark Roberts (Amersham Town Council)
 Ron Newall (Amersham Action Group)
 Jane Barnes (Amersham Action Group)
 David Watson (Rotary Club)
 Christian Scott (Chiltern U3A)
 The minutes of the previous meeting were agreed

3 Community Matters

Roger Goodes updated the attendees on the latest support and upcoming activities from Buckinghamshire Council. This included:

- a drive to increase food donations and volunteering opportunities with foodbanks,

- supporting welcoming spaces locations, such as Libraries and Community Centres, in offering this support to residents again as they had done last year during the winter months. Organisations/venues looking to take part were asked to get in touch.
- The Energy Doctor scheme which provided support to residents on low incomes to insulate their homes.
- Revenues & benefits support

See the corporate update appended to the minutes for further information.

The board manager provided Community Matters which included:

- The Homes for Ukraine Scheme were looking for rematch sponsors to provide space in their homes for Ukrainian nationals to live, who had settled in the local area but who's current arrangements were coming to an end. The team would be joining the Community Board at events to share further information.
- The Helping Hand had warm packs for community groups to distribute to local individuals available at Amersham and other Bucks Libraries.
- The Community Board had been looking for support to those struggling with loss and bereavement, they had connected local venues with Rennie Grove Peace Hospice to consider becoming 'Compassionate Cafes'. They also promoted the Kings Church Amersham Bereavements Matter support service and asked members to help raise awareness of this. They also noted that Kings Church would be distributing Christmas Hampers to local families as they had done last year.
- Community Impact Bucks launched a lunch club to reduce social isolation, and were looking to recruit a new volunteer coordinator to help deliver this, as well as help in promoting the club to older people in the community who would benefit.
- Amersham Owned were hosting a Dementia support group and were looking for help in promoting the session. They requested that guests booked a space in advance.
- Amersham Museum were looking for a new chair of trustees to join the charitable organisation.

The Chairman invited Town & Parish Council representatives to provide local updates.

Vinny Patel highlighted the launch of Café 23 in Amersham following the success of Cafe22 in Little Chalfont. The new dementia café was due to celebrate its official launch soon.

4 Presentations

Wild Amersham:

Marieke Bosman gave a presentation on Wild Amersham and their progress since the group was set up in 2021. The group monitored local habitats and biodiversity and aimed to work with and strengthen the community. They had held a variety of events and training throughout the year. They were setup under the umbrella of

Sustainable Amersham. There had been lots of local support and enthusiasm so far. Residents interested in getting involved could email (wildamersham@gmail.com), sign up to newsletter (<https://forms.gle/tQoq6JT2KWpbPuuz7>), visit the Sustainable Amersham website to volunteer (<https://sustainableamersham.org/volunteering-roles/>) and book to attend events, such as the wild bird migration talk which was happening the following Wednesday (<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/migrating-birds-near-you-tickets-739267247237>).

Energy Doctor Scheme:

Helen Edwards gave a presentation about the scheme funded from the governments levelling up fund until March 2025. There were currently four team members but this was expected to grow. They delivered home visits to those who met certain criteria (which could be found online: [Request a visit from an Energy Doctor | Buckinghamshire Council](#)) and could advise on ways to reduce energy consumption and costs and put in place suitable low-cost easy retrofit resource efficiency measures, which included draught proofing, insulation, LED lighting, secondary glazing film for windows, electricity consumption monitors (which weren't linked to energy providers systems) and more.

Simply Walk:

Fiona Broadbent gave a presentation about the Simply Walk scheme, which linked with the board's health and wellbeing priority, and enabled older adults to take part in physical activity. The short easy walks were in close reach to where many of the residents who took part lived and focused on *"maintaining" rather than "increasing" physical activity in older adults to ensure they remained included in social activity.* There were 360 volunteers across the county and the scheme had celebrated its 21st year in July. The team were keen to recruit new volunteers in Amersham so that they could introduce more walks. Fiona described a successful social prescribing pilot project which could be delivered in other locations.

Re-Engage Tea parties:

Susan masters gave an update on a Community Board funded project which provided monthly tea parties for socially isolated older people (hosts). Each host would hold a tea party twice per year with support from volunteers and they would be free to attend. The offer included refreshments, transport (which was otherwise a huge barrier), some games, and most importantly, conversation. The team were organising a Christmas tea party for all hosts and volunteers, they had recruited enough volunteers to run a 12-month rota and had ambitions to get back to having four tea party groups in the area, which had been the case before Covid.

5 Community Board Updates

The board provided updates on the Task & Finish groups:

- Volunteering – opportunities were available through the Community Impact Bucks Volunteer Matching Service and the board were helping to promote this. The group were keen to develop a campaign which would highlight positive case studies of volunteer experiences. They were also considering hosting an event in the New Year which would support volunteer groups and

encourage residents to volunteer – they were looking for help with organising this.

- Food & Nutrition - Public Health data showed 25% yr6 children were overweight and so the board were working with local partners to understand what support was available and if something new could be put in place to help tackle this.
- Online Safety – the board were working with local partners to explore opportunities to help raise awareness and provide training and support to residents.

The Chairman highlighted some of the engagement activities, including first Outdoor Cinema event in Amersham which was a huge success and had been supported by local volunteer groups.

Upcoming events were highlighted, and attendees were asked to help promote these:

- Fed Up Men’s Mental Health event on Saturday 25 November
- Self Defence class for ladies and girls aged 12+ – the final of four classes funded by the board to be delivered in Little Chalfont on Saturday 18 November.

The Chairman thanked everyone for attending the meeting and asked the board network to help with promoting the wide variety of activities and initiatives taking place locally, and to encourage others to get involved.

6 Date of Next Meeting

Thursday 15th February 2024

Updates from Town & Parish Councils

Coleshill Parish Council have raised the necessary funds to go ahead with the speed reduction on Magpie Lane. Buckinghamshire Highways have been instructed and advised that work will take 9 to 18mths to complete.

Council has recently had its annual play inspection for Hill Meadow play area. The report states that the swings have passed their life expectancy and should be removed along with the old multiplay. This will be extremely costly not only to remove and dispose of the equipment and reinstate the ground but also the cost of any new equipment. The play area is suitable for very young children and is tucked away behind the housing at Hill Meadow. The Parish Council are hoping to speak to parents of young children to determine whether if it is refurbished it would be used before deciding on what funding streams may be available for applications.

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Community Boards – Buckinghamshire Council Update – January 2024

Could you or someone you know foster?

With a national and local shortage of Foster Carers, coupled with an increase in demand, Buckinghamshire Council has set up a dedicated task force to look into how we can improve our support to Foster Carers as well as review our processes and procedures to increase the number of people applying, being approved and staying as a Buckinghamshire Council Foster Carer.

The task force are looking into all options and are working on a package of incentives which will make fostering for Buckinghamshire Council a unique and favourable option in a very competitive market. Following feedback from our current Foster Carers one quick win before Christmas was the issuing of larger size wheely bins to all current foster carers which was a welcomed support for fostering families.

We will also be reaching out to our local community partners and would welcome your insight and help too, to ensure we are reaching more of the right people who could care for our children.

With over 500 Buckinghamshire children needing; caring, supportive and loving homes on long and short term basis we're committed to building our fostering community and taking good care of our fostering families. As our unique offer is developed we will keep you updated and seek your support in reaching your local residents and communities.

If you, or someone you know would like to find out more about Fostering, please visit: www.buckinghamshire.gov.uk/foster

Regeneration framework – what it means for our towns

Our regeneration framework sets out an over-arching approach to deliver our vision to create places where people want to be, driving local revitalisation and creating vibrant, thriving spaces for people to live and work across the county. It sets out the opportunities to build on our strengths as well as the economic and social challenges we need to respond to.

As well as setting out our vision for three town centres – Aylesbury, High Wycombe and Chesham – the regeneration framework provides a toolkit to enable areas to develop and progress their own plans for renewal.

[Buckinghamshire Regeneration Framework guidance](#)

In addition to the Regeneration Framework we set out we have set out more detailed regeneration strategies for our three biggest towns:

View the [Aylesbury Regeneration Strategy](#) (PDF, 11.6 MB)

View the [Chesham Regeneration Strategy](#) (PDF, 8.41 MB)

View the [High Wycombe Regeneration Strategy](#) (PDF 7.87 MB)

Our Local Plan: what, why and how

Local plans are at the heart of the planning system and are the main consideration used in deciding planning applications. A local plan sets out the long-term vision and framework for future development of an area – the Local Plan for Buckinghamshire will go up to 2045.

It will look at future needs for housing and employment across the county, identifying where development should take place and protected places where it needs to be carefully controlled.

The Local Plan is our opportunity to set out how we intend to manage and accommodate future growth, meet our local social, economic and environmental needs and get the right infrastructure in place. We have already started preparatory work with two recent public consultations covering an [Attitudes Survey](#) and our [draft vision and objectives](#).

Our next consultation will invite people to have their say on a selection of different strategic growth scenarios for how we can accommodate new homes and jobs throughout Buckinghamshire. This will help establish the guiding principles which will help to shape where and how we will plan to deliver new housing in the next Local Plan. This is likely to take place in spring this year.

[The Local Plan for Buckinghamshire | Buckinghamshire Council](#)

Housing Strategy – vision for future housing supply

We have recently completed a public consultation on our first Housing Strategy. The strategy sets out how all the partners involved in delivering housing in Buckinghamshire will work together to ensure that the housing offer delivers the housing our residents need. It focuses on three main priorities:

- Responding to the needs of our diverse population
- Better homes which are good quality, sustainable and matched to need
- New homes which are affordable, accessible and appropriate

It sets out the challenges we face, the opportunities we can use and how we are responding to these.

Buckinghamshire all-age autism strategy

Buckinghamshire Council is launching its first autism strategy, bringing together an all-age plan of lifelong support for autistic people in Buckinghamshire. The strategy has been co-produced with autistic people, their families and professionals in Health and Social Care.

Our vision is to help autistic people live as independently as possible and have the same life opportunities and experiences as everyone else. We want to ensure autistic people can access the right support whenever they need it and contribute to shaping how the council works.

The all-age autism strategy focuses on the following areas:

- Improving awareness and understanding of autism
- Tackling health and social care inequalities
- Developing a needs-based approach so that autistic children and young people get the best start in life
- Developing better support for employment and meaningful activities
- Ensuring more adults with autism maintain their independence

The strategy has been consulted on and is looking to be adopted in March – subject to Cabinet approval.

AMERSHAM/CHESHAM & possibly MISSENDENS

Support for residents following King George V House closure

Amersham now has a new Library Council Access Point located in the Chilterns Lifestyle Centre. Chesham Library Council Access Point is also available for residents to visit. At the libraries residents will be able to find out about council services, report, pay or apply for services themselves using our computers, or use our telephones to contact the Council Customer Services team.

For residents looking for more personal support, such as needing assistance to report, pay, or apply for a service, or needing to talk to an advisor in person, our offices in High Wycombe and Aylesbury offer a Council Access Point+ service to help customers with more complex enquiries.

Our Council Access Points offer face-to-face support for residents who need support to access services. For customers who can, contacting the council online or over the phone remains the easiest and quickest way to contact us.

Consultations

Happening soon

Activity name	Start date	End date	Community Board
RAF Halton SPD	Monday 22 January	Monday 4 March	Wendover
Penn Neighbourhood Plan	Thursday 25 January	Thursday 7 March	Beaconsfield and Chepping Wye

High Wycombe Community Governance Review	Monday 12 February	Sunday 7 April	High Wycombe
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Looking ahead

We have a number of county-wide activities currently scheduled for Spring/Summer 2024:

- Local Plan growth scenarios
- Local Transport Plan 5
- Buckinghamshire Walking and Cycling Infrastructure Plan
- Housing Allocations Policy
- Leisure Strategy
- Sexual Entertainment Venue Policy
- Street Trading Policy