



Cllr Jilly Jordan & Cllr Caroline Cornell

Soulbury Parish Council Meeting, Monday 19th Oct 2026

Help shape Buckinghamshire's plans to prevent homelessness and support local people

Local people across Buckinghamshire are being invited to have their say on plans to widen housing options, strengthen earlier support to prevent homelessness and rough sleeping, and improve access to housing advice.

Residents, community groups, businesses and local organisations are being invited to help shape the new Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2027 to 2032, with a six-week consultation that is now live.

By focusing on early intervention and prevention, the Council aims to reduce homelessness and rough sleeping, improve community wellbeing and ensure Buckinghamshire remains a place where individuals and families can thrive.

The strategy, developed with local partners, focuses on three key areas:

- Preventing homelessness early by identifying people who may be struggling and providing help as soon as possible, before they lose their home.
- Reducing the need for temporary accommodation and where necessary, ensuring it is safe and suitable, while helping people move into settled housing as quickly as possible.
- Supporting people to rebuild their lives by helping them move into affordable, settled housing and access the support they need to live independently and thrive.

Preventing homelessness is about more than housing. It is about helping people maintain their independence, supporting families through difficult times, and ensuring residents can access help before problems escalate into crisis. Our strategy places a strong emphasis on working together with partners and adopting a One Council approach. By doing so, we can address wider support needs, including access to training, employment, health services and other opportunities that help residents build stable and independent lives.

Supporting residents experiencing housing difficulties and tackling rough sleeping As national policy continues to evolve, we will build on the work already taking place locally and ensure the final strategy is supported by a clear, measurable action plan and reflects new requirements. Yet is flexible enough to move with national policy changes. "Preventing homelessness is at the heart of our approach. By providing support earlier and making it easier for people to access help, we can reduce the risk of homelessness and prevent it where possible.

We're also committed to learning from those with first-hand experience of homelessness and working with local communities to help shape services that respond to people's needs.

We want as many people as possible to get involved, so whether you've experienced homelessness yourself, work with vulnerable people, or simply care about your local community, I'd encourage you to take a few minutes to share your views so we can develop a plan to help more local people access a safe, secure place to call home.

Residents can also take part by completing the survey online at: yourvoicebucks.citizenspace.com.

Anyone with questions, or require this information in another format or language, can email: housingstrategyconsultations@buckinghamshire.gov.uk

The consultation closes at 11.59pm on Sunday 25 October 2026.

Find out more about the consultation, the drop-in events and have your say at: yourvoicebucks.citizenspace.com.

Council invests more than £725,000 to support communities with the cost of living

Residents across Buckinghamshire are set to benefit from more than £725,000 of council investment in local voluntary and community organisations, helping ensure support is available for those facing cost of living pressures.

Through Buckinghamshire Council's Financial Wellbeing Community Fund, 19 organisations from across the county have received funding to provide practical help, advice and guidance to residents and families when they need it most. The funding, which comes from central government's Crisis and Resilience Fund, is distributed to local councils to support local communities facing cost of living challenges.

Working in partnership with local charity Heart of Bucks, the council is investing in trusted community organisations that understand the needs of local people and are well placed to deliver support where it can make the greatest difference. The funding will help residents access a wide range of services, manage financial pressures and build confidence in managing their finances for the future.

This investment is helping to create stronger, more resilient communities across Buckinghamshire by ensuring residents can access the right support at the right time, from practical and financial advice to connected services that provide longer-term help and stability.

The organisations receiving funding are:

- Acorn Community Bank
- Age UK Buckinghamshire
- Aylesbury Vineyard Storehouse
- Aylesbury Women's Centre run under Riverway Community Charity
- Citizens Advice Bucks
- Community Youth Ventures CIC
- Connection Support
- Jedidiah UK (Buckingham)
- King's Church High Wycombe
- Life
- People and Planet Matter
- Redeemed Christian Church of God – RCCG House of Mercy, Aylesbury
- Restore Hope
- RSASS Buckinghamshire (formerly Rape Crisis)
- Southcourt Baptist Church, Aylesbury
- The Money Heave Community Project
- Waddesdon Hall
- Wycombe Homeless Connection
- Wycombe Mind

This investment will help provide practical help for residents facing financial pressures today, while also giving people the tools, advice and confidence they need to improve their financial wellbeing in the longer term.

Independent review highlights progress in improving everyday life for Buckinghamshire residents

Residents across Buckinghamshire are benefitting from improvements to local services, stronger support for communities and continued investment in the county's future, according to an independent review of Buckinghamshire Council.

The Local Government Association (LGA) recently returned to Buckinghamshire to look at the progress made since its original Corporate Peer Challenge in 2025. The review team, made up of experienced councillors and senior officers from other councils, describes Buckinghamshire Council as an "impressive organisation with strong foundations, strong leadership and a positive organisational culture".

The review found significant progress across all of the areas highlighted during the original assessment, including strengthening local communities, supporting economic growth, improving services, delivering new homes, and maintaining a robust financial position despite the pressures facing councils across the country.

At the heart of the review is the positive difference being made for residents, with services becoming easier to access, support reaching people more quickly, and investment continuing in the places and communities that matter most to local people.

One example is improving customer service by using automation for 'simple' requests to save time for our customers and free up customer service colleagues for more complex queries our residents come to us with.

The peer team also noted that:

- residents can more easily see how council services are performing and how public money is being spent.
- improved technology is helping residents get answers and support more quickly while ensuring taxpayers' money is used effectively.
- communities are receiving greater support through programmes such as Opportunity Bucks, helping local people shape and strengthen their neighbourhoods.
- continued improvements are being made to services for children and young people with SEND and their families.
- residents have played an important role in shaping plans for Buckinghamshire's future through extensive engagement on the new Local Plan.
- regeneration projects are creating opportunities for residents through new jobs, investment and thriving town centres.

Since the original review, the council has also introduced a new 'Corporate Plan' for the county, creating a clearer link between the issues residents tell us matter most, the services the council delivers and how taxpayers' money is spent.

Steven Broadbent, Leader of Buckinghamshire Council, said:

"Everything we do is about improving outcomes for residents and making Buckinghamshire an even better place to live, work and visit.

"This review recognises the progress we've made in making services easier to access, supporting residents when they need us, investing in communities and ensuring taxpayers receive good value for money.

"It's encouraging to see that progress recognised, but we're not standing still. We're ambitious for Buckinghamshire and we'll continue looking for ways to improve services and deliver even more for local people."

The review concluded that Buckinghamshire Council has made significant progress since the original challenge and is well placed to build on that momentum in the years ahead.

- Buckinghamshire Council's first Local Government Association Corporate Peer Challenge took place between 30 September and 3 October 2025.
- A formal progress review took place on 3 July 2026. The full report can be viewed here: [LGA Corporate Peer Challenge Final Report 2021](#)
- The review recognised significant progress across strategic planning, governance, community empowerment, regeneration, housing and organisational culture.

Your Bucks, Your Say: help shape the services that matter most to you

Buckinghamshire Council is at a key stage in planning next year's budget and is inviting residents, businesses and local organisations to help shape these financial plans in a consultation that opens today.

Every day, Buckinghamshire Council delivers services that support people and communities across the county. From caring for vulnerable adults and children to maintaining roads, collecting waste and recycling, supporting town centres and helping people into work, these services play an important role in everyday life in Buckinghamshire.

These are also the services that support the council's vision to improve everyday life for all residents, as set out earlier this summer in the council's plan for the next five years. This plan outlines how residents will be able to access better opportunities, be part of thriving communities, be supported when they need help, live in and visit great places and feel their local services offer value for money.

The council is now planning the budget for the next financial year that will pay for the services that will deliver this vision and the council's commitment to Buckinghamshire residents.

Buckinghamshire Council's annual **Your Bucks, Your Say** consultation has launched on Monday 7 September, giving our residents, businesses and community groups the opportunity to take part in developing the 2027/28 budget priorities.

Like councils across the country, Buckinghamshire Council is facing increasing pressure on its finances. Around three quarters of the council's budget is spent on four essential services: adult social care, children's services, home-to-school transport and temporary accommodation for people experiencing homelessness.

Changes to the way local government is funded also mean that a growing proportion of money raised locally in Buckinghamshire is being redistributed elsewhere, creating additional financial challenges for the council.

Despite these pressures, Buckinghamshire Council remains in a robust financial position with value for money one of its most important pillars. The council is continuing to plan ahead, finding smarter and more efficient ways of working, making good use of technology, reducing waste and making big savings while protecting the services residents depend on most, with the current budget plans maintaining weekly bin collections, investing in roads and town centres and programmes to support people into work particularly younger residents.

Steven Broadbent, Leader of Buckinghamshire Council, said:

"The decisions we make about how public money is spent affect the services that people rely on every day, which is why it's so important that we hear directly from residents, businesses and community organisations before any final decisions are made."

"Buckinghamshire is in a robust financial position, but like councils across the country we continue to face rising costs and increasing demand for many essential services. We must make sure every pound is spent wisely and focused on the areas that make the biggest difference to people's lives."

"We've worked hard to protect frontline services, invest in our communities and find new and more efficient ways of working. At the same time, we want to make sure our plans reflect the priorities of the people we serve.

"Whether you're a resident, run a business or are part of a local organisation, I'd encourage you to take a few minutes to complete this consultation. Your feedback will help shape our spending priorities and ensure we continue to focus on the services that matter most across Buckinghamshire."

The Your Bucks, Your Say consultation runs from **Monday 7 September until Sunday 18 October 2026**.

Residents, businesses and organisations can take part online at [buckinghamshire.gov.uk/your-bucks-your-say](https://www.buckinghamshire.gov.uk/your-bucks-your-say). Paper copies are also available from libraries and Council Access Points across Buckinghamshire.

- Buckinghamshire Council agreed a balanced budget for 2026/27 at its Full Council meeting on 25 February 2026.
- The council's approved medium-term financial plans include savings and income generation totalling £83.7 million across 2026/27 and 2027/28.
- Your Bucks, Your Say is Buckinghamshire Council's annual budget consultation and helps inform budget-setting for the following financial year.

Town and Parish Council customer service VIP line

You can make contact with us via the following email address:

parishsupport@buckinghamshire.gov.uk

There is a dedicated Town and Parish Council customer service VIP phonenumber where you can reach a member of our customer team on 0300 303 5640, 9am to 5:30pm Monday to Thursday, and 9am to 5pm on Friday.

Jessie Bath, Member Liaison Officer



Jessie Bath is a Planning Senior Business Support Officer, working within the Member Liaison Office for the Planning & Environment area.

She supports Members, Town & Parish Councils and the Planning & Environment teams to answer questions/enquiries they may have.

Planning & Environment covers the following areas:

- Planning – Development Management
- Planning – Major Developments
- Planning Enforcement
- Planning Policy (i.e. NPPF (National Planning Policy), 5 Year Land Supply, S106, Neighbourhood plans)
- Heritage and Archaeology
- Ecology
- SuDs – Strategic Flood Management
- Building Control
- Highways Development Management
- TPOs (Tree Protection)
- Landscape and Urban Design

One of the avenues to support communications between Town & Parish Councils and Officers are the Planning Surgeries, which we first set up in August 2023.

Schedules for these are circulated before each quarter, and the surgeries are well worth you attending if you need any Planning & Environment support, or if you just want to know more about the service.

Additionally, and you may already be aware of this, but we hold annual Town & Parish Councils forums, where our Planning & Environment teams give updates on each area and cover any policy or legislative changes you should be aware of.

To find out more about our Member Liaison Officers, email:

memberliaison@buckinghamshire.gov.uk

Planning Liaison Surgeries, Q4 (Oct-Dec)

- Members can request a 20-minute appointment by emailing memberliaison@buckinghamshire.gov.uk, they will receive a Request Booking Form by automatic reply. The Member should then complete the form and return to the email address above.
- The meetings are held via Teams. A link to the online meeting will be included when an invitation is sent to the Member
- At least **two working days' notice** is required to request a Member Liaison Surgery appointment.

Please contact the dedicated Town and Parish Council customer service VIP phoneline where you can reach a member of our customer team on 0300 303 5640, 9am to 5:30pm Monday to Thursday, and 9am to 5pm on Friday for a date if required

Current Dates:

Planning Town & Parish Representative Liaison Surgeries (Oct – Dec 2026)

Monday 12 October, 10-11.15am – Planning Area 1 Surgery Appointments

Monday 26 October, 10-11.15am – Planning Area 1 Surgery Appointments

Monday 9 November, 10-11.15am – Planning Area 1 Surgery Appointments

Monday 23 November, 10-11.15am – Planning Area 1 Surgery Appointments

Monday 7 December, 10-11.15am – Planning Area 1 Surgery Appointments



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