

Community Boards – Corporate 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

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.

Consultations

Happening soon

Activity name	Start date	End date	Community Board
All Age Carers Strategy engagement	End of Jan/ Early Feb	TBC	County-wide

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
- All Age Carers Strategy consultation
- Leisure Strategy
- Sexual Entertainment Venue Policy
- Street Trading Policy