



Newsletter

March April May 2026

Editorial

After an incredibly wet winter it would be nice to think that this Spring edition of the village newsletter will herald a change to the weather to brighter and warmer days. There are certainly signs that Spring is on its way with flowers emerging on the verges and birdsong filling the air.

This newsletter includes an important article on the Buckinghamshire Local Plan and encourages all residents to engage with the consultation.

There is a cheese and wine tasting event on 7th March. Please see the advert inside. We hope to see you there.

In order to keep costs down, this newsletter has been restricted to 12 pages so, for this edition, the pages for useful telephone numbers and recycling dates have been omitted.

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 18th May 2026.

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

Halton Parish Council Update Buckinghamshire Local Plan & Consultation Opportunities

We wish to update you on the Buckinghamshire Local Plan and the critical role we all must play as the consultation process moves forward.

The Government has intervened, directing Buckinghamshire Council to publish the final draft ('Regulation 19') Local Plan for consultation by 23 July 2026. This rare intervention follows concerns about slow progress, with no further delays allowed. The consultation will now occur sooner than expected, with less than four months for the Council to finalise site allocations and policies after the 'Regulation 18' consultation in Autumn 2025, which did not include specific site allocations.

We expect information on the "Call for Sites" submissions from Buckinghamshire Council soon, as these will form the basis for the upcoming consultation.

Why is This Important for Halton?

Buckinghamshire cannot demonstrate a five-year housing land supply, which means development may proceed speculatively under the "presumption in favour of sustainable development." This could bypass public engagement and make it harder to ensure that development aligns with our local needs. Halton must actively engage in the consultation to ensure future development aligns with our shared vision.

What is Halton Parish Council Doing?

Halton Parish Council is working with neighbouring parishes (Aston Clinton, Weston Turville, Wendover) to draft a joint Spatial Plan. This will allow us to assess site submissions collectively, considering the broader impact on infrastructure,

landscape, and community life. Our goal is to ensure careful, well-considered development that protects green spaces and supports sustainable growth.

As the next consultation approaches this summer, we encourage all residents to stay engaged, share their views, and help shape a Local Plan that works for Halton.

Meeting with the DIO on the Future of RAF Halton Site

Halton Parish Council recently met with the Defence Infrastructure Organisation (DIO) to discuss the future of the RAF Halton site. The DIO is proposing up to 2,800 dwellings across green and grey belt land. This plan includes various smaller sites, as well as the airfield area, and is aimed at protecting parts of the Green Belt. However, details remain unclear.

The DIO is working with English Heritage to protect Halton House, conducting environmental studies on the Wendover Arm Canal, reviewing utilities, and using transport modelling to assess infrastructure needs. They are also evaluating sports assets and the potential decommissioning of the rifle range.

Looking Ahead: Halton's Position

We've slowed Halton's neighbourhood plan to ensure alignment with the evolving Local Plan and to collaborate more effectively with neighbouring parishes. This approach will allow us to agree on key principles about where development should take place, what infrastructure is needed, and how to address potential constraints.

The Government has made it clear that significant new housing is needed, and Halton, along with the surrounding area, will play a role in this delivery. Over the next 12 months, there will be more opportunities for public consultation, and we strongly encourage all residents to participate. If you have concerns

about Central Government policies, the upcoming Local Government and General Elections provide an opportunity to make your voice heard.

We urge everyone to stay informed, engage with the consultation, and help shape Halton's future. Here is the link to view the information on Buckinghamshire Council's website:

<https://yourvoicebucks.citizenspace.com/planning/2aa4b313/>

Parish Councillors

We are pleased to welcome Duncan Phillips who joined the Parish Council at our January meeting. Duncan and his wife have lived in the village for two years and he has recently retired. Duncan has over 30 years' experience working in industry across a range of management and leadership roles, he has a background in regulatory environments, governance, environmental management and health and safety. Duncan's skills and experience will be invaluable in supporting the role of the Parish Council and delivery of our ongoing projects.

We still have two vacancies, and we would love to hear from you. If you have some time to spare to support us - we could do with more help particularly with planning for the future of our Parish. Why not get involved - and make a difference? If you would like to find out more call 01296 626073 and leave your name and number and one of us will call you back.

Next Parish Council Meeting

The Annual Parish Council Meeting is on Wednesday 13 May at 7:00 pm in the Village Hall. The Parish AGM is on Thursday 21 May at the RAFA Club at 6:30 pm.

Halton Socials

Halton Christmas Quiz

Thankyou to everyone who came along on the 13th December to help make the Christmas Quiz such a success.

Alex and Jeremy deserve a special mention for setting up the equipment and compiling the quiz. We all thought they did a great job. The 'mash up' round had us scratching our heads for sure! It was a close finish but Les, Sue, Andy, Jane and Mark emerged victorious. Congratulations to them!

Cheese and Wine evening

Back by popular demand is a Cheese and Wine evening hosted by No 2 Pound Street on 7th March. Details will be released shortly (or possibly have arrived already). If you're not on our email list please let us know. Email haltonsocials@gmail.com

EV Chargers for the Village Hall Carpark Cancelled

Halton was taking part in Buckinghamshire Council's EV Charging Scheme, which would have provided two EV Car charging points in the village hall car park. This would have given residents who do not have drives and customers of the village hall the opportunity to charge their electric cars.

Unfortunately, Buckinghamshire Council could not reach agreement with their preferred supplier, so the supplier has pulled out. The project was being funded by the Department for Transport, and all schemes had to be installed and completed by 31 March 2026. As Buckinghamshire Council can no longer meet this deadline the funding is lost.

The Parish Council has been offered the opportunity to go ahead and fund the EV Charge points by sharing the costs with the operator 50/50. But at a cost of £28,000 for installation and no income earned in return, we have declined the project as

unaffordable for a small parish. We know that some of our residents will be disappointed at this news but rest assured if any government opportunities arise to fund on-street EV chargers, then we will take part.

Black Poplar

Has anyone tried getting a tree listed? We are very fond of a magnificent tree near us. It is a fairly rare Black Poplar and is the tallest tree in the woods by the Blue Bridge. It is a particular favourite of ours as the trunk has the most amazing zig-zag bark. It is also a favourite with our local Jackdaws, they often gather there and chatter making a number of 'practice' fly offs before, all of a sudden, whooshing off in a clatter of calls to their rookery.

The trunk measures 4 m so it may even pre-date the Rothschilds! They can grow to 30 m and live for 200 years so it may be approaching the end of its life. It is covered in large balls of Mistletoe. We have been a bit concerned this year as a number of branches have died and along with it the Mistletoe. This may be down to the very dry weather last year. There are only around 7000 Black Poplars in Britain and 'ours' is the even rarer female, numbering only about 600. In the late summer it produces a cotton like fluff which blows everywhere and probably causes quite a bit of hay fever.

Imposing and elegant, the Black Poplar was once a staple of Britain's landscape to be found on floodplains and lining wet ditches but today the trees are few and far between due to drainage and modern agricultural methods. It was used to make matches, floorboards, carts (and Clogs in Holland) and was used in construction. It would be nice to get it registered and on a preservation list.

Jos and Alwyn

Healthwatch Bucks

Healthwatch Bucks want to find out how much people feel is their responsibility to look after their own health and wellbeing, and what they think is the responsibility of the NHS.

The NHS 10 Year Health Plan for England: fit for the future aims to “reinvent the NHS through 3 radical shifts“. One of these is ‘From Sickness to Prevention’. Project Manager, Alison Holloway says: “We know that people are busy and keeping themselves healthy, or seeking help for health issues isn’t always a priority. However, it is always better to prevent people getting unwell rather than having to make people well again.”

Healthwatch Bucks want to know if people are aware of resources available already to help them keep as healthy as possible. They also want to understand what would help people in Bucks become better participants in their own care. They would like people to share their feedback in confidence via their online survey on their website bit.ly/4rbs6YZ or via this QR code. The survey closes on 31 May.



They would also like to have small group discussions with 6 to 12 people, especially if you're not comfortable using a computer to fill out our survey. Please call us on 01494 324832 if you would be interested in hosting a group to talk in more detail about this subject.

Healthwatch Bucks will produce a report and a set of recommendations to inform those who are involved with public health in Bucks. This will include what people tell us would help them look after their own health and wellbeing better.

Zoe McIntosh, Chief Executive of Healthwatch Bucks, says: “We want to make sure local people have the information they need to prevent ill-health, where they can, and access care services when they need them. We will share what we learn so we can work with providers of health services to make improvements where it’s needed.”

Village Hall Update

Village Hall Update: Staffing and Bookings

As part of the Parish Council’s ongoing work to manage the Village Hall effectively during the renovation period, a revised staffing arrangement has been introduced that better reflects the Hall’s current needs and patterns of use.

We are pleased to welcome Natalie Fieldhouse as the Village Hall’s new Booking Clerk and Caretaker. Natalie brings valuable experience from managing and running other local village halls and will be responsible for handling bookings, supporting hirers and overseeing day-to-day caretaking of the Hall. Alongside these changes, the Hall has recently benefited from a deep clean, the introduction of new cleaning products and the installation of a new baby changing unit, helping to ensure the space remains welcoming, clean and family-friendly for all users.

For all enquiries and bookings,
Please contact Natalie at
bookings@halton-pc.gov.uk
Or use the QR code.



Residents can also use the online booking form on the Parish Council website at www.halton-pc.gov.uk to check availability and make provisional bookings. We currently have weekend availability for parties and events over the coming months.

Repair and Conservation Works at Halton Village Hall

Halton Parish Council is pleased to update residents on a major programme of repair and conservation works planned for Halton Village Hall, helping to secure the long-term future of this important community building. We are extremely grateful to the HS2 Community & Environment Fund for providing us a grant of £100,000 and to the Rural England Prosperity Fund in conjunction with Buckinghamshire Council and Heart of Bucks for granting us £17,500.

The Village Hall is an historic Victorian building and a central hub for village life. A recent condition survey identified serious deterioration, including failing external finishes, defective drainage and a deteriorating historic stained-glass window. These issues are causing damp to spread internally and, if left untreated, would threaten the continued use of the Hall.

Following specialist heritage advice from Battram Associates, the Parish Council developed a detailed programme of works which has been formally approved as part of its funding agreement with the HS2 Community & Environment Fund. The approved works focus on urgent repairs to the historic fabric of the building, using appropriate conservation techniques and traditional materials.

Contractors and approach

The Parish Council is working with Lost Marble, led by Stewart Ivory, as lead contractor. His proposals, which informed the approved scope and costs, prioritise repair over replacement, the use of breathable lime materials and a carefully phased approach to minimise disruption while ensuring long-term durability.

What works are approved?

The approved programme includes:

- Repairs to external walls using breathable materials
- Roofing repairs to prevent water ingress
- Restoration of an historic leaded and stained-glass window
- Internal lime plaster repairs to damp-affected areas
- Improvements to drainage and rainwater goods
- Urgent repairs to the north wall, including removal of inappropriate paint finishes and re-decoration using breathable lime materials

Parish Council Budget and Council Tax for 2026/27

The Parish Council has been carefully preparing its budget for the 2026/27 financial year. Like all councils, we are facing increased costs due to inflation, particularly for staffing, utilities, contracts and maintenance. The Finance Committee met in December to review the budget and the main saving that they could identify was staffing costs. The Committee voted to reduce the hours of the Bookings Clerk/Assistant Clerk post from 15 to 5.5hrs per week, but even with this saving we will have to plan and manage very carefully to come in on budget. The Council has worked on the basis of a precept increase of up to 6%, which is broadly in line with council tax increases seen across Buckinghamshire. This will result in an annual budget increase of £3,006 overall.

For a typical Band D household, a 6% increase would equate to around £7 per year, or roughly 60 pence per month. Exact amounts vary slightly by property band. The proposed budget allows the Council to:

- Maintain essential local services such as the village hall, street lighting, environmental projects, dog bins, the village toilet at the church, defibrillator provision and community events
- Manage the Village Hall safely and responsibly during its renovation period (the renovation costs are being funded by HS2 CEF and REPF grants)
- Keep reserves within nationally recommended levels

St. Michael and All Angels Church

As we have highlighted before, the fall in congregation numbers and the availability of the Vicar has led the PCC to agree to move to a monthly service cycle from the weekly schedule we had before. With the start of a new year this has been put into effect. The timing of services will continue to be 6.00pm. The general rule is that a service will be held on the Second Sunday of each month unless there is a major Christian festival, such as Easter, when the service will be on that date . The specific dates are:

March 8th	Sung Evensong
April 5th	Holy Communion Easter Sunday
May 10th	Sung Evensong
June 14th	Holy Communion

Please do join us if you can. On a separate note we are in the process of replacing the church noticeboard which will happen over the next couple of months and will be a great improvement.

Reporting Roads

Halton Parish Council does not control any of the roads around the Village. Illegal activities, such as cars blocking driveways, are a Thames Valley Police responsibility and road or pavement repair falls under Buckinghamshire Council authority. We know that potholes are a very serious problem on some of our roads and there have been several incidents involving burst tyres and damage to cars.

If you see a pothole or other problem with a road or pavement, please report it direct via Fix My Street <https://fixmystreet.com/>. All reports are read and distributed to the correct team by a local Buckinghamshire Council technician. When filling in an online report, please use neutral language and it is always best to provide photos with a very accurate location (What3Words is best). You'll also be able to see previous reports with comments about progress.

When planning your road trips locally, there is a One Network site that will highlight all current roadworks and road closures. You can also confirm any diversion routes that have been established. Use this site to check the status of pavements and footpaths too. <https://one.network/public>

Parish Office

Our Parish Clerk works part-time. 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

The Parish Council website can be accessed at www.halton-pc.gov.uk