



# Buckinghamshire Historic Environment Forum agenda

Date: Tuesday 16 April 2024

Time: 2.00 pm

Venue: Mezzanine 2, Walton Street Offices, Walton St, Aylesbury HP20 1UA

## Membership:

Cllr Bradburn (Milton Keynes Council), Cllr P Brazier (Buckinghamshire Council) (Vice-Chairman), Cllr B Chapple OBE (Buckinghamshire Council) (Chairman), R Currie (Wycombe Museum), B Griffiths (Milton Keynes Museum Trust), Cllr Hall (Milton Keynes Council), Cllr C Harriss (Buckinghamshire Council), Cllr T Hogg (Buckinghamshire Council), G Marshall (Buckinghamshire Archaeological Society), S Mason (Discover Bucks Museum), W Morrison (Conservation Board for the Chilterns AONB), D Wilkinson (Historic England) and M Woods (Buckinghamshire Conservation Trust)

<b>Agenda Item</b>	<b>Page No</b>
<b>1 Apologies/Changes to membership</b>	
<b>2 Declarations of interest</b>	
<b>3 Minutes of the last meeting</b>	<b>3 - 8</b>
<b>4 Talk on The Mystery of Grims Ditch</b> Lucy Lawrence	
<b>5 Recent Discoveries at Little Kimble</b> Lucy Lawrence	
<b>6 The Olney/Aldi Roman Mosaic</b> Nick Crank	
<b>7 Update From Members and Partners</b>	<b>9 - 10</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Buckinghamshire Archaeological Society</li><li>• Conservation Board for the Chilterns AONB</li><li>• Buckinghamshire Conservation Trust</li><li>• Archaeological Officer – Buckinghamshire</li></ul>	

- Archaeological Officer – Milton Keynes
- Heritage Officer- Buckinghamshire
- Heritage Officer- Milton Keynes
- Historic England
- National Trust
- Milton Keynes Heritage Association
- Museums
- Oxford Diocesan Advisory Committee

## **8 Date of the next meeting**

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: Harry Thomas via email at [democracy@buckinghamshire.gov.uk](mailto:democracy@buckinghamshire.gov.uk).



## Buckinghamshire Historic Environment Forum minutes

Minutes of the meeting of the Buckinghamshire Historic Environment Forum held on Thursday 14 September 2023 in Room 1.25, Civic Offices, Milton Keynes City Council, 1 Saxon Gate East, Milton Keynes, MK9 3EJ, commencing at 2pm and concluding at 3:45pm.

### Members present

Cllr R Bradburn, Cllr P Brazier (Vice-Chairman), Cllr B Chapple OBE (Chairman), Cllr C Hall and Gary Marshall (Buckinghamshire Archaeological Society)

### Others in attendance

E Alqassar, N Crank, J Horton, P Markham, S Peart

### Agenda Item

**1 Election of Chairman**  
**RESOLVED**

Members of the forum voted to confirm Councillor B Chapple OBE as Chairman for the ensuing year.

**2 Apologies/Changes to membership**

Members heard apologies from the following:

- Councillor Thomas Hogg
- Councillor Clive Harriss
- Briony Hudson (Amersham Museum)
- Charles Pugh (National Trust)
- Michael Woods (Buckinghamshire Conservation Trust)
- Wendy Morrison (Conservation Board for the Chilterns AONB)

**3 Declarations of interest**

There were none.

**4 Minutes of the last meeting**  
**RESOLVED**

That the minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 9<sup>th</sup> March 2023 be agreed as a correct record.

## **5 Chosen Focus: Climate change measures and the historic environment in Buckinghamshire**

Joanna Horton (Heritage & Archaeology Team Leader) and Eliza Alqassar (Historic & Built Environment Manager) gave a presentation to the forum detailing the efforts that have been undertaken to ensure that listed buildings were adapted to cope with new energy efficiency measures and flood defences, and how archaeological sites were being impacted by tree planting projects and solar farm installations. The slides would be appended to the minutes of the meeting. The following key points were raised in their presentation:

### **Solar Farms**

The traditional installation methods for solar farms (involving grounding panels by driving poles into the ground, and running underground cables to carry electricity) created various opportunities to disrupt and damage sites of potential archaeological interest. The Heritage and Archaeology team recommended geophysical surveys at solar farm sites, followed by targeted trenching to identify the location of buried archaeological remains.

This had been undertaken at the Fox Covert Solar Farm near Adstock and Great Horwood, following the granting of planning permission in June 2021, where a geophysical survey and subsequent trenching found Iron Age roundhouses on site. The identified area was then removed from the solar farm scheme in order to preserve it.

Alternative solar farm installation methods mitigate the risk of damage to archaeological sites. These include grounding solar panels with concrete slabs and weights as opposed to driving poles into the ground and suspending the electric cables underneath the panels as opposed to running them underground.

### **Tree Planting**

Buckinghamshire Council had committed to planting 543,000 trees by 2025. Much of this planting would take place in rural areas where the archaeological potential was less well known, including on some sites featuring medieval ridge and furrow.

One such site included an area designated for planting as part of the Wing Woods project, where archaeological features were identified. Those areas were removed from the tree planting scheme, with a ten-metre planting buffer zone around the archaeological remains in a manner that was suitable for both the planting project team and the heritage team. The remains would be left preserved in situ.

### **Built Heritage**

The presentation also highlighted examples of listed buildings which had undergone retrofitting to ensure their resilience in the face of new natural threats related to climate change, such as flooding. This included The Queens Head in Chesham, which

had had flood defences installed, as well as air source heat pumps.

The presentation also demonstrated how solar panels had been installed on a hidden area of the roof of a listed building in Brill, which allowed for easy maintenance without risk of damage to the building's original fabric, thus protecting the fabric and character of the building. It was suggested that crown roofs were best suited to this.

It was explained that high profile cases of this retrofitting, often on well-known historic and listed buildings, acted as the catalyst for the wider effort elsewhere, as the public became aware of it. One such example being the installation of solar panels across the roof of Kings College Chapel in Cambridge.

### **Embodied and Operational Carbon**

Much of the media coverage of newer development had focused on operational carbon emissions, produced over the lifetime of an older building as compared with a newer building. It was the view of the heritage team that a more holistic approach, which also assessed embodied carbon produced prior to and during the construction of newer buildings would offer a means by which existing buildings could contribute towards the effort to reduce carbon emissions through retrofitting as opposed to demolition and reconstruction.

The Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) calculations used to assess the energy efficiency of buildings assumed that a building was constructed with a cavity wall, and was therefore disproportionately inaccurate for many historic buildings, which did not have them, but when considering other factors would perform as well as those which did. The use of Lime in particular was identified as a reliable, and sustainable material to use on walls where existing plaster was crumbling.

When looking to retrofit or renovate older buildings, the advice was to avoid shying away from the 'quick wins' such as basic maintenance and repair work that would compromise the physical appearance and character of the building. More involved improvements and upgrades included overhauling windows, replacing falling cement with lime render, and boiler upgrades.

Following questions, Joanna confirmed that historically, the Heritage team had not normally been asked to comment on sustainability factors relating to planning applications. Including them as a consultee, as well as the climate change team in future cases would facilitate the joined-up thinking required to preserve heritage sustainability moving forward.

Simon Peart (Conservation and Archaeology Team, Milton Keynes City Council) confirmed that embodied carbon policies would be included in the New City Plan.

Members thanked Joanna and Eliza for their presentation.

## **6 Update From Members and Partners**

The forum received verbal updates from external partners on their ongoing work. The following partners updated the forum:

### **Phil Markham - Senior Archaeology Officer (Buckinghamshire Council)**

Phil drew attention to the report circulated with the agenda pack which gave a detailed summary of the work his team were undertaking. And summarised the following key points:

Much of the fieldwork in relation to HS2/Fusion sites had been completed, with a number of sites continuing to be monitored during the construction phase.

The excavations at the site of the South-East Aylesbury link Road developments had now been underway for over a year, with the first phase due to be completed soon. Evidence of a Roman settlement had been found there.

A further phase of evaluation had been completed at the Hampden Fields development between Aylesbury and Weston Turville. Locations for excavation work had been identified, and this was likely to begin during the autumn.

A cache of 3 eggs was discovered in association with a basket, pottery vessels, coins, leather shoes and animal bone at the Berryfields excavation site a number of years ago, all dating to approximately the 3<sup>rd</sup> Century AD. One of the eggs was intact and scans confirmed that there was liquid still inside. The egg is currently at the British Museum.

### **Nick Crank - Archaeological Officer (Milton Keynes City Council)**

Nick directed attention towards the update document circulated earlier with the agenda pack and reported the following:

A third phase of excavations was underway at the MK East Strategic Urban Extension. Findings were in keeping with expectations following earlier geophysical surveys, with a key find being evidence of a late Iron Age to Roman settlement complex to the east of the A509 Newport Road.

Following examinations of the roof structure at the Grade II listed Old Bakehouse, High Street, North Crawley, it emerged that it was likely that the house had been of open hall layout, and possibly built much earlier than the 17<sup>th</sup> Century, as had previously been thought. It was possible that the listing of the building would be revised in the wake of this discovery.

A late Roman building had been uncovered following excavation works by Oxford Archaeology at the Warrington Road site to the north of Olney. The site also included a large mosaic, which will be left in situ, and the planning permission will include a condition for its preservation.

Milton Keynes Archaeology Day would take place at the Central Library on Saturday 4<sup>th</sup> November. There would be talks related to ongoing excavation works as well as information stands, displays and activities.

#### **Simon Peart - Conservation and Archaeology Team (Milton Keynes City Council)**

Several schemes were being developed and implemented to retain and repurpose old buildings in central Milton Keynes as a means to mitigate the embodied carbon emissions caused by the development of new buildings.

Simon gave details on a few examples including Station House, and Saxon Court. It was explained that schemes such as these normally involved conversion to residential use, with an upgrading of their thermal performance.

#### **Councillor Charlotte Hall - Milton Keynes Heritage Association**

Charlotte gave an overview of the Heritage Association, explaining that seventy heritage groups were affiliated, and were given help to catalogue and archive their collections properly. Over two hundred and twenty events, open days and activities had been put on. The primary focus of the association was promoting education related to local heritage, and engaging with younger generations to develop a continuing interest in the future.

#### **Gary Marshall - Buckinghamshire Archaeological Society**

The Buckinghamshire Archaeological Society was working on volume 64 of their journal, which would be published in May 2024. The journal would cover reports of discoveries from recent archaeological excavations, historic buildings, local and industrial history and all aspects of times past across Buckinghamshire.

Efforts had been made to digitise and publish historic editions of the journal going back over 150 years. Many of the currently available editions were available on the [BAS website](#)

The Active Archaeology Group were excavating at the 'Ha-Ha', Gt Linford for a third year.

#### **7 Date of the next meeting**

It was noted that the date of the next meeting would be 16<sup>th</sup> April 2024. A venue for the meeting would be communicated in due course.

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## **Bucks Historic Environment Forum 16<sup>th</sup> April 2024**

### **Buckinghamshire Archaeological Society report**

The society will once again be co-ordinating the Bucks Local History Network conference to be held on Saturday October 5<sup>th</sup> in the Methodist Hall in Aylesbury. This will be the 25<sup>th</sup> year of the conference and to celebrate TV historian Ruth Goodman will present the key lecture. The theme of this year's conference is farming and agriculture in Bucks.

The BAS AGM will be held on Saturday 11<sup>th</sup> May with a keynote talk on recent developments at Grims Ditch by Lucy Lawrence. The 64<sup>th</sup> volume of Records of Buckinghamshire will be available for collection. Digitisation of old editions has now been completed with a community grant from HS2 and can be viewed on the Archaeology Data Service. The society also publishes occasional papers

Membership of the society stands at about 380 but has dropped slightly due to subscription increase to £24 and some elderly members resigning membership.

The Society maintains a regular programme of talks and outings and the Active Archaeology Group within the society also holds monthly meetings and lectures and is currently digging at two sites in Milton Keynes – the Ha-ha at Great Linford and the 18<sup>th</sup> century gardens at Stanton Low. The next meeting, on May 9<sup>th</sup> (evening) will cover the Etymology of local place names.

BAS will take part in the Aylesbury Museum's Heritage open day in July and Milton Keynes in September. The Group undertook a watching brief for the new fence installation at Quarrendon, investigating 181 auger holes. Work is planned to record a service trench at Hogshaw (Knights Hospitallers Chapel) later in the year.

The BAS website has tried to keep abreast of approved HS2 reports and lists these with relevant links.

Unfortunately the website continues to be the victim of robotic phishing affecting its sales and has therefore had to be vigilant in obstructing these and also returning monies where they have been fraudulently taken.

The society is aware of proposals affecting the Halton museum storage site and also around potential relocation of the county archives.

A publication covering the history of Notley Abbey is in preparation, with publication planned for mid 2024.

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