



Buckland Parish Council

Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting of Buckland
Held in Buckland Village Hall
On Monday 14th April 2025 at 6.30pm

Present:

Cllr Jon Sainsbury(Chair) Cllr Fiona Livingston Cllr Heather McKenna
Richard Peel(BOST Chair) Clerk: Mrs Jane Lewis
Buckinghamshire Cllr Mike Collins Buckinghamshire Cllr Steve Bowles
There were 6 members of the parish in attendance.

Apologies: Cllr Carole Paternoster

Chairmans Introduction

The chairman welcomed the attendees.

1. Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting 2024

The minutes from the meeting held on 8th April 2024 were agreed and signed by the Chairman.

2. Chairmans report on the year 2024/2025

Acting Chairs Report – Jon Sainsbury welcomed everyone to the Buckland Parish Annual Parish Meeting.

Before I start I would like to take a moment to thank Nigel Hayward for over 20 years of dedicated service to the PC. During his time there were many achievements including:

The introduction of the Village Neighbourhood Plan, the listing of the Dancers End Water pumping station, the return of the PC office to Buckland, preservation of the Roman bones found on the site of Arla, purchase of the Community Orchard and close liaison with All Saints and BOST .

Introduction of Current Members of the Parish Council -

Jon Sainsbury -Acting Chair and Financial Oversight

Jane Lewis Clerk -Clerk to Buckland Parish Council and Responsible Financial Officer
,Administration and Speed Watch Co-ordination.

Carole Paternoster - Planning and Assistant Clerk.

Fiona Livingstone - Environment, Foot Paths and Styles.

Heather McKenna - Joined in 24 - Environment and Street Lighting .

Cllr Mike Collins and Steve Bowles have both represented Buckinghamshire Council at our meetings over the year .

Finances - Costs have increased this year. We continued stringent financial controls in 2024. We improved financial reserves to ensure we comply with NALC guidelines of reserves equaling 6-12 months precept. Going forward we are hoping no more large increases in the Parish Councils tax bills are required.

Planning - We continue to ensure the Neighborhood Plan is fit for purpose and scrutinise all planning applications impacting the Parish . The application for 90 more homes off Chapel Drive was turned down at appeal; BPC objected to the Bloor Home proposals at crossroads roads. To date no further information has been received.

Thames Water pumping Station – BPC met with new MP Laura Kyrke Smith who has helped exert pressure on TW for information. To date no further news on this matter.

Grass cutting and land maintenance - Accounted for 25% of budget last –to save money a reduction on cuts of verges, churchyard and burial ground was introduced. High Rainfall and vegetation growth followed the reduction in cuts, so areas looked less tidy

New Land Maintenance contract for 2025/2026 is under way, one cut per month anticipated this year. All Saints Churchyard area cut by BPC as gesture of goodwill, this will only be 4 cuts this year. All Saints trying to coordinate group of volunteers to help with churchyard maintenance.

Street lights - Led replacement of Street Light would cost £6500. PC agreed to upgrade lights to LED as and when the current bulbs require replacing. We considered request to turn lights of between midnight and 5am however due to lack of footpaths council declined.

Burial Ground BPC working with Chiltern Society on maintenance of this area. Tidied and replaced hedging in Green Lane; A wildflower area has also been created.

Community Orchard - BPC responsible for maintenance of hedges and grass cutting in this area. All other works have been funded by grants: Wendover Community Board, Aston Clinton, Drayton Beauchamp & Buckland Horticultural Society, The Chiltern Society, Gib Lane Community Fund. With these grants we have planted more trees, more fruit trees, hedging, scattered wildflower seeds, installed benches and a kissing gate.

Community Noticeboards - Notice Boards refurbished by Wendover Shed with funding from Wendover Community Board.

We plan to refurbish BPC noticeboards this coming year.

New Road -BPC worked with residents to install sign and reduce traffic using road

Traffic Monitoring- PC commissioned Truvello strips. Data on Buckland Road revealed 48% of vehicles speeding, discussing traffic calming measures with Bucks, costs are major blockers

Tring Hill Bucks CC not acknowledging accident black spot – going to meet the MP shortly.

Speed watch group is low on numbers, PC looking for volunteers.

Footpaths and Stiles - Parish Council has reported many problems with footpath access, dyke bridges and stiles have been reported to Bucks CC . Unfortunately these have not been prioritised by the county council.

Arla, Olleco, Tritax - BPC ensuring Arla continue with Liaison meeting which were 3 yearly -2 yearly going forward . Odours continue to be an issue along with rubbish just outside premises.

ARLA/Olleco completed grass cutting in Lower Buckland

Lower Buckland -Bridleway Issues – Concrete bollards installed in Puttenham, and Buckland.

Assisting Lower Buckland Residents with emergency service access. The Buckland bollard was replaced with a removable bollard, and then repeatedly vandalized within days of installation.

BPC continue to keep close eye on prospective development of land in Lower Buckland.

Dog walking businesses continue to hire/purchase land resulting in increased traffic through Buckland.

Communication and engagement with residents - Introduced quarterly newsletter. Residents responded positively to this, have kept paper instead of electronic as result of feedback from residents. Any volunteers for help distributing always welcome. Facebook page and website always source of information and noticeboards as well.

Litter picks undertaken in lower Buckland.

We are all custodians on Buckland and the role of the PC is to protect the parish, the environment and provide support for its residence.

Finally I'd like to thank the Parish Councilors , all of whom are volunteers, for their time and effort and the Clerk who's professionalism allows the Parish Council to function.

3. Presentation of Accounts

The Clerk to the Council, Mrs Jane Lewis, presented the unauthorised accounts. The figures showed that the final figures were in line with the proposed budget for 2024/2025. The accounts

were due to be audited later in the week. The Clerk reported that the Council had been successful in securing over £10000 of grants for work in the Burial Ground and Community Orchard. Grasscutting continued to be a major expense for the parish and the Council had secured competitive quotes for the works this year.

4. BOST Treasurers report for the year ending 31st March 2025

There have been significant changes to the Buckland Old School Trust during the past year relating to its governance, profile and communication. The Trust has embarked on a series of initiatives to raise awareness about the village hall, streamline the function of the Trust and put transparency and communication at the heart of what we do.

At a meeting in August last year, the Rev Sally Bottomer stepped down as Chair of the Trust and I was elected to the post. At the same time, Linda Oatley was nominated as the other Church representative.

The same meeting agreed that Carole Paternoster would assume responsibility for the Old School House, that Linda would deal with the application for Grants and Paula Graves would continue to report on Finance. Nigel Hayward, at the time, was the other Parish Council representative. Phil Hedges, who now lives in Devon, agreed to resign after working with the Trust for many years. A marketing plan was agreed which included recommendations to introduce a logo and strapline, subsequently agreed as 'A Hall for Us All', introduce a new website, be more active with social media, set up an online booking system and launch a survey to find out past use and ideas for future activities.

We identified target audiences and agreed that a major event to commemorate the 25 years of the existence of the hall, including an exhibition and a day of activity, should be organised to help bring the community of the Buckland Parish together.

The plan also recommended a more active pursuit of grants and sponsorship. In the interests of transparency, it was agreed that we should publish summaries of the minutes of meetings on the website, include FAQs and a list of key events and a history of the hall and background information on each Trustee.

A review of the hourly costs of the hall was sanctioned along with the ambition to double the time the hall is used for regular bookings to 30 hours per week in the first year and quadruple the adhoc bookings during the year to 12. It was also decided to review the Trust's schedule that had remained unchanged for more than 20 years.

The ambitions outlined in the marketing plan have largely been fulfilled. A news release, which was reproduced in the local media and newsletters was issued at the end of the year to announce the appointment of two new trustees and the launch of the website and online booking system. Thanks go to James and Jane Lewis for turning the concept for the website into an active system now attracting around 500 visitors a month and already showing a 20% increase in searches on Google, with Facebook now registering 70 followers. To date we've had 19 responses to our survey. These will be discussed at our next meeting in June.

Changes have been made to our schedule/governing document including changing an unlimited time to serve as a Trustee to a three year term that can be extended to nine years with the agreement of members of the Trust; the ability to remove Trustees with a vote of no confidence, the addition of a code of conduct and policy documents on equality and diversity, safeguarding and health and safety. A decision was also made to reduce the number of Parish Council representatives from two to one to broaden representation on the Trust.

After benchmarking our rates with other halls and looking at more detail at our income and expenditure we agreed that our rates should remain at £15 per hour for non-villagers, that the rate should be £12 for villagers and that £20 per hour should be charged for private events.

In addition to the above we have obtained a necessary music licence for the hall, reduced the bank accounts from 4 to two, put in a planning application for signage at the front of the hall and agreed to signpost the car park in New Road.

We successfully applied for a Community Grant from, Buckinghamshire Council which will fund the signage adjacent to the entrance to the hall and a new marquee.

The Hall Manager has undertaken work to improve the hall's facilities including replacing a door for the disabled, upgrading the fire doors, ensuring the smoke detection system is functional and introducing a Hive heating system.

We've also explained our plans and ambitions to the New Road Residents Association and at a meeting with immediate neighbours.

Recently there have been other changes to the Trust membership. Paula Graves, after many years of sterling service, resigned as Treasurer and Nigel Hayward, who resigned as Chairman of the Parish Council, consequently forfeited his role as one of the Parish Council representatives. Our intention in the coming months is to intensify our promotion of the hall and facilities to increase take up; to act on the feedback from the survey; recruit new Trustees and focus on making September 13 – the date of our anniversary celebration – a successful event for the community. Our bank balances currently stand at £33,160.57 in the current account and £51,942.42 in reserves.

5. Questions from the Floor

A member of the public commented on the Parish Councils end of year figures compared to last year showed that the Council had carefully managed budgets.

6. The Chairman thanked everyone for coming to the meeting. He closed the meeting at 6.30pm.