

EDLESBOROUGH PC Buckinghamshire Councillors Report for 19th December 2024 and Newsletter copy

On a mission; tree planting season gets underway again in Buckinghamshire

National Tree Week began on Saturday 23 Nov making it the ideal time to mark the tree planting season. Buckinghamshire Council will be kicking off with over 4,000 trees being planted near Winslow and Great Horwood; this new woodland will be named Roddimore Wood.

Weather permitting, the 4,625 new trees will be planted before Christmas. Species include native Black Poplar, Oak, Eared Willow, and Blackthorn which is particularly beneficial to brown hairstreak butterfly larvae.

Tree planting is one of the ways in which the council is working towards its goal of reducing its carbon emissions by 75% by 2030, on the way to achieving net-zero no later than 2050, as part of the [Climate Change and Air Quality Strategy](#).

Other new woodlands we will be creating this planting season include Isle of Wight Wood in Gerrards Cross, Innisfree Wood in Great Missenden, Huntsmoor Park Wood in Iver and Lower Munt's Wood in Saunderton. We are also planning to plant another of our 'Tiny Forests' in Desborough.

Local schools and communities are getting involved by volunteering to help with our tree planting mission including planting the Desborough Tiny Forest with pupils from Millbrook Combined School.

Park for free this Christmas

To make your Christmas shopping experience more convenient and affordable this year, Buckinghamshire Council is offering free parking in selected council-owned car parks on certain dates in the run up to the festive season.

The free council run car parking days are:

- **Aylesbury (all council-owned car parks):** Every Thursday in December from 3:30pm
- **Aylesbury (Walton Street Car Park only):** Every Sunday in December up to Christmas

New Education Tax Raises Concerns in Buckinghamshire

The recent introduction of a 20% VAT on independent school fees and the abolition of business rates relief by the Government has sparked significant concerns about the potential impact on Buckinghamshire's education system.

At its full Council meeting on Wednesday evening, Members agreed that the Leader of the Council writes to the Secretary of State for Education requesting that this policy be rethought given its impact on young people's wellbeing and attainment. They also agreed for the Cabinet to carry out a full impact assessment of the full year impact of the Education Tax upon both Buckinghamshire State Schools and Buckinghamshire independent schools both mainstream and those that provide Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) provision

Buckinghamshire Council Opposes New 'Family Farm Tax'

At its full Council meeting on Wednesday evening, Buckinghamshire Council voiced strong opposition to the recently introduced 'Family Farm Tax' by the government, citing significant concerns over its potential impact on family farms and rural communities.

Councillor Phil Gomm stated: "The new tax will make it exceedingly difficult for farmers to pass on their farms to the next generation, thereby threatening food security and the viability of rural communities.

Buckinghamshire contains many farming communities and numerous family farms. They face the devastating impact from this new 'Tax.' At a time when farmers in Buckinghamshire are struggling with soaring costs and energy prices, this sudden and unexpected tax rise will damage the future of their farms and negatively impact on wider local communities and environmental sustainability.

Farmers in Buckinghamshire are already grappling with reduced subsidies, adverse trading relations, and rising costs. We believe that the new tax will exacerbate these issues, making it even harder for farmers to sustain their operations."

In response to the tax, the council plans to write to the Chancellor of the Exchequer and the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs to express their dismay and request a reversal of the policy.

No ifs, no butts – Council demonstrates its zero-tolerance on sales of illegal tobacco, cigarettes and vapes

Buckinghamshire Council has once again demonstrated its zero-tolerance to those attempting to sell counterfeit and illegal vapes and cigarette and tobacco products in the county, following recent successful court action against three local businesses.

In November, Smokey World, in Castle Street, High Wycombe, was issued with a closure order by Wycombe Magistrates to run for three months and later the same month Red Power in Aylesbury was also served with a closure order for a period of three months. Most recently, Stoke Convenience Store in Stoke Road, Aylesbury,

was served with a one-month closure order at a hearing at Milton Keynes Magistrates' Court on Tuesday 3 December.

All three premises had been subject to investigations by officers from Buckinghamshire and Surrey Trading Standards, having been caught selling a variety of illicit products including illegal vapes, counterfeit cigarettes and hand rolling tobacco in test purchasing exercises carried out by undercover officers. A number of operations involving tobacco detection dogs were also carried out at the locations. These specialist canines are trained to sniff out cigarettes and tobacco that is hidden from sight. At Smokey World the dogs were able to locate counterfeit good concealed behind sophisticated false wall panels. Stoke Convenience Store was also caught selling both regular vapes and alcohol to underage shoppers.

The closure orders were sought under the Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014, and mean neither of the premises is allowed to open for trade during the three month/one month period respectively. If the orders are breached, those involved are liable for arrest and could receive up to 51 weeks in prison, or a fine, or both.

Man caught littering sees penalty soar to more than £1,100 after failing to pay Fixed Penalty

A man who failed to pay a simple £150 Fixed Penalty Notice (FPN) for littering in March 2024 has paid a hefty price for his crime, as the costs rise to more than £1,100 in court.

Ricardo Allen of Hawkins Road, London, was convicted of an offence of littering in his absence, at Wycombe Magistrates Court on 16 October 2024.

The court heard that on Wednesday 6 March 2024, a vehicle was recorded littering on Broughton Lane, Aylesbury. The offence was recorded by a dashcam provided by another driver. The footage played a key role in the investigation, capturing the offence and an image of the litter being discarded from the window.

The vehicle was traced to Allen who attended an interview in Aylesbury, where he was shown the dashcam footage. The litter consisted of food waste, specifically takeaway packaging containing chicken bones. The driver received a £150 Fixed Penalty Notice for the littering offence, however, he refused to pay. In cases like this, Buckinghamshire Council gathers sufficient evidence to prosecute in the event of non-payment and as this happened in this instance, there was no choice but to initiate court action.

On Wednesday 16 October 2024, the evidence was presented at a hearing held in the defendant's absence, as he chose not to attend the court. The court found Mr Allen guilty. Legal costs were imposed, totalling £798.96, which additionally included a fine of £220 and a victim surcharge of £88.00. Allen was ordered to pay the total amount of £1,106.94 within 28 days.

Company learns the hard way – NEVER pay cash to have your waste removed

A waste company which paid another company to take away waste from their own vehicle when it broke down has been prosecuted in court after the waste was found dumped by the roadside in Buckinghamshire.

Complete Waste Management Ltd, based in Essex, pleaded guilty to the offence of failing in their duty of care when transferring waste to a waste remover, when the case was heard at High Wycombe Magistrates' Court on 27 November 2024.

The court heard that on 14 September 2023, a mixture of household and building waste was found dumped at Ibstone Road in Stokenchurch. Buckinghamshire Council's waste enforcement team carries out regular searches of the area, due to it being heavily blighted with fly-tipping. On this occasion, an enforcement officer found details amongst the waste belonging to an address in Fairlight Road, London.

Enquiries identified a company called Complete Waste Management Ltd who explained that they recognised the waste, and they had removed the waste from the property in London. Complete Waste Management Ltd explained that when they removed the waste initially, their vehicle broke down and was unable to move. In order for the recovery vehicle to take their van away, the waste on the back needed to be removed.

Complete Waste Management Ltd found a company to remove the waste from their van and arranged for its removal, explaining that this was the last they heard of it. Complete Waste Management Ltd said they paid £150 cash but did not do the appropriate checks and so when the waste was later found dumped illegally, they admitted liability.

Magistrates at High Wycombe Magistrates' Court fined Complete Waste Management Ltd £600 and ordered them to pay a contribution of £1546.71 towards the council's clean up and investigation costs. A victim surcharge was also added of £240 - making a total to pay of £2,386.71

Councillor Derek Town