



Newsletter

February, March and April
2024

Editorial

Welcome to 2024. Hopefully the cold weather is now behind us and we can look forward to Spring.

After a couple of successful events organised by the newly formed Halton Socials, more have been arranged. A regular get together will be happening each Thursday afternoon at The Clubhouse and a Beetle Drive at the Village Hall will take place on 8 March.

We now have a date for parishioners to make comments on the development of the RAF Halton site. This will be on 21 February in the Village Hall and everyone is encouraged to attend and have their say. Please see inside for details.

Many of you will have walked the newly laid towpath, which is a great improvement and seems to be well used. There will be an official grand opening on 28 June.

Whilst you are out and about you may also notice our new bug hotels that will be installed soon on a couple of our verges. Through wild flower planting, tree planting and our provision of these insect homes, the Parish Council is fulfilling its obligation to increasing the biodiversity of the area. Along with our surrounding villages, we are gradually developing green corridors throughout the region for the local wildlife.

Parish Council News

The last 12 months has been a busy time for the Parish Council. Parish Councillors are volunteers who give their time to help improve the local community. While the actual powers of the Parish Council are limited we attempt to do what we are responsible for well and to influence those who have authority and responsibility to help us in the other areas, such as highways and planning. Some of the things we have done this last year:

- We have raised the issues of highways safety along the B4009, Halton Lane and Perch Bridge and general speeding issues with Buckinghamshire Council.
- We have continued to maintain and manage the Village Hall.
- We have participated in the Supplementary Planning Document development for the closure of RAF Halton. This will be coming out shortly and you will have the chance to comment on it at the public consultation in the Village Hall on Wednesday, 21 February. See article on the RAF closure.
- We have purchased a new website and a new system infrastructure.
- Going forward, we have a lot of preparatory work to do due to the closure of RAF Halton, so we now need to fund a part time administrative assistant to support our part time clerk.

The Parish Council is funded through the Council tax rate along with the County Council, police and fire service. Like everyone the costs of the Parish Council have been affected by inflation and we have had to reflect that in our budget for next year where the budget for the Parish Council will go up by 8.0%. This will increase our overall budget by £3,501.60 and will result in an increase of £9.88 per annum for an average Band D Property.

Closure of RAF Halton

We are pleased to announce that the public consultation on the Strategic Planning Document (SPD) for the RAF Halton site will take place in the Village Hall on Wednesday 21 February from 2pm until 8pm.

The SPD is Buckinghamshire Council's Policy Document, which sets out the policies that the Building Developers will have to abide by when they apply for planning permission for the Halton site. It sets out the quantity of housing, where it can be built, community facilities, such as shops, a school, sports facilities, and where green spaces must be protected and maintained.

Workshops took place throughout 2023, with Buckinghamshire Council Officers, who are specialists in their areas, such as planning, education, heritage, highways, environment and biodiversity. The Defence Infrastructure Organisation and Halton Parish Council also contributed at the workshops supported by our ward councillor Richard Newcombe.

Please save the date and come along. This is an important event, where you can ask questions as officers will be there from Buckinghamshire Council and members of the Parish Council. Buckinghamshire Council are interested in your views and feedback, so please have your say, and take this opportunity to influence the Halton policy document as we all want the best outcome for our Parish.

The consultation is open from now until Monday 4 March. You can access the Strategic Planning Document (SPD) online at:

<https://yourvoicebucks.citizenspace.com/planning/raf-halton/>

A hard copy is also available to view at the Parish Council Office. Please call Fiona to make an appointment. She is in the office on Tuesdays and Thursdays.

Grand Opening of the Wendover to Halton towpath 28 June, 2024



The upgraded Wendover to Halton towpath was completed at the end of November and countless favourable comments have been received.

A 'grand opening' is planned for Friday 28 June, a date chosen by the Headteacher of John Colet School as this is the last day of its 'Focus Week' of extracurricular activities. Detailed times have not yet been agreed but are likely to be 10:00am to 3:00pm. It is hoped that John Colet's pupils will play a significant part in the organising of the day, and EKFB are also kindly going to provide support.

The event will be open to all and they will be able to join at any stage of the towpath and go in either direction. It is hoped that there will be musical participation, refreshments and displays along the way.

New railings will have been installed at the Wharf Road end by then, and new signage will be in place at either end and along the way.

St Michael and All Angels' Tower

You may have noticed that the church tower has changed its appearance and is now covered in scaffolding.



The reason is that the window openings to the bell chamber (where the bells hang at the top of the tower) have been eroded by the weather. The actual blocks used in the construction of the church are made from Sarsen Stone. These blocks are very hard. A different stone, called Bath Stone, has been used to form the openings for windows and doors. Bath Stone is softer and easier to work but is more prone to weather erosion especially as it ages. The upper openings of the tower have suffered as they catch the wind and rain more than the lower ones.



Some stone falling on the roof in 2020 brought this to our attention and since then we have been raising money to fund the repair of these openings. We have secured two grants from the Bucks Historic Churches Trust and the Benefact Trust. Through money raising and donations we have secured further funding. The Church PCC did commit to provide a level of funding from its reserves towards this project. However with the increase in building materials inflation, the PCC agreed to provide further funding to enable the project to start before inflation took it out of our reach.

We should thank all those people who have contributed to our efforts to get this done. We should also thank EKFB (the HS2 contractor) who very generously provided the security fencing for the scaffolding.

The work should take about six weeks. During this process we have discovered that the date and initials of the original stonemason (we believe) are carved onto some stones on the tower. Have a look for them (although I confess it would be easier to see them when the scaffolding has been taken down) and let me know if you find them.

We are at the stage where the stone masons are now assessing what needs to be done, based on a much closer examination of the stone compared to their ground based assessment. If it transpires a lot more work is required we will be faced with some difficult decisions once our small contingency has been used up.

If you would like to donate to this project please contact Brian Thompson at brian.thompson12@outlook.com

On Demand Bus Service for Halton Village

We have been writing for over a year about an On Demand Bus Service for the Village. We are pleased to report that Buckinghamshire Council have now identified a contractor to provide the service and it is due to start this Spring. To get on board, passengers can summon one of the accessible minibuses to a bus stop in the village. We are awaiting details on how the service will work. The minibus will drop off passengers anywhere within the operational area, which includes Stoke Mandeville Hospital, Aylesbury town centre and the railway stations at Wendover, Stoke Mandeville and Aylesbury. Funding has been provided from the government's Rural Mobility Fund as part of a pilot scheme, and we have been assured that it will be affordable and accessible to holders of the Buckinghamshire Older Person's bus pass.

Village Social

Roll up, roll up for our next event at the Village Hall.

On 8 March at 7.30pm we will host a Beetle Drive and buffet. The cost will be £10 to include the Beetle Drive, buffet and prizes!

Please bring your own drinks to the event which promises to be fast, furious but most of all fun!

To confirm numbers please respond to haltonsocals@gmail.com

Bingo Night



I'm happy to report that the bingo evening was a great success. We had 28 enthusiastic players, delicious food and super prizes. A variety of bingo callers kept the players on their toes and everyone had fun. Thanks to all who helped.

Would anyone like to join the social committee? With the facilities of the Village Hall, the Church, the Clubhouse and the surrounding countryside, we have the opportunity to develop a programme of events for all of us to get together more often. If you can lend a hand, please email jean_fitt@hotmail.co.uk

Wanted—Organist for St Michael and All Angels

After many years of service Margaret, our organist has decided to retire. We would like to thank her for all she has done for us.

It leaves us with a gap. We are looking for someone who could play the organ at our church services. They are held on a Sunday evening at 6.00pm – Holy Communion on the first Sunday of the month and Even-song on the remaining Sundays in the month. In addition the organist

will be asked to play at the occasional funeral or wedding service for which they would be paid.

If you are an organist who could help us or you know someone who could, then please contact brian.thompson12@outlook.com.

Coffee, Chat, Cards and Cake

Calling Halton Villagers: come along to The Clubhouse for any one or all of the above.

Starting on Thursday, 8 February at 2.30 pm and thereafter each week, you are most welcome to pop along to the Clubhouse for a game of cards or to chat. Just look for the table with the cards displayed and come and say hello.

It's a lovely venue on our doorstep available for everyone. I hope to see you there soon.

Bug Hotels and Bee B&Bs

A very warm welcome to all passing insects and other invertebrates who may wish to spend time in our new bug hotels. We hope you will find them a comfortable place to nest or rest up in or even to spend the winter. Bug hotels are a good way of helping to increase biodiversity. They provide homes for important pollinators and predators of agricultural pests.

The Parish Council will be installing a couple of these on two of the roadside verges that it manages. They were constructed by volunteers from Lindengate and were funded by a grant from the Community Board. Increasing biodiversity within the parish is a requirement of the Council's Environmental and Sustainability Policy and we hope that the bug hotels will help it realise this.

The hotels will be monitored over the next months and years to see how successful they are. Parishioners are encouraged to spend a few moments when passing to see if they can identify any species that are using them.

Smaller structures, (Bee B&Bs?) would help to increase the variety of wildlife in your garden or open space so please think about installing some.

Village Diary

8 February	Coffee, chat and cards at The Clubhouse	2:30 pm
15 February	Coffee, chat and cards at The Clubhouse	2:30 pm
21 February	SPD Public Consultation in Village Hall	2:00 – 8:00 pm
22 February	Coffee, chat and cards at The Clubhouse	2:30 pm
29 February	Coffee, chat and cards at The Clubhouse	2:30 pm
7 March	Coffee, chat and cards at The Clubhouse	2:30 pm
8 March	Beetle Drive in the Village Hall	7:30 pm
21 March	Coffee, chat and cards at The Clubhouse	2:30 pm
27 March	Parish Council meeting in Village Hall	7:00 pm
28 March	Coffee, chat and cards at The Clubhouse	2:30 pm
4 April	Coffee, chat and cards at The Clubhouse	2:30 pm
11 April	Coffee, chat and cards at The Clubhouse	2:30 pm
18 April	Coffee, chat and cards at The Clubhouse	2:30 pm
25 April	Coffee, chat and cards at The Clubhouse	2:30 pm

Recycling Dates

Green Waste Bin	Blue Recycling Bin and Garden Waste	Food Waste Bin
Wednesday 24 January		Wednesday 24 January
	Wednesday 31 January	Wednesday 31 January
Wednesday 7 February		Wednesday 7 February
	Wednesday 14 February	Wednesday 14 February
Wednesday 21 February		Wednesday 21 February
	Wednesday 28 February	Wednesday 28 February
Wednesday 6 March		Wednesday 6 March
	Wednesday 13 March	Wednesday 13 March
Wednesday 20 March		Wednesday 20 March
	Wednesday 27 March	Wednesday 27 March
Thursday 4 April*		Thursday 4 April*
	Wednesday 10 April	Wednesday 10 April
Wednesday 17 April		Wednesday 17 April

Residents on the Wendover side of Perch Bridge have different collection days and dates, one day later on Thursday each week.

*Estimate based on previous collection patterns.

Next Issue

If you have anything for inclusion in the next Halton Village Newsletter please email it to carolinewaddams@hotmail.co.uk or ring 01296 624458 before April 18th, 2024.

The views expressed by contributors are their own and not necessarily the views of The Halton Village Newsletter.

Useful Telephone Numbers

Clerk to the Parish Council – Fiona Richardson	01296 626073
Village Hall Booking Clerk—Sarah Stobbs	07565 797049
Guard Room – Main Point	01296 656211/656503
Wendover Police Office (Wendover Library) - Tues & Fri 10am-12pm	01296 621916
Police Non-Emergency Number	101
Crimestoppers	0800 555 111
Electricity Emergency	0800 316 3105
Fly Tipping Hotline	0845 330 1856
Potholes notification	08452 380882
Wendover Health Centre	01296 623452
WHC Friends Desk	01296 622565
Halton Community Combined School-Halton	01296 622264
John Hampden Infant School-Wendover	01296 622629
Wendover CE Junior School	01296 669822
John Colet Secondary School	01296 623348
Church Warden-Linda Kynaston	01296 431009

Parish Office

Fiona Richardson our Parish Clerk works on Tuesdays and Thursdays 9am – 3pm. If you would like to meet with the Clerk at the Parish Office, Halton Village Hall, on any matter, please make an appointment on 01296 626073 or email clerk@halton-pc.gov.uk