

September 2023 Update from BC for CBs

Share your views and help us keep Buckinghamshire safe

The Safer Buckinghamshire Board is a local Community Safety Partnership that brings together experts from the police, fire service, probation, health and social care services. The board develops an annual action plan to reduce crime and anti-social behaviour in Buckinghamshire and help keep it a safe place to live and work.

To help develop this plan, we want to hear from local residents to understand:

- the impact of crime and anti-social behaviour in their local area
- their experience of reporting crimes
- how safe or unsafe they feel in Buckinghamshire

[The survey](#) is open to anyone living, working and/or studying in Buckinghamshire and will be open from 11 September until 29 October.

The results of the survey will be combined with an analysis of all crimes that happen in the county to help develop partnership activities for the following year.

Residents can complete the survey on [Your Voice Bucks](#) and enter into our prize draw to win one of three £100 leisure vouchers*.

A communications toolkit including newsletter copy, social media copy/graphics and a digital poster will be provided before the survey launches so you can share with your local communities.

*Terms and Conditions apply

Local Plan – progress and next steps

The Local Plan for Buckinghamshire (LP4B) provides a major opportunity to shape the growth of Buckinghamshire over the next 15 years and beyond. It will identify areas for new housing and employment, while also designating areas for protection and enhancement, such as our valued landscapes, natural habitats and heritage.

Earlier this year we carried out a public engagement survey on the draft vision and objectives for the LP4B. We received about 700 responses to the Local Plan for Buckinghamshire Vision and Objectives which we are in the process of analysing and considering.

We have now published an [interactive map and basic details](#) of the 1,000 or so sites which were submitted in response to our two Calls for Brownfield Sites and our Wider Call for Sites. We are assessing these sites for their suitability, availability and achievability

(including viability) to accommodate development. This work will help us to shape the first Buckinghamshire Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment (HELAA).

Our next local plan public engagement work is likely to take place in early 2024, subject to Cabinet approval. This will be on possible high-level growth scenarios for the spatial distribution of new development to meet assessed levels of housing and employment need.

PickMeUp expands to Flackwell Heath

Wycombe's PickMeUp on-demand bus service, introduced by Buckinghamshire Council to reach residents not serviced by regular bus routes, has expanded to include Flackwell Heath. The expansion will help improve links from Flackwell Heath to Loudwater, Cressex, Booker and other parts of town.

Launched as a pilot in September 2022, it is funded by a three-year, central Government Rural Mobility Fund grant. It has proved popular, providing 1,500 rides per week and running Monday to Friday from 6am to 7pm.

Now after reviewing how the service is being used, and in response to requests from the local community, the council and operator Carousel Buses are pleased to extend the benefits of the service to many more potential passengers.

An additional vehicle will now operate at the morning and afternoon peak to keep up with demand. Fares reflect other local bus services and bus tickets such as Wycombe Smart Zone tickets and Concessionary Bus Passes are valid.

Bookings are made in advance via the PickMeUp High Wycombe app or by calling 01494 296021 to arrange a convenient nearby pickup point.

www.pickmeupwycombe.co.uk

Cost of Living update

Community Food Chain Campaign

The Helping Hand team has recently launched the Community Food Chain Campaign which aims to increase public food bank donations and raise awareness of volunteering opportunities available at local food support organisations. You can find out more here – <https://www.buckinghamshire.gov.uk/campaign/community-food-chain/>

If you would be interested in finding out how you can support this campaign please contact Hannah Tomlin, Food Lead Co-ordinator, Helping Hand Team – hannah.tomlin@buckinghamshire.gov.uk

Helping Hand team/ MEAM referrals

The Helping Hand team has identified a cohort of residents who are within Opportunity Bucks areas and have made a high number of applications for support from the team. With their agreement, these residents have been referred on to our Making Every Adult Matter (MEAM) Team who can offer intensive support to develop a better understanding of the challenges these residents are facing and help to connect them with additional services who can further support them.

Welcoming Spaces

There are locations throughout the county, including Buckinghamshire libraries and community venues such as churches and halls, that have continued to offer a Welcoming Space to residents throughout the summer months.

Now that we are moving into autumn we are looking at ways in which Welcoming Spaces can again offer residents warm and friendly places to go and meet with others this coming winter. More information on resources and guidance for setting up a Welcoming Space will be available shortly.

If you have any queries in the meantime please contact Laura Davies, Operations Manager, laura.davies@buckinghamshire.gov.uk

Energy Doctor

Buckinghamshire Council has introduced a new Energy Doctor scheme as one of the initiatives funded by its allocation of the Government's UK Shared Prosperity Fund.

Under the scheme, domestic resource efficiency officers are visiting qualifying homes to assess and advise on measures that can reduce energy consumption and costs.

The team also installs suitable low-cost measures in homes such as draught proofing, hot water cylinder insulation jackets, reflective radiator panels, secondary glazing film and LED lights.

To qualify for an Energy Doctor visit, applicants must meet all of the following criteria:

- They rent the property through a private rental agreement, or own and live in the property
- The household has an income of £30,000 or less (before tax), is in receipt of means-tested benefits such as Universal Credit and Council Tax Support, or a member of the household is disabled
- The domestic property has an energy performance certificate (EPC) rating of D, E, F or G, or does not legally require an EPC

To find out more about the Energy Doctor scheme, and to request a visit, go to the [council's website](#).

Revenues and Benefits

Council tax collection remains on target despite obvious pressures in the community and as a result additional funding is being made available to the discretionary housing payment

fund to support residents who may have one-off difficulties preventing them paying their rent.

Have your say on council spending

Our budget consultation is now open and residents and organisations throughout Buckinghamshire are invited to take part.

As with councils across the country, our budgets are under immense pressure, particularly with more and more people needing social care. As a result, some difficult decisions will have to be made.

So it's essential that residents and organisations have their say on where their council tax is spent. The survey is at [buckinghamshire.gov.uk/money-matters-consultation](https://www.buckinghamshire.gov.uk/money-matters-consultation). We would also really appreciate your support in sharing this message with people and organisations throughout all our local communities.

The consultation closes at 11.59pm on Sunday 15 October.

Buckinghamshire Council consultations

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