



An update for Community Boards from Buckinghamshire Council Summer (July to September 2022)

Support for Ukrainian guests continues across the county – further help is still needed

Over the last few months there has been an outpouring of support for our Ukrainian guests from our communities, alongside the work that we at the council are doing. We now have over 1,100 Ukrainian guests with more than 600 still expected to arrive.

The community boards have been central to our efforts and have achieved so much across the county. Highlights include:

- More than 60 people gathering at a local pub to welcome and make new friends and share stories.
- Working with the community to put together welcome packs including food parcels, toiletries, vouchers from supermarkets and cafes, free eye test, donated gifts, clothing, toys, tech equipment, and SIM cards.
- Coffee mornings with talks covering a wide range of subjects including trauma, fraud, banking and life in the local area.
- Weekly lunch sessions where professionals help support both the host families and Ukrainian friends with various issues.
- Helping to secure funding for Ukrainian professionals – so far funding has been secured for a doctor and an accountant to take the relevant exams to practise here in Buckinghamshire.
- English classes.
- A social event led by a group of Ukrainian guests to celebrate summer solstice.
- A weekly yoga class led by one of the Ukrainian guests.

There's a dedicated area on our website for anyone who would like to know more about how they can help/get involved – check out [‘Helping Hand for Ukraine’](#)

Support with food, bills and finances – Helping Hand and Holiday Activity Fund

As we approach the summer holidays, this is a timely reminder that we have support available for families and individuals in need, those on low incomes and those who are experiencing a financial emergency or crisis.

Our Helping Hand team can help if you – or someone you know:

- are struggling to afford food

- cannot keep on top of your bills
- are in debt
- are struggling to pay for essential goods in your home.

Find out more about our Helping Hand team and how they can [support with food, bills and finances](#). Our #backontrack scheme offers practical advice and support for people experiencing money difficulties: [Money problems - advice and support if you are struggling to make ends meet | Buckinghamshire Council](#)

Using the Government Household Support Fund, the Helping Hand team will be providing £50 Digital Food Vouchers to eligible children and young people to support families over the summer holidays. These vouchers will be distributed through schools in July.

We also have our Holiday Activities and Food (HAF) programme for children who receive benefits-related free school meals. Further information can be found at [HAF information for families | Family Information Service \(buckinghamshire.gov.uk\)](#)

Waste and recycling missed bins and garden waste charges

1 Missed bins

Unfortunately in some pockets of the former Chiltern, South Bucks and Wycombe district areas of Buckinghamshire the recent change of bin collection days caused greater than anticipated disruption. This was due to both residents and crews getting used to the new bin collection days.

Following a difficult few weeks, an [open letter of apology was issued from Cllr Martin Tett, Leader of Buckinghamshire Council](#) and additional measures put in place.

By the end of day on Tuesday 5 July, Veolia were due to have picked up any remaining missed collections, and from this point on, the overwhelming majority of missed collections reported should be collected the following day (as per business as usual arrangements).

Background (if needed)

September 2020: Veolia took over the waste contract for the former Chiltern and Wycombe district areas (previously held by Serco).

November 2021: Veolia took over the waste contract for the former South Bucks district area (previously held by Biffa).

May 2022: Buckinghamshire Council and waste contractor, Veolia, made some vital improvements to bin collection rounds in the former Chiltern, Wycombe and South Bucks district areas. The round reorganisation, which was implemented from Monday 9 May 2022, was contractually required and agreed by Buckinghamshire Council and Veolia to ensure an efficient

collection service operates in the south of the county. The new rounds undertake a 'zonal' approach to collections which keep collection vehicles closer together on collection days and introduce a more balanced and deliverable resource profile across all waste streams. The new approach allows for greater efficiencies, as roads which breach previous district boundaries can now be collected on the same day by the same crew.

2 Garden waste charges (for boards in the Wycombe area)

In view of the disruption experienced by the round reorganisation, the start of the new garden waste subscription arrangements has been moved back to Monday 26 September.

From that date we will offer a single chargeable 'opt-in' garden waste collection service, at a cost of £50 per bin per year (or reusable bags for properties not suitable for wheeled bins).

This means anyone who has previously received free collections of garden waste will now have to subscribe, paying an annual fee to continue receiving fortnightly kerbside garden waste collections from the council.

Our household recycling sites continue to provide free disposal of garden waste for anyone not wanting to pay for the subscription service.

Find out more regarding the [garden waste changes](#).

More information on how the service works can be found at [Buckinghamshire Council's Arrange a garden waste collection pages](#).

Community boards will be at the county show on 1 September

The Bucks County Show is happening on Thursday 1 September at Weedon Park on the outskirts of Aylesbury for the first time since 2019, before the lockdown.

This action-packed one-day event includes a whole range of summer activities for all the family, from the traditional livestock competitions, horse of the year show and showjumping, freestyle motorcycle display, to the gentler arts of home and garden skills.

Buckinghamshire Council will be having one big combined stand highlighting that we are one unified organisation supporting residents in so many different aspects of their lives.

Of course the community boards are central to that support. The managers are working together to plan the community board stall that will raise their profile, show some of the many successful projects carried out and encourage people to get involved with their communities through the boards. There will also be fun activities for the younger visitors!

Update on the £150 council tax energy rebate

Over 80% of the £150 council tax rebates to help offset rising fuel costs have been paid to eligible households. There is also an additional discretionary £25 Helping Hand top-up which Buckinghamshire Council is paying to householders who are on specific benefits.

Anyone who pays their council tax by direct debit should have received their rebate automatically. Anyone who pays by another method is required to claim their rebate – details can be found at <https://www.buckinghamshire.gov.uk/council-tax/150-council-tax-energy-rebate/how-to-claim-the-council-tax-energy-rebate/>

Claimants have until August 2022 to supply their bank details enabling the council to pay directly into their bank account. There is funding available for all eligible properties.

From Monday 1 August householders will not be able to supply their details and all those households that have not claimed will receive a £150 voucher instead, which can be cashed at any post office.

Bucks Online Directory

A reminder that the Bucks Online Directory is a great place to publicise any community events, support groups, activities and services to local people. And please do share the link with anyone who may benefit from the information provided:

[Find activities, groups and services near you | Bucks Online Directory | Buckinghamshire Council](#)

Current and upcoming consultations

Buckinghamshire Council consultations

A reminder that current consultations and surveys from Buckinghamshire Council are available to view on our website <https://yourvoicebucks.citizenspace.com/>

Where appropriate, we also list NHS consultations and surveys as well.