



South West Chilterns Community Board Meeting

Chairman Cllr Dominic Barnes

17 November 2021





Agenda

Chairman's Welcome

Apologies for absence

Declarations of Interest

Notes of Last Meeting

Presentation – Buckinghamshire Business First – Philippa Batting

Presentation – Redcote Leisure – Charlie Metcalfe

Presentation – Rural Forum – John Bloomer and Alex Nelms

Formal Community Board updates/overview

Community Matters – Consultations/Petitions/Council updates

Topics for future consideration

Date of the next meeting – Wednesday 16 February 2022 @1830





Buckinghamshire Business First

Philippa Batting





Redcote Leisure

Charlie Metcalfe



Starting my Business in Lockdown

Charlie Metcalfe



Where did it all start?

- I have spent my working career thus far working for small businesses, mainly in the outdoor and leisure industries.
- In this time learning skills such as customer service, accounting, and business management
- Learnt from mistakes along the way
- Just prior to the COVID pandemic, in February 2020 I decided it was time to use what I had learnt and start my dream of running my own business.
- A month into this journey lockdown begun...
- This brought uncertainty to what was an exciting beginning.



My first business...



- My first business, I purchased, was **Total Lawn Care**. A specialist **grass cutting** and **lawn care** provider completing bespoke treatments and maintenance plans for customers' lawns. It came with a few good clients in both Guildford, Marlow, and surrounding areas.
- I started working in March during the lockdown with a COVID protocols in place.
- I was quickly amazed with the number of new clients I picked up because more people were at home looking at their lawns and wanting them to look green and healthy, I was also privileged to have many friends and family wanting to use my services when they found out it was my own business.
- The grass cutting season was soon upon us and I was able to take on a member of staff a couple of days a week to allow me to keep up with new enquiries and develop the business as well as ensure the quality of work remained high.
- With this new member of staff gave me a little more time to think about how else I could develop my business, this led me to think a little outside the box...



Micro Campers



- Whilst researching and looking for other opportunities I stumbled across Redcote Leisure.
- In April 2020, Jason the owner, has just started opening Redcote Leisure franchises.
- Redcote Leisure is a **specialist Micro Camper conversion company**. Each branch can use the Redcote Leisure brand and products to either purchase suitable vehicles and convert them into micro campers and then sell them on, or convert customers' existing vehicles into micro campers.
- This is done with the existing Redcote Leisure camper conversion kits which get delivered to each branch for installation into specific / suitable vehicles, **all manufactured and built in the UK**



Redcote Leisure ?

- I was initially drawn to the Redcote Leisure franchise for a few reasons.
 1. Running a branch could be done on either a part time or full-time basis with a good work life balance.
 2. The franchise fee was in the region of £10k which I felt was an affordable amount of money to invest.
 3. Having worked in the outdoor and leisure industries and converted my own camper van before I felt I had prior knowledge and passion for this industry.
 4. I felt I could run this business perfectly alongside Total Lawn Care to give me a varied working week.
 5. The site I had in Marlow, at Westhorpe Watersports Centre would lend itself perfectly to this business with an existing campsite, outdoor centre and motorhome storage already on site.
- There was of course still the concern of the pandemic in the back of my mind but I was sure that the world would return to some sort of 'normal' in the near future.



Redcote Leisure Marlow



- Redcote Leisure Marlow was born in June 2020.
- As part of the franchise included all the training I required to get my branch open and ready for business.
- My first task was to find a couple of suitable vehicles I could purchase to then convert into Micro Campers. Redcote Leisure have micro camper kits that suit specific vehicles
- The selling points of Micro Campers are:
 - Car, Van & Camper in one vehicle
 - Can use the vehicle everyday with the 5 travelling seats
 - Small and easy to drive, can get into all car parks and easy to park
 - Sleeps 2 inside and more with an awning
 - Cheaper to insure and tax than larger camper vans and motorhomes
- I made my first sale in the first month which was a huge confidence boost and then allowed me to grow my stock from 2 to 4 with a little more investment.
- As the season went on sales were flowing and I quickly found out how much I enjoyed helping customers find their adventure vehicle, selling someone their first car or some were because they have lost a loved one and now on their own so they wanted to see more of the country and explore.
- The forthcoming sales allowed me to increase my stock to around six micro campers, giving a good range to choose from.



Lockdown 2

- The second lockdown came in the winter of 2020 and suddenly I found I had to close the doors to visitors.
- Many people in the UK wanted camper vans as this was one of the only ways to holiday in the UK, so demand was high, but I wasn't able to show anyone the campers in the flesh.
- I had to change my way of selling, with help from the franchisor. This meant doing online video/virtual viewings and delivering the campers directly to the customers contact free.
- This proved very successful with the Marlow branch outselling all other Redcote branches during the winter period.
- Sales steadily came through during the winter with the lawn care business still picking up a few odd jobs having had its most successful year to date. This gave me time to plan what 2021 may bring, with the uncertainty of the lockdown still at the forefront of my mind.
- With both businesses taking up all my working time during 2020 I knew that I couldn't develop much further without any additional help. I still had someone helping me with the lawn care business and also had a member of staff come on board for some evenings and weekends during 2020.
- To date, I have sold 32 micro campers and carried out a further 10 conversions



Thames Valley Camper Hire

- Something that I had in the back of my mind since starting a business within the camper industry was the hire of campers and the conversion of larger campers.
- I still knew that I wouldn't have much time in my diary for these arms of the business so would need some additional personnel and help to make these avenues work.
- I teamed up with a friend, now business partner, Ian, to create **Thames Valley Camper Hire Limited**.
- We hired out 3 campers during 2021, two coach built motorhomes, one 4 berth and one 6 berth and one micro camper. A successful year sending many customers off on their adventures around the UK and Europe.
- As it stands now, I have also opened a new workshop in Cuddington which houses a specialist camper conversion business focusing on larger vans.
- I had converted my own vans over the years and using these skills alongside those of Louis, a qualified mechanic, who had helped me out in 2020. We have now completed the conversion of 4 campers for customers and have one up for sale that we purchased, converted, and now selling.



Thames Valley Campers



Thoughts...

- Setting up my own businesses in 2020 was the best decision I have ever made. It has given me the flexible, work-life balance I was looking for and I have enjoyed sending customers off on their adventures and developing a lawn care business in the local area with many happy clients which is still growing.
- I would recommend this to anyone. It can be stressful at times but generally it is very rewarding and as a director you are in control of your business and where you want to take it next. I didn't have a huge amount to invest in these businesses, so it is doable for anyone with the time and drive to do it.
- I had success with the Start Up Loans UK, funded by the British Business Bank, I needed a little more cash to get Redcote Leisure off the ground. I was appointed a business mentor, based in Marlow, and had to produce a cash flow forecast but the process was simple and made me feel financially safe. This is a great way to fund a new business, if you know you have the work coming in and you stick to your cash flow forecast. It gave me the leg up I needed with very affordable repayments.
- My advice to anyone thinking about it is.... Go for it, seek the support you may need and start small and grow at the rate you are comfortable with.
- I mean... if you had told me I would have three businesses and two sites all complementing each other after 2 years of trading I wouldn't have believed you!
- Thank you for listening.





Rural Economy

John Bloomer and Alex Nelms





Formal Community Board Updates

Funding report – circulated with agenda pack

Action plan – circulated with agenda pack

Community Engagement Action Group update – Cllr Carol Heap

Highways and Transport Action Group update – Cllr Mark Turner

Environment and Climate Change Action Group update – Cllr Neil Marshall

Economic Regeneration Action Group update – Cllr Alex Collingwood





Community Engagement

Action Group

Chairman – Cllr Carol Heap

Vice Chairman – Cllr Jocelyn Towns





- *Engagement and Reach*
- *Interactive Dementia Experience*
- *Buckinghamshire Older Persons Action Group (BOPAG)
Golden Years Free Information Day*
- *Social Prescriber – Primary Care Network (PCN)*
- *Future Plans*





Highways and Transport

Action Group

Chairman – Cllr Mark Turner

Vice Chairman – Cllr David Johncock





- *Brief update on schemes*
- *Parking surveys*
- *Speeding*
- *Cycle route update*
- *Public Transport Connectivity*
- *Implementation*
- *Broadband*





Environment and Climate Change

Action Group

Chairman – Cllr Neil Marshall

Vice Chairman – Cllr David Johncock





- *Trinity Road quietway*
- *Off Street Residential Induction Charging (OSRIC) charging EV and hiring*
- *Thermal imaging camera application*
- *Parish ecology assessments*
- *Eco School (Marlow)*
- *Solar schools initiative*
- *Solar compacting waste bins*
- *Releaf Marlow*





Economic Regeneration and Development

Action Group

Chairman – Cllr Alex Collingwood

Vice Chairman – Cllr Zahir Mohammed





Community Matters

Proud of Bucks Awards

Queens Platinum Jubilee

Public Questions

Consultations – Trinity Road Quietway

Petition - Marlow





Proud of Bucks Awards

Mr Lloyd Jeffries



Proud of Bucks Award



Categories

Buckinghamshire Community Award Best Adult Contribution - For an individual who has contributed to their local community during 2021 by improving lives for others or improving their local environment.

Buckinghamshire Community Award Best Young Person Contribution – For young people who have had a positive impact on the local community or peers through community engagement or activism.

Buckinghamshire Community Award Best Community Group Contribution - Recognises and celebrates a group in the community board area who has made a clear and positive impact on the community during 2021

The Proud Of Bucks team will:

- With comms develop and produce nomination form, webpage and process for automated replies etc.
- Put together a Comms plan & Comms pack including corporate wide comms and articles, posters and graphics that can be tailored and made local for each of your areas.
- Collate all the nominations for each award and send through to you.
- Provide updates on how many nominates received throughout the nomination period.
- Provide support for judging process including scoring matrix.
- Brief the long listing working group.
- Have an officer present in longlisting/judging panel to ensure fairness.
- Procure awards and certificates.
- Comms around winners.
- Supporting with comms to award winners, collecting photo permissions etc.
- Collecting proposed door step delivery dates to coordinate.

Community Boards are responsible for:

- Promoting the awards and encouraging people to nominate.
- Share nomination form to all networks.
- Put together a working group from your Board (4 people min) to longlist nominations.
- Putting together a judging panel, setting up the meeting, supporting the panel.
- Notifying the Proud Of Bucks team of the winners.
- Collecting awards from the Proud Of Bucks team.
- Putting plans together for presenting the awards
 - The standard: door step drops, with photos/ video
- Support with the comms for winners, promote them locally.

What will they receive as a winner?

Winners:

Engraved glass trophy – Groups

Personalised medal - Individuals

Framed certificate – All

Highly Commended:

Certificate



Thank you.



The Queen's Platinum Jubilee

October/November 2021



Overview

- The Queen will be celebrating her 70 years as Queen on the 2nd June 2022 with an extended bank holiday for the public (2nd June – 5th June).
- A cross-council steering group has been formed to co-ordinate activity across the Council and maximize opportunities for Buckinghamshire communities to celebrate and '*plant a tree for the Jubilee*'. (*Queens Green Canopy*)
- A Jubilee events sub-group has also been formed as well as the steering group to ensure we don't lose sight of all things civic and ceremonial.
- The Queen's Platinum Jubilee presents a once in a lifetime opportunity to enable our residents, after the Covid pandemic, to come together and celebrate and make a significant contribution to tackling climate change.
- Buckinghamshire has a proud tradition of supporting the monarchy, particularly through its support for the Lord- Lieutenant. We are keen to build on this history to mark the Queen's Platinum Jubilee.

Activity Underway

- **We are promoting the Woodland Trust offer of free trees.**
- **We have offered a gift of a free Jubilee Tree and plaque** to all schools, early year and care home settings. 234 settings have registered interest.
- Buckinghamshire Council are in Phase 1 of a **large scale tree planting project** which aims to plant over 500,000 trees over the next 10 years. The overall programme is scheduled to consist of approximately 20 new woodland sites primarily on the Buckinghamshire Council agricultural state
- **A web page is now live** to inform and signpost information for the Jubilee: [The Queen's Platinum Jubilee | Buckinghamshire Council](#)
- **Presentation provided to Community Board Chairmen to encourage each community board to develop their own projects to support the Platinum Jubilee.**
- **Guidance and a process for community groups regarding roadside tree planting is being produced.**
- **Project suggestion toolkits for schools and communities is being developed.** This will encourage schools and community groups to think about how young people and residents can get involved in creative projects to celebrate and understand the role of the Monarchy as well as climate change.

Future Activity Planned

- **Events guidance will be developed** for celebratory events such as street parties
- **Community Boards** are encouraged to develop their own projects
- **Local events & tree planting** will be promoted and celebrated.
- **Tree planting activity will be logged.**
- **Delivery of free trees and plaques** to schools, care homes and nurseries for November 2021.
- **Exhibition events** will be held through Buckinghamshire's Archive and Libraries Services
- **Inter-generational project opportunities to be explored** - for school children and our senior residents to explore and creatively consider our veteran trees and their history.

What can Community Boards do?

- Consider promoting and supporting local community events to celebrate the Platinum Jubilee e.g.
 - Micro-funding for street parties
 - General promotion at community board meetings/networks
 - Councillor attendance & involvement in event planning
 - Consider invitations to lieutenancy to local events
- Promote and support the 'Plant a Tree for the Jubilee' initiative
- General but far reaching promotion of the Platinum Jubilee
- Project funding

Project Ideas



Exhibitions (delivered by our Archives Team)



The Big Jubilee Lunch



Tree planting celebrations



Library events



Street Parties



Tree Stories



Celebration plant displays



Celebrate a Tree

Optional Funding streams

- **Heart of Bucks** – <https://heartofbucks.org/>
- **HoB General Fund**- [Heart of Bucks General Fund | Heart of Bucks: The community foundation for Buckinghamshire.](#)
 - Hob Green Community Fund**- [Green Community Fund | Heart of Bucks: The community foundation for Buckinghamshire.](#)
 - HoB Green Schools Fund**- [Green Schools Fund | Heart of Bucks: The community foundation for Buckinghamshire.](#)
- **The National Lottery Heritage Fund** - [Welcome | The National Lottery Heritage Fund](#)
- **The National Lottery Community Fund**- [Home | The National Lottery Community Fund \(tnlcommunityfund.org.uk\)](#)

Background Information

- [The Queen's Green Canopy \(queensgreencanopy.org\)](http://queensgreencanopy.org)
- [Free Trees for Schools and Communities - Woodland Trust](#)
- [The Tree Council | Working together for the love of trees](#)
- [The Queen's Platinum Jubilee | Buckinghamshire Council](#)



Public Questions

None Received in advance of meeting





Consultations

Trinity Road Quietway





Petition

Barnards Hill/Terrington Hill, Marlow





Topics for future consideration

Open to the floor





Dates of Next Meeting

*The South West Chiltern Community Board
next meetings will be on:*

Wednesday 16 February 2022 at 1830h

*Saturday 2 April 2022 – Community
Engagement event*

Marlow – 1000 - 1400

