



**Cllr Jilly Jordan**

**Soulbury Parish Council Meeting Monday 15th July 2024**

## **Buckinghamshire homes urged not to miss out on energy-saving grants**

Eligible homeowners in Buckinghamshire are being urged not to miss out on Government-funded measures to save money on their fuel bills.

Properties which meet certain criteria, including their Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) rating, could receive home improvements from insulation to air source heat pumps as part of the Homes Upgrade Grant Phase 2 (HUG2) scheme.

In Buckinghamshire, we are committed to reducing our carbon footprint and retrofitting homes is a vital part of that. The free upgrades involved in the HUG2 scheme will help residents live in warmer homes, reduce their carbon footprint and cut down on their energy bills.

I would ask residents to please check their eligibility for the scheme and, if eligible, to apply before it's too late.

Funded by the Department for Energy Security and Net Zero, the energy-saving measures can include insulation upgrades, and the installation of solar panels and low carbon heating systems such as air source heat pumps and more.

Households with a combined annual income of less than £36,000, including benefits, whose homes are not heated through mains gas, and those with hard-to-heat homes could be eligible.

Eligible properties will receive an assessment to evaluate and determine the energy saving measures that could be undertaken, and any improvements made are completely free of charge.

Work is completed on a first-come, first-served basis with applications closing at the end of September 2024.

To find out more about HUG2 and to check if your home is eligible, visit [www.hugapply.co.uk](http://www.hugapply.co.uk) or call Agility Eco on **0800 107 8883**.

## Buckinghamshire Adult Learning receives top marks from Ofsted

Buckinghamshire's Adult Learning service has once again received a rating of 'Good' in a recent Ofsted inspection. All aspects of the service were rated Good, but this time the courses on offer for adults were ranked Outstanding by inspectors.

Buckinghamshire Adult Learning runs over 1,500 part-time courses and workshops, both online and in person from 140 locations across the county. With courses ranging from academic and skills-based subjects to those offering opportunities to try new hobbies and interests, there is something for all.

The Ofsted inspection looked at all aspects of the service, from the quality of education provided whilst offering wider personal development for individuals and leadership and management. Inspectors made particular note of the success of efforts focusing on upskilling Buckinghamshire's residents in some of the more deprived areas of the county and also praised the emphasis on helping learners to overcome barriers to learning, including those for whom English is not their first language. The report noted: "Many learners express how they came to the United Kingdom with little understanding of English, but they can now access community services without the need for an interpreter. Several have secured employment."

The service was also praised for the way teachers work with learners to understand their needs and develop individualised support plans to meet them, together with the support provided for those with additional needs.

The report highlighted a couple of areas where minor improvements could be made to further enhance the service, including helping a small number of young learners to access opportunities to develop their wider interests and talents and also providing more rapid support to a few apprentices to stay or get back on track. Work is already underway to address this area, with the recent introduction of tailored intervention plans.

Buckinghamshire's Adult Learning Service offers the opportunity for adults to fulfil their ambitions, further their interests and achieve their potential through learning and training.

We are pleased that the efforts of all those who work within the service have been recognised as part of this inspection. All our tutors are dedicated and passionate about their subjects and every class allows learners to develop their skills, knowledge and confidence in a supportive and inclusive environment. We will take on board all comments from the report to ensure we continue to build and improve our offer to adult learners in Buckinghamshire.

Find out more about Buckinghamshire Adult Learning at: <https://adultlearningbc.ac.uk>

## Summer fun for everyone!

The summer holidays are nearly here and with six weeks free from lessons, homework and the usual school routines, many families will be busy planning fun things to do.

For those on lower incomes, juggling finances during the summer can be particularly hard, but Buckinghamshire Council is once again providing extra support for those who need it.

Children in Reception up to Year 11 who receive benefits-related free school meals can take part in up to 16 free holiday club sessions over the six-week break. The Holiday Activities and Food (HAF) programme will be running in over 60 locations, offering a wide range of activities including sports, cooking, pickleball, coding and martial arts sessions. Those eligible for the HAF sessions will have received a code via an email from Holiday Activities to book places. Each session includes a healthy meal for the children taking part. For more information on HAF visit the [website](#).

Certain families are also being given a £50 food voucher per eligible child to help with the cost of providing extra food during the holiday period.

We know that school holidays can place additional pressures on family budgets. That is why we have developed a range of support for those who need it. The summer should be a fun and carefree time for all children, and we hope this support will help ensure that everyone is able to make the most of their summer break.”

There are lots of free family events taking place over the summer months and beyond. Once again this year, Buckinghamshire Council’s hugely popular WhizzFizz is teaming up with partners to offer free fun family events in Aylesbury, Chesham and High Wycombe. This includes Wycombe Celebrates, a new festival of the senses on Sunday 8 September in High Wycombe. [Visit the WhizzFizz website](#) to find out what’s on in your local area.

The [Buckinghamshire Family Information Service](#) is a great one stop shop to find details of local things to do with your family this summer. There is also a handy directory which allows you to [search for types of activities and specific locations](#).

Here is a reminder of some of the other free or low-cost things you can do right here in Bucks this summer:

- Explore the local countryside on foot or bike. Find details of walks and trails for all ages and abilities on our website: <https://familyinfo.buckinghamshire.gov.uk/things-to-do/family-friendly-walks>
- Buckinghamshire’s Country Parks have miles of scooter and buggy-friendly paths as well as fun play areas and cafes. A variety of family-friendly events are also planned over the summer. For more information visit: <https://countryparks.buckinghamshire.gov.uk>
- Go on an interactive adventure with Love Exploring. Download the free app and join in the fun in parks and open spaces across the county. This summer try out the new themed activities involving Tree Fairies and Butterflies and Moths: [Love Exploring](#)
- Join the 2024 Summer Reading Challenge at your local library. This year’s challenge is called Marvellous Makers and encourages children to get creative and enjoy reading during the

summer. Visit your local library for lots of FREE activities this summer: [2024 Summer Reading Challenge](#)

- All of Buckinghamshire's leisure centres will be running activities and fun family sessions throughout the summer. Check the details of your local centre online: <https://www.buckinghamshire.gov.uk/health-wellbeing-and-sports/leisure-centres-and-sports-clubs/leisure-centres>
- The Discover Bucks Museum and Wycombe Museum have a range of fun events and activities taking place during the holidays. Some activities have a small fee and booking is necessary. Visit their websites for more information: <https://www.discoverbucksmuseum.org>; <https://wycombemuseum.org.uk>
- Open Weekend 2024 offers the opportunity to explore Buckinghamshire culture over one long weekend (25-28 July) with free and low cost family-friendly summer activities including: music, theatre, online events, heritage, talks, outdoor activities, and art & craft workshops. <https://buckinghamshireculture.org/projects/open-weekend-whats-on>

Whatever the age or interest of the children or young people in your family, you really are spoilt for choice for things to do in Buckinghamshire this summer. And even better, many options are either free or low cost so everyone can enjoy them. So please go out and enjoy the available activities!

## Countywide grass cutting and weed spraying programme is underway

In recent weeks, council crews have been busy working across the county as the annual programme of grass cutting and weed spraying gets underway.

Grass and roadside vegetation has grown even faster than usual for this time of year, following the very wet winter and ongoing spells of heavy rain throughout spring, together with periods of sunshine. To deal with this exceptionally fast growth, the council has brought in additional grass cutting crews.

Three rounds of cuts are scheduled at rural road junctions this year, in order to maintain good visibility for road users, with the first now completed. Two cycles of urban verge cuts are also programmed to take place in areas where this service has not been devolved to parish and town councils. The first urban cutting cycle has begun. Additionally, crews will be attending locations across the county where reports have been made of roadside cuts being needed to maintain road safety. To date more than 150 of these reactive cuts have taken place with crews primed to go out when new issues are reported on Fix my Street.

In addition to grass cutting, work is also in progress to tackle the growth of weeds alongside footways. Two cycles of weed spraying will be carried out across the whole county on all public footways over the coming months, as well as 'siding out' at targeted locations. This is the process of clearing edges of footways where weeds and vegetation have grown through. Crews will use Glyphosate to spray weeds. The chemical is not harmful to people or animals and can be used safely close to water courses. The spray is applied in a fine mist, in very small doses and starts to work within an hour of application. It can only be applied during dry weather.

Our crews will be working hard across coming months to keep on top of grass and weed growth around the county. Our inspectors regularly review all locations, but we would ask residents who spot areas where they feel the growth is making it difficult for road users, to report these to us via Fix My Street so we can investigate further and take quick action where needed.

To report any issue on a road or street within Buckinghamshire visit:  
[www.buckinghamshire.gov.uk/fix-my-street](http://www.buckinghamshire.gov.uk/fix-my-street)

# Buckinghamshire Council adopts new county-wide Local Heritage List

Buckinghamshire Council has adopted 1,466 new heritage assets onto its county-wide heritage list. The council has developed a Local Heritage List to protect some of the most important sites in the county that contribute to the character and heritage of Buckinghamshire.

There have been more than 3,440 nominations from members of the public for inclusion on the list, which resulted in a team of volunteers working alongside the council's staff helping to assess sites and enrich records. In January 2023, 771 sites were brought forward for adoption in Phase 1. A further 1,466 sites have been added, bringing the total number of locally listed assets to 2,237.

The Local Heritage List identifies locally significant heritage sites and celebrates their contribution to local identity and character. These sites include historic buildings (houses, chapels, agricultural and industrial buildings), archaeological sites (upstanding earthwork remains and buried sites), formal gardens, public open spaces, public works of art, monuments, and street furniture.

This is different to statutory listing and designations (e.g., Grade I, II and II\* Listed Buildings, Scheduled Monuments, and Registered Parks and Gardens), which are assessed nationally by Historic England.

Some of the sites going forward for adoption in the Local Heritage List are:

- [Amersham Railway Station and platforms](#)
- [Benjamin North & Sons former furniture factory, Piddington](#)
- [Oakley Airfield bomb storage area](#)
- [Hedsor House, Hedsor](#)
- [Mushroom Tree Shelter, East Claydon](#)
- [Rawlings Dell Borehole](#)
- [Ludwig Guttman statue \(founder of Paralympic Games\)](#)
- [Anul gana miku uchi murugan kovil temple](#)

We are very pleased that we've been able to progress our Local Heritage List and adopt a further 1,466 sites.

This is thanks to the hard work of our Heritage & Archaeology Team and the many volunteers who have worked, who have collated and assessed the hundreds of sites nominated by local communities.

The Local Heritage List will help us protect local heritage assets for future generations to enjoy. For instance, assets on this list will be recognised and considered in any future planning applications."

To view a list of nominated sites, please visit the [Buckinghamshire Local Heritage List website](#)

- Total nominations assessed to date = 2,670. Of this number, 1,466 are 'candidate ready' for adoption. Of the 1,466 ready for adoption, 1,363 are buildings, 1 parks and gardens, 76 landmarks/art, 26 other/archaeological.
- In March 2021, Buckinghamshire Council was one of 22 Local Planning Authorities awarded a grant of £70k from the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities.
- The council have also ran a series of online and in-person [talks and events](#) and working parties with volunteers, including Cultural Heritage Students from the Royal Agricultural University and the Young Archaeologist's Club. So far, they have engaged with over 40 groups and organisations, including 17 parish councils and other stakeholders, such as Transport for London, the Canals & Rivers Trust and the Chilterns Conservation Board

## Pilot parking scheme to provide greater choice for customers

From week commencing Monday 17 June, drivers in the Wycombe area will be able to take advantage of an innovative new scheme being piloted in council car parks locally. The National Parking Platform (NPP) is a national pilot which aims to provide customers with greater flexibility in paying for parking.

The pilot scheme will run in all council car parks in Wycombe, Princes Risborough, Bourne End and Marlow and will allow customers to choose which supplier they purchase their parking time through. At present only one digital supplier, RingGo, is offered. The NPP will allow customers to choose from three suppliers: JustPark; PaybyPhone and RingGo. Each one has its own dedicated app, fees, and telephone number, allowing customers to choose which supplier works for them and the price they pay.

The idea behind the scheme is to give customers a choice in what they pay for their parking and to go for the option that best suits them. With different suppliers offering different convenience fees across one area, it forces them to be competitive in their pricing. This drives down costs for motorists which is another positive. This is part of a pilot so we will be monitoring how it is used and will feed back our findings.

Find out more online about the National Parking Platform, including the fees that suppliers will be charging initially in the Wycombe area: [www.buckinghamshire.gov.uk/npp](http://www.buckinghamshire.gov.uk/npp)

More information on Buckinghamshire Council car parks can be found here: [www.buckinghamshire.gov.uk/parking-roads-and-transport/parking](http://www.buckinghamshire.gov.uk/parking-roads-and-transport/parking)

Council car parks included in the National Parking Platform pilot:

### **Bourne End**

- Wakeman Road

### **Wycombe**

- Desborough Street
- Desborough Square
- Duke Street
- Easton Street
- George Street
- Handy Cross Park & Ride
- Kingsmead Recreational Ground
- Railway Place
- Richardson Street
- Totteridge Road

- WDC Offices – Front
- WDC Offices – Rear
- Swan

### **Marlow**

- Dean Street
- Institute Road
- Liston Road
- Marlow Central
- Pound Lane
- Riley Road
- West Street

### **Princes Risborough**

- Horns Lane
- The Mount