

The Oaks



SUMMER 2026

DELIVERED FREE TO 800 HOMES

**View from
the chair**
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**Pole dancing
on May Day**
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**Ballet picture
special**
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for SID**
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Park life is all swings and roundabouts

THE play park and bike track at the Memorial Hall is managed by the parish council and inspected annually by the Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents, who found no major issues during the check in April.

However, one of the junior swing seats had started to deteriorate due to teenagers standing on the seat and swinging high putting excessive stress, on the covering. This has now been replaced. The play equipment in the play park is specifically built for younger children and should not be used by teenagers.

There was recently a minor accident to a young child who was running towards or using the igloo climber and we remind parents to supervise children using climbing equipment.

The bike track is showing signs of excessive wear so the parish council has decided to obtain funding to resurface the track with Tarmac. Although this is expensive it should pay for itself within four years as against annual resurfacing with specialist fine gravel.

There have been issues of vandalism to the seating shelter which has suffered from graffiti of a nature that is unacceptable, particularly for younger children. Councillors quickly painted over the damage as soon as it was brought to our attention. Litter has been an issue at the play park and bike track but we are pleased to report that there has been a marked reduction in recent weeks.

We hope that the trend of placing litter in the bins continue throughout the summer and we ask all parents to encourage their children to do likewise.

View from the Chair

By Barry Dickens
Chairman of Bucklebury Parish Council

IT IS rare that I do not cover the NE Thatcham development in The Oaks and this edition will be no exception, as mitigating the impact of this up to 2,500 home development on the lives of us in Bucklebury is the most important piece of work I have been involved with in more than 30 years on the parish council.

Some of you will have attended the drop-in session in Upper Bucklebury in late April where West Berkshire Council (WBC) and the developers set out how they would be conducting the master planning exercise mandated by the planning inspector.

The parish council submitted questions to the developers by the mid-May deadline for responding to drop-in events. From their answers we have learned that many of the important studies and evidence that will inform the masterplan are at an early stage. One of the most important for us in Bucklebury is the Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA). It will determine, among other things, how the development will have an impact on the setting of the National Landscape in which Bucklebury lies. We have written to WBC saying we wish to collaborate on the LVIA work and not just be asked to comment later in the summer when it is part of the draft masterplan. I made this point directly to the leader of WBC when I met him recently.

The other major study of considerable interest to us, as hundreds of additional daily car journeys may well go through Upper Bucklebury, is the Traffic Modelling which will recommend the development site exits, road junction improvements and possible additional traffic calming measures in the parish.

I doubt anyone is unaware of our community speed watch (CSW) activities. We will now be operating it in more locations and using the Bucklebury speed indicator device (SID) data — we have more than 1.6million recorded vehicles — to optimise the deployment of CSW. There is evidence that CSW/SID is helping to reduce speeds in the 30mph areas. So most drivers are getting the message, while those who aren't get a letter from Thames Valley Police and, if a persistent offender, follow-up action from them as their irresponsible behaviour could endanger the lives of our residents.



Our May Day beacon-lighting event on Chapel Row Green proved a great success (see pages 6-7 for a report and pictures). Blessed with benign weather, several hundred visitors enjoyed superb live music, Maypole dancing and traditional games. We are looking to have a similar event next summer, maybe on mid-summer's evening or on a date linked to an event in our village's history.

Our monthly Thursday coffee mornings in the Memorial Hall are now a permanent fixture in the calendar. From small beginnings a few years ago we now regularly see 40 or so parishioners enjoying hot drinks, cakes and, most importantly, conversation.

We presently have two vacancies on the PC, one occasioned by the death in March of Peter Spours. Peter was a dedicated, hard-working councillor who greatly contributed to our work on the NE Thatcham development. Anyone who would like to serve on the PC is invited to get in touch (see opposite page).

You don't need me to tell you that mobile phone coverage in the parish is patchy, with coverage non-existent in some areas. We responded to a survey on the topic by our MP Olivia Bailey earlier in the year and have now learned of a scheme whereby Icon Tower, a global wireless infrastructure provider, will erect a tower to improve coverage in places where it is poor. As a PC we are looking further into this.

One of my activities is chairing the Patient Participation Group for Chapel Row Surgery. We meet 3 times a year with a GP partner and the practice manager. We learn of developments in the surgery and issues affecting the West Berks group of surgeries. We could do with some younger PPG members to better reflect the mix of patients. Please contact me if you are interested in joining. Such is the high quality of service by the surgery's 9,000 patients, we rarely have to deal with complaints but concentrate on offering constructive suggestions for improvement.

Only here for the beer (and cider)

THE Beerfest is back this year. Thank you to all those who have volunteered to help. We are always looking for more volunteers on either the Friday, Saturday or Sunday so please let me know if you would like to help. It's on Saturday, August 29 at the Recreation Ground in Bucklebury, 1pm-7pm.

Planning is well under way; The Reading and West Berkshire branch of the MND Association will be running the tea hall for us again this year and the profits will be donated to them. We have also asked MacMillan Cancer Support to provide a tombola or raffle and all profits will be donated to them.

Graham's Hog Roast will be there so make sure you come along to sample the best hog roast in Berkshire!

The music line up is almost complete including our local artist Mollie and JJ & the Jukes will be closing the evening. As usual, there will be a good selection of beers and ciders

We will be making space available for trade stalls and children's games so please let me know if you would be interested in attending and having a pitch. There is no upfront cost, just 10 percent of takings up to a maximum £30.

To find out more about all the activities held at the Victory Room, go to our website: www.buckleburyvictoryroom.com

John Brims
Chair of the Trustees of the Victory Room
0118 9713308 or
07799 348451
jbrims@outlook.com



Chance to have a say and join your parish council

BUCKLEBURY Parish Council has two vacancies for parish councillors.

We cover Bucklebury village, Chapel Row, Upper Bucklebury, The Slade, Marlston, Carbinswood Lane, and Hillfoot.

To be eligible you must be over 18 years of age, have occupied land or premises in the parish for the previous 12 months or lived in or within three miles of the parish, or have worked in the parish for at least the past year.

As a parish councillor you will attend parish council and planning meetings on the second and fourth Mondays of the month.

Each month, the parish council considers any newly submitted planning applications in the parish or any on the parish boundary but in adjacent parishes. At

least two councillors make a site visit and consider each application before reporting back to the council at a full council meeting or a planning meeting. The council then decides whether it objects, has no objection or supports the application. West Berkshire Council then makes the formal decision on whether the application is approved or refused.

Over the past few years, BPC has been involved with opposing the development of 2,500 homes north east of Thatcham. This site has now been approved in the current WBC Local Plan but BPC continues to fight to mitigate the impacts of this development on the parish.

Bucklebury Parish Council manages assets around the parish including Bucklebury Meadows, Hockett Field, the

Fred Dawson Play Park and the bike track, and the Cemetery in Byles Green. Currently BPC is moving forwards with resurfacing the bike track so that it is more suitable for current users, who differ from those for whom it was designed.

BPC has been active in trying to educate motorists to reduce their speeds when driving through the parish.. We organise beacon-lighting events at Chapel Row, Common clearing and litter-picking; Carols by candlelight in the Cemetery and monthly coffee mornings.

If you are interested in becoming a parish councillor, contact the Clerk, Helen, (clerk@buckleburyparish.org) or chairman Barry Dickens, (barry.dickens@bucklebury-pc.gov.uk).

BEER | ALE | CIDER | GREAT FOOD | LIVE MUSIC | CHILDREN'S ENTERTAINMENT | FARMERS' MARKET | TRADE STALLS | AND SO MUCH MORE! | A GREAT DAY OUT FOR ALL THE FAMILY | COME AND JOIN US |

Graham's Hog Roast will be here!

Bucklebury Beerfest 2026

Saturday 29th August
Bucklebury Village Recreation Ground RG7 6PS
1pm until 7pm

Entry is FREE!

Proceeds of Tea Hall to MND Association
Proceeds of the Tombola to MacMillan

MND Association
Reading and West Berks

MACMILLAN
CANCER SUPPORT

Buckle up for friendly competition

BUCKLEBURY Tennis Club continues to flourish for recreational play, drills, junior coaching and league competitions.

Drills with our club coach Damian Lane continue to be very popular, with sessions on Monday evenings. For further details please contact our drills organiser Karen Pegg on kpegg61@gmail.com. Karen is also your contact for junior coaching with Paul Wardell, which takes place on Wednesday afternoons in term time. The club has entered teams in the Newbury and District Summer League and also in the Berkshire League. If

you are of a suitable standard and would like to be considered for match play, please contact the club secretary at normancasson@aol.com

New members are welcome to join the club at any time. Membership fees for the year up to March 31 2027 are on our website at buckleburytennisclub.com.

If you have any queries about joining the club, please contact our membership secretary Norman Casson at normancasson@aol.com.

As a member you may book a court by using the booking link, which is also on the club website.

Tennis

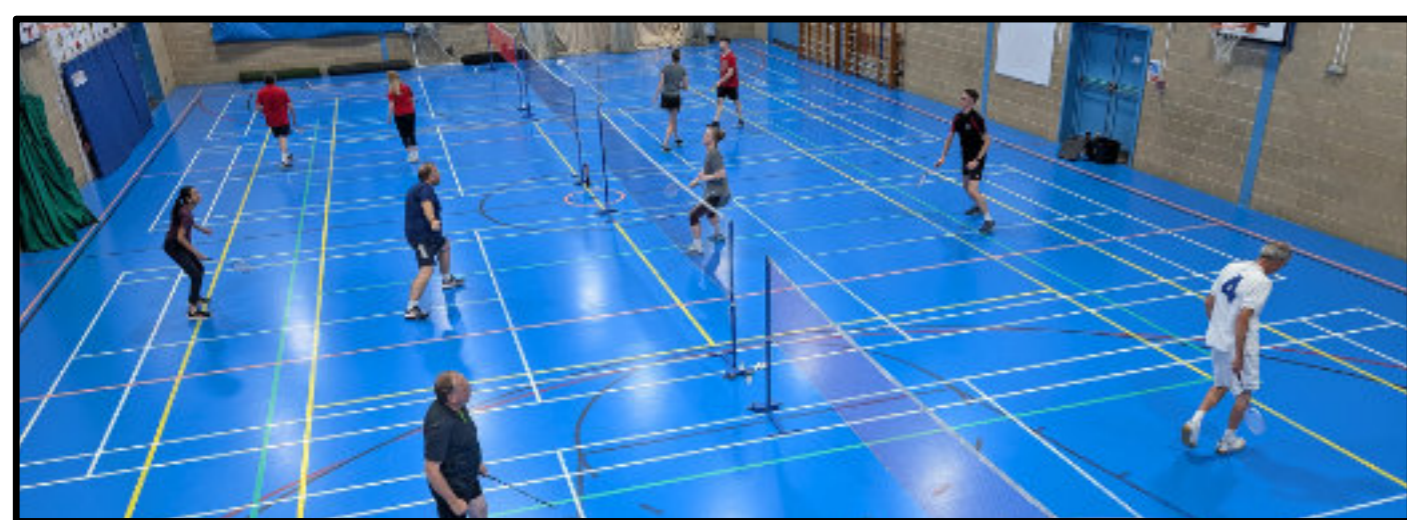
The club holds mix-in sessions for over 18s on Tuesday evenings from 6pm as well as mens and ladies mix-ins on Saturday mornings and Monday mornings respectively.

In addition, non-coached junior sessions are held on Sunday afternoons from 2.30 to 4pm.

If you have any general queries relating to the club, please contact the club chair Rosie MacGregor below.

rmac1951@gmail.com

www.buckleburytennisclub.com



Doubles all round at Elstree

BUCKLEBURY Badminton Club has plenty to offer – whether you're a seasoned player or keen to pick up a racket again.

The club play every Tuesday evening at Elstree School, Woolhampton, providing a great opportunity to enjoy competitive yet sociable badminton in a relaxed atmosphere. With a mix of abilities and a strong community spirit, these sessions are all about playing good doubles games, improving skills and having fun.

We enter teams into the Newbury and Reading

Badminton

leagues, giving members the chance to test themselves against other local clubs throughout the season.

The club is again hosting a Summer Club, at the usual time and place, running from July 7 to August 25. This is a brilliant opportunity to keep active over the summer months, make new friends and enjoy regular badminton. Whether you're returning after some time away or trying badminton for the first time, the Summer Club is open and welcoming and just £7.50

per visit. There's a maximum of six visits for insurance reasons but you're welcome to join the club as a member if you decide it's for you!

We actively encourage and recruit women to strengthen both social play and league teams.

If you've played before – even casually – you'd be given a warm welcome, with coaching available.

Badminton is a fantastic way to stay fit, build confidence and connect with others locally. Check us out at buckleburybadmintonclub.com to find out more or ask any questions.

Bowls

INDOOR Bowls runs at the Memorial Hall on Mondays from 10.30am to 12.30 and on Friday from 2pm to 4.

We take a summer break from July 31 to September 4.

There is a small charge of £3 for each session per person and there is plenty of space for six people per carpet lane. We have a break for a drink (bring your own, if more than water) – it is much more exercise than you would think! Come and try it out, it is fun and everyone is welcome.

Dee Burgess
ianddburgess@blueyonder.co.uk
07722 431280



Winning Cougars have FA OK

FC BUCKLEBURY Cougars are delighted to confirm that since our last Oaks update, we have completed our FA accreditation for another year, which confirms our status as a club offering a consistent standard on and off the pitch and creating the ideal environment to nurture players, coaches and volunteers.

As part of the accreditation process, we are required to have all volunteers DBS checked and have safeguarding qualifications to ensure we continue to offer a safe and positive environment for our young players.

Cougars are a community youth football club, offering coaching, development and league matches to children in the parish and beyond.

The club is non-profit and run entirely by dedicated volunteers. We welcome boys and girls of all abilities, aged between 6 and 17, and run an adult ladies team. We have teams in the

Football

Reading and West Berkshire League and the Peter Houseman Youth League, which includes Hampshire and Berkshire.

All our teams play on Sundays and we run additional training sessions during the week. Our younger age groups play Sunday morning matches at Bucklebury Primary School and our teams all train at Bucklebury Recreation Ground in the lighter months.

Now the football season has finished, our teams have been playing in summer tournaments. We have already had some success with our U12s and U16s topping their groups at the recent Thatcham tournament

We now have more players registered with the club than at any time in the club's history and it is fantastic to see so many young people

involved and enjoying playing football.

Our success has meant that most of our teams are running at capacity, so we will need new volunteers to help coach and manage new teams to enable the club to continue to expand. We offer a lot of support for volunteers and have many very experienced, and qualified, coaches at the club who can provide advice and support for new volunteers. It is a very rewarding experience, and the club will help you gain FA coaching qualifications.

Spaces are available in a few of our teams including our Under 14s (school year 9 from September 2026), and our Under 17s (school years 11 and 12). If you know someone who would like to give it a try, then please get in touch and they can come along to a training session and hopefully then join us.

Please do enquire for all age groups as it is possible spaces will come up through the summer.



MAY DAY MAYHEM!



THE beacon was loaded and ready to be lit, the Maypole was up and the stage was in place – all we needed was for the weather to hold for the May Day evening on the Green at Chapel Row. Thankfully, the sun came out just in time as the crowds arrived. The evening began with young and old dancing around the Maypole. While everyone agreed we could all do with a little more practice, a great deal of laughter and fun was had by all. Fortunately, a few people knew what to do, including Tamara from The Slade and so the ribbons didn't get too entangled! Sophie and Charlotte sang beautifully, accompanied by Ben, who later performed alongside his daughter while the band Goya Goya prepared to take to the stage. They then

entertained the crowd with a fantastic set that was enjoyed by everyone. We were incredibly fortunate to have such talented and professional musicians performing on the night. Throughout the evening, villagers enjoyed picnics as well as delicious food and refreshments from Paul's Burger Van, Go Fish, cakes provided by Bucklebury PTA, and cider from St Crispin's Farm and beer from the The Bladebone. Bucklebury History Society created a wonderful display exploring the history of Maypole dancing, complete with some delicious traditional sweet treats. The Blakey and Peters families did a fantastic job running Splat the Rat, skittles, and the tombola, while the Cougar



Football Club kept budding footballers busy testing their goal-scoring skills. Sustainable Bucklebury encouraged visitors to plant seeds and discover simple ways to live more sustainably. The evening concluded with Simon Peters playing the bagpipes before John Ashman lit the beacon – a fitting end to a wonderful community celebration. Huge thanks to the Parish Councillors who helped organise, set up, run, and clear away the event, especially to Jason and Carissa Allum and David Southgate for loading the beacon, Jason for digging the Maypole hole, David Southgate for the sound system; and Marcus Allum for providing the stage. Big thanks to Willie Hartley Russell and Bucklebury Estate for allowing us to use the Green.



Pictures by David Southgate



'It has been a privilege to be head of a wonderful school'

By Andy Higgs
Headteacher

THE first half of the summer term is always a sprint. It almost always includes at least one four-day week! It makes for a very busy time.

May not only brings 'darling buds' but also statutory assessment for Year 6. These tests are sent away for external marking and are not for the faint-hearted. Every child has to think carefully about every question in every paper.

The children have been working hard to secure the knowledge and skills required in the curriculum. Resilience, stamina and a willingness to work hard are key. This term especially, we can see children beginning to accelerate and close learning gaps. This is testament to the hard work of staff in partnership with families. Of course, it is also driven by each pupil themselves.

Scholarship and academic progress are at the forefront of the school's work. The Bucklebury Way is centred on

growing the whole child in every child. This means we seek to nurture young people who are capable, confident and curious, and balanced in mind, body and spirit. Every day, we see our school family forming, growing and deepening relationships within classes and across ages. How we are, our character and the way we do things creates the space for learning and community.

Our roots are in the mission to grow the whole child and every child and the effect of our work is seen in the outcomes pupils achieve and the future success of our alumni.

All children have enjoyed time off-site. On every occasion staff were thrilled to hear wonderful feedback from hosting staff and members of the public alike.

The term brings the much anticipated upper school summer performance once again hosted by our friends at Elstree School. On July

11, the summer fete is being run by the Friends of Bucklebury School who raise thousands of pounds for our school with your support.

In due course, pupils will receive the customary annual reports which highlight how the whole child is developing. We write about how each is developing in mind, body and spirit. It is a distinctive feature of our school and one that we seek to continually develop.

My thanks to every pupil in Year 6 who leaves us in 2026. Each of you has contributed so much to the life of the school. Particular thanks to our school captains this year, Everleigh and Pippa. They have contributed a huge amount this year.

In addition, after 11 years at Bucklebury, I too will be

leaving in the summer. After 15 years as a head, I am taking a sabbatical. It has been a privilege to be the headteacher here.

Through a most challenging time, we have successfully navigated four inspections and a global pandemic.

Day after day, it is a school family that lives out the first line of its vision; love is tangible every day. The governors understand this and will do all they can to ensure the school continues to flourish.

There will be an open afternoon tea on Monday, July 20 at school. It would be lovely to see you from 4pm. Our service of thanksgiving is at 9.30am on Tuesday July 21 at All Saints, Upper Bucklebury. Thank you to everyone who continues to support the school.

SUSTAINABLE Bucklebury is a local community group that aims to run targeted local projects and provide information on living sustainably in our area. We have previously distributed wildflower seeds to encourage gardening for wildlife and are running regular Bucklebury Repair Cafe events.

Held quarterly at All Saints Church in Upper Bucklebury, Repair Cafes are community events that can be used to get help fixing items you own without having to dispose of them, reducing waste, and saving money.

Since our last Oaks update, we have run two more Repair Cafes and the numbers of items and successful repairs were up from our previous events. Our team of volunteer repairers fixed or gave advice on 39 items, potentially saving them from landfill.

We are also now running a book swap at our Repair Cafes. We are always keen to encourage recycling, but reusing items is even better for our environment. If you don't have an item that needs repair, you can still come along to swap a book or two, or take one for an optional donation, and enjoy the cafe.

The provisional date for our next Repair Café is Saturday, July 11 – but please check on our website.

We held our regular group meeting in the Oak Room on April 21. The meeting started with guest speaker Ben Mitchell, giving a very interesting talk on the importance of rivers in society and how flooding has become more prevalent due to human impact such as building and farming and more recently, climate change.

In February we completed planting of our new community orchard in Upper Bucklebury in the small parish meadow next to the Cottage Inn



FIXING IT FOR THE PLANET



paddock (pictured) with children from Bucklebury Primary School. There are 16 trees in the orchard which are a mix of apple, pear, plum, and cherry. Thanks to Veolia who funded the orchard and Jason Allum who picked and ordered our trees and has been very busy with other volunteers on both planting and maintenance!

We want to make the Sustainable

Bucklebury group an enjoyable community endeavour, whether you want to simply access information, join a project for a couple of hours or get more involved. If you have time, ideas, comments, or energy to spare, or just want to know more, please get in touch. Visit our website, join our Facebook group, or find us on Instagram.

www.sustainablebucklebury.org.uk

Talks are food and drink to historians

'BEER and Skittles', the latest meeting of the Bucklebury History Group, was anything but dull, despite lacking both beer and skittles!

Sue Ellis told lively stories about local pubs and publicans from Roman times to today: how drinking customs evolved and why some places became inns while others remained simple alehouses.

We all enjoyed the May Day event in Chapel Row when members dressed in historical clothing, which, along with displays of past local celebrations, Maypole traditions and even recreated ancient foods from

History Group

Cornwall and beyond drew people to our tables.

We also visited Englefield House, hosted by Richard Benyon, who shared stories of the people who have lived there since 800 AD, long before the Benyon family arrived in the 18th century.

Our next event is on September 17 at the Victory Room when Marcus Allum will be showing photographs of Bucklebury through the years.

Wynne Frankum

THE Tuesday Ladies Club are an informal group who meet on the second Tuesday in the month at 7.15pm in the Oak Room at the Memorial Hall. All are welcome. There is no annual subscription, just a £3 per person charge on the night, so if you would like to come along you would be very welcome. Our next event is a summer tea on July 14 from 2.30-4.40pm and our next talk is by Sandra Pullen on the Hidden Tribes of Papua New Guinea on October 13. All our forthcoming meetings are listed in the diary on the back page.

Wynne Frankum & Diane Dalgano

Join old friends and meet new ones over a cuppa

Everyone is welcome at the monthly coffee (and cake) mornings at the Memorial Hall, Upper Bucklebury from **10.30am till noon**. If you need a lift call Helen on 01635 863581

Thursday, June 25
Thursday, July 30
Thursday, August 27
Thursday, September 17
Thursday, October 30
Thursday, November 26



westberkshireballetschool.com



Having a ball with Cinderella!

By Lucie Wilson

IT has been an incredibly busy and exciting term at WBBS, and we are delighted to share some of our highlights with you.

Our biggest event of the year so far was our ballet production of Cinderella, which took place over a three-show performance weekend at Arlington Arts. We are thrilled to report that the shows were a huge success, with performances nearly selling out. The dancers worked exceptionally hard throughout the rehearsals and truly shone on stage. They danced and performed beautifully, demonstrating not only their talent but also an impressive level of professionalism. We are enormously proud of every student who took part and would like to thank all the families, volunteers, and supporters who helped make the weekend so memorable.

As we approach the end of the academic year, our musical theatre and tap departments are busy preparing for their end-of-term showcase. This is always a wonderful opportunity for students to celebrate their achievements and share their progress with family and friends.

We will be saying goodbye to a number of our senior students as they embark on exciting new adventures at university. We are especially proud that one of our dancers will be continuing their training at Performers College to pursue further vocational theatre education. We wish all of our leavers every success and happiness in the next stage of their journeys and look forward to hearing about their future achievements.

We would also like to wish the very best of luck to all of our students who will be taking

their ballet examinations in July. We know how hard they have been working and are confident they will do themselves proud.

We will be welcoming new students in September, with trial classes available in ballet, musical theatre and tap. Whether your child is completely new to dance or looking to develop their skills, we would love to hear from you.

Finally, we are looking forward to our Summer School week, which promises to be full of dancing, creativity, fun, and friendship. We can't wait to spend another fantastic week with our students before the new term begins.

We offer classes for ages 3 years through to adults — new students are always welcome!

WBBSlucie@gmail.com



Pictures courtesy of Sonja Watson Photography



FREE GUIDE • PLAN AHEAD BEFORE THE RUSH



The PSTN Switch-Off Checklist

The UK's landline network is being switched off. Don't wait to be contacted. Here's what to do now, in plain English.

- STEP 01 Don't wait. Start planning now**
Your provider should write to you before your line is switched, but letters can come late, get missed, or not arrive at all. We've heard from people whose lines stopped working with no warning. Acting early gives you choice and avoids the rush.
- STEP 02 Ask your provider when your area is scheduled**
The switch-off is rolling out area by area across the UK. Call your provider and ask directly. Don't wait for a letter. Knowing your date helps you sort everything else in good time.
- STEP 03 Check if your home phone will still work**
Most older corded phones that plug directly into the wall socket will not work on the new digital network without an adapter. Check with your provider. Many will supply one free of charge, or replace your handset.
- STEP 04 Check any personal or medical alarm**
If you or someone in your home uses a telecare device, such as a lifeline pendant alarm, fall detector, or emergency call button, contact the alarm provider before anything changes. These devices often rely on the phone line and may need replacing or reconfiguring.
- STEP 05 Check your home burglar alarm**
Many home alarm systems use the phone line to contact a monitoring centre if they're triggered. Contact your alarm company to ask if your system is switch-off ready.
- STEP 06 Know what happens if the power or internet goes down**
Unlike a traditional landline, your new digital phone needs your broadband router switched on and working. If the power goes out or your internet drops, it won't work. **The Phonely app** means you can still make and receive calls from your mobile using mobile data, so you're never left without a phone.
- STEP 07 Ask your broadband provider about emergency call backup**
Your broadband provider is required by Ofcom to offer you a way to call 999 during a power cut, usually a battery backup unit for your router, free of charge if you rely on your landline and don't have another device, such as a mobile phone. Contact them directly to find out more about battery backups.
- STEP 08 Write down your key phone numbers today**
In case of any disruption during the switch, keep a few important numbers written down somewhere easy to find: your doctor's surgery, a family member, and your provider's customer service number.
- STEP 09 Ask for help, sooner rather than later**
You don't have to figure this out alone. Your provider must offer assisted migration support, and charities like Age UK can help. The earlier you ask, the more time there is to get it right.

Gardeners hope for dahlia stars in autumn after Nick's giveaway

Taking care of the countryside

THE West Berkshire Countryside Society promotes the understanding, appreciation and conservation of our countryside. We hold free events where you can meet friendly and like-minded folk, organise regular guided walks, organise talks on natural and local history and support barn owl conservation. A £15 annual subscription entitles you to four copies of the 'Upstream' newsletter each year. Find out more on our website (below) and become a member! Our events below give you the opportunity to come out on practical tasks, learn new skills, meet new people and, above all, enjoy yourself. You are welcome to stay for as long as you wish. Please wear suitable clothing and footwear, bring work gloves and make sure you have refreshments for your day. All tools will be provided. Grid references and 'What Three Words' listings locate the task meeting point. Please check the website for updates.

July 2026		
Tue 14 th July 10:00	Ashampstead Common	Raking previously cut grass in woodland glades. Meet at car park SU587751 /// swells.wrist.dandelions
Guided Walk Thursday 8th July 21:15	Nightjars on Bucklebury Common	Join Society members to look for and hear these summer visitors to the heathland. Meet in the car park off The Common, closest to Chapel Row SU560 692 /// runner.rotate.musically
Tue 21st July 10:00	Rushall Manor Farm, off Back Lane, Bradfield	Continuing conservation management tasks. Meet at the Black Barn off Back Lane between Stanford Dingley and Bradfield, SU584723 ///telephone.brink.crate
August 2026		
Tue 25 th Aug 10:00	Rushall Manor Farm, off Back Lane, Bradfield	Continuing conservation management tasks. Followed by BBQ. Meet at the Black Barn off Back Lane between Stanford Dingley and Bradfield, SU584723 ///telephone.brink.crate
September 2026		
Tue 29 th Sept 10:00	Rushall Manor Farm, off Back Lane, Bradfield	Continuing conservation management tasks. Meet at the Black Barn off Back Lane between Stanford Dingley and Bradfield, SU584723 ///telephone.brink.crate
www.westberkscountryside.org.uk		

HORRIBLE weather kept gardeners indoors and plants kept their heads down, but eventually Spring erupted and rewarded us with a prolonged display of blossom.

The tenacity of Bucklebury gardeners continues to amaze. The Victory Room looked wonderful for the Spring Show, which was well attended. A full report is on our website and we are exploring ways to attract more children's entries.

Behind the scenes we are preparing the club's constitution, planning a programme for next year. Rearranging our banking and financial situation continues to be complicated. We thank all members who completed the membership survey and are pursuing the ideas which arose.

We would welcome younger members onto the committee to assist the improvement of our Society. We do encourage everyone to use our website, but still respect our traditions, and continue with show entries, cash collections, membership and Century Club as normal.

The schedule will also be posted on the website to keep all members informed. Type 'Bucklebury Horticultural Society' into your web browser.

Horticultural Society

The winter programme provided more useful gardening advice from Ray Broughton and Nick Gilbert's distribution of potential prize-winning dahlia tubers may bear fruit at the Autumn Show. Unfortunately the opportunity to learn more about the activities at Cottismore Nursery was poorly attended.

The Summer Show is on Saturday, July 4 in the Victory Room and our Autumn Show is at the same venue on Saturday, September 5. Full details are in the schedule. Take a look and see if you can plan to produce a few entries. Visitors are welcome during the afternoon.

The Century Club is flourishing and helps keep subscriptions low. Draws are monthly and the annual fee is £12. If you would like details, please contact Margaret Grannum on 0118 9713944. Last year's Social at The Cottage Inn was successful and it is planned to repeat a similar event with an Italian theme on Saturday, October 3. Tickets available at the Summer Show.

New members are always welcome. **Derek Matthews 0118 9712587**

Bucklebury Community Bus is recruiting a salaried driver to transport children between Upper Bucklebury and Thatcham from September. Mornings (8-9) and afternoons (3-4) or just afternoons during term time. For more information email buckleburybus@gmail.com. The 'not for profit' transport service for the residents of Bucklebury Parish relies on volunteers and fundraising and is looking for more committee members. Please email us if you can spare an hour or two per month to help with finances or basic admin.



Reference	Description	BPC Status	WBC Status
24/00701/FUL	<u>Ivinghoe, Stanford Dingley (Adjacent Parish)</u> Demolition of Existing bungalow and replacement with a new dwelling and landscape enhancements. Amendment to single storey only.	Object	Awaiting decision
25/00912/FUL	<u>Appletrees, Chapel Tree.</u> Erection of two standalone supported living units, staff facility, elevational external alterations to an existing building, and ancillary works associated with the existing care facility.	No Objection	Approved
25/01597/MDOPO2	<u>Former 5-10 Paradise Way, Chapel Row.</u> Request to modify/discharge a section 106 planning obligation dated 4 May 2023 between (1) West Berkshire District Council and (2) Sovereign Housing Association Limited (the Section 106 Agreement) in accordance with Section 106A(1)(a) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.	No Objection	Awaiting decision
25/01860/FUL	<u>The Barns, Manor Farm.</u> Restoration and conversion of redundant agricultural buildings into one dwelling, creation of carport, landscaping and associated works.	No Objection	Approved
25/02057/HOUSE	<u>Red Hill House, Briff Lane.</u> Erection of a swimming pool and changing rooms and associated works.	No Objection	Refused
25/02225/FULMAJ	<u>Bucklebury Farm Park, Bucklebury.</u> Section 73A – vary condition 4 ‘landscape works’, 5, ‘arboricultural watching brief’ and 6 ‘ecology condition’ of approved application 19/02108/COMIND: Retrospective application for 7 glamping units and associated development for perennial use.	No Objection	Awaiting decision
25/02574/HOUSE	<u>Ladywood, Long Grove.</u> Two storey side extension, single storey rear extension, porch to the front, veranda, addition of windows and solar panels.	No Objection	Refused
25/02544/PACOU	<u>Glenvale Nurseries, Hungerford Lane (Bradfield Parish).</u> Application under General Permitted Development Order (England) Order 2015 (as amended) – Schedule 2, Part 3, Class R to determine if prior approval is required for a proposed: Change of use of existing agricultural building to B8 storage and distribution.	No Comment	Refused
25/02832/HOUSE	<u>Rushdens Cottage, Bucklebury Road (Stanford Dingley Parish).</u> Section 73: Variation of Condition 2 (Approved Plans) of planning permission reference 24/01284/HOUSE (Single storey rear extension, following demolition of a small plantroom. Clay tile hanging to frontage and side elevations to replace existing upvc cladding with new windows a new bay window and a new tiled roof front porch. Associated internal and external alterations). Amendment: Substitute approved drawings to allow a larger side extension to be built.	No Objection	Approved
25/02959/HOUSE	<u>Kolumbine, Tylers Lane.</u> Two storey rear extension and remodelling of existing bungalow with solar panels to roof. (Relates to preapp 25/02247/PREHH)	No Objection	Awaiting decision

26/00001/HOUSE	<u>Middlewood House, Carbinswood Lane.</u> The partial demolition, alteration and erection of 2 storey and single storey extensions and associated landscaping.	No Objection	Refused Taken to appeal
26/00038/HOUSE	<u>Smithincott, The Avenue, Bucklebury.</u> New multi fuel burning stove and associate external flue.	No Objection	Approved
25/01643/CERTE	<u>Fairchilds, Sadgrove Lane, Bucklebury.</u> Residential garden curtilage in continuous use since 2013.	No Comment	Lawful
26/00089/HOUSE	<u>Kilcreggan, Upper Buklebury.</u> Two storey side extension and single storey front extension.	No Objection	Awaiting decision
26/00115/FUL	<u>Heatherdene, Bucklebury.</u> Replacement of an existing stable building and separate haybarn with an American-style barn, and associated groundwork for the base.	No Objection	Awaiting decision
26/00245/HOUSE	<u>Stag Cottage, Zin Zan.</u> Single storey side/rear extension to provide entrance lobby and lounge.	No Objection	Approved
26/00312/HOUSE	<u>The Cleffon, Broad Lane.</u> Proposed extensions including a front, side, rear and porch extension, raising of the roof to accommodate extra bedrooms, parking area and oil tank to the rear, and 2m front gates/hedges.	No Objection	Awaiting decision
25/02954/FUL	<u>Poachers Paddock, Long Grove.</u> Retrospective application for the replacement of agricultural building and extension.	No Objection	Approved
26/00420/FUL & 26/00421/LBC	<u>Picton Farm, The Slade.</u> S73a and S19 applications to vary condition 2 Plans of planning permission 25/01790/FUL and 25/01791/LBC for The repair and conversion of existing outbuildings to ancillary residential use. The repair and extension of an existing storage outbuilding following demolition of small existing store. Installation of replacement surface water and foul water drainage. Replacement entrance gates, form new parking area and path to Farmhouse. Definition of the residential curtilage associated with Picton Farmhouse which is listed at Grade 2.	No Objection	Approved
26/00598/AGRIC	<u>Hillfoot Farm, Hillfoot.</u> Application to determine if prior approval is required for a proposed: New building – Steel framed shed.	Support	Approved
26/00685/HOUSE	<u>Amber, Pease Hill.</u> Erection of front and side extensions; with associated internal and external alterations.	No Objection	Awaiting decision
26/00825/HOUSE	<u>Red Hill House, Briff Lane.</u> Erection of a swimming pool, plant and changing rooms and associated works.	No Objection	Awaiting decision
26/00702/FUL	<u>Ashdown House, The Slade.</u> Erection of an agricultural barn for the storage of machinery, vehicles, feed and associated materials, together with ancillary workspace and animal welfare facilities.	Object	Awaiting decision

More planning applications on next page

It's not all potholes, bins and flytipping



■ This is the Red Crossbill Chris thinks was a false alert. In Britain it is mainly seen in the Scottish Highlands and north Norfolk. Not to be confused with Red Cross Bill, who works for the aid charity!



By Chris Read
Bucklebury Ward Councillor

OFTEN think how lucky we all are to live in such a great community as Bucklebury, with many of us right next to Bucklebury Common.

I was fortunate enough to have the opportunity to sit up all night in one of the gullies to the west of the common, keeping an eye on one of the Belted Galloway cows with other volunteers. The night sky was perfectly clear with only a little light and noise coming up Harts Hill from Thatcham.

Yesterday I had the Merlin Bird ID app running for just 10 minutes in our garden. It picked up 20 different birds from crows and wood pigeons to a song thrush, goldfinch and blackcap. I even had a red crossbill, but I suspect that may be a misidentification. It would be good to hear from other people if they have detected one lately.

I thought it might be useful to write a bit more about my duties as a Councillor for West Berkshire (it is not all potholes, bins and fly-tipping).

Residents may not often hear about the Local Access Forum (LAF), but its work plays an important role in shaping how we experience and enjoy our countryside. I've been pleased to be involved in this forum, helping ensure that Bucklebury's voice is heard in discussions that directly affect our footpaths, bridleways and green spaces.

The Local Access Forum is an advisory body that brings together representatives from a wide range of interests, including landowners, walkers, cyclists, equestrians and local authorities. Its role is to provide independent advice on public access to the countryside by looking at how routes are maintained, improved and protected, while also balancing the needs of those who live and work on the land.

This work is highly relevant for Bucklebury. We are fortunate to have an extensive network of footpaths and bridleways, many of which are well-used by residents and visitors alike. These routes contribute not only to our

quality of life but also to the local economy and to wider wellbeing. However, they do not manage themselves. Behind the scenes, there are ongoing discussions about signage, maintenance, accessibility and how best to protect these routes for future generations.

Through my involvement in the Forum, I am able to bring forward local concerns and perspectives into countywide conversations. This might include highlighting issues with specific paths, raising the importance of accessibility for less mobile residents, or ensuring that any proposed changes take into account the character and needs of our parish.

PLANNING APPLICATIONS (continued)

Reference	Description	BPC Status	WBC Status
26/00796/HOUSE	<u>Red Hill House, Briff Lane.</u> Proposed extension following the permission granted 23/00280/HOUSE and subsequently 25/02263/HOUSE to extend the commencement date with this application. This application is the same as the granted 25/02263/HOUSE which slightly amends the drawings originally permitted.	No Objection	Awaiting decision
26/00845/FUL	<u>Picton Farm, The Slade.</u> The construction of an agricultural storage Barn and hardstanding utilizing the existing stable yard access from Holly Lane. Associated fencing, landscape planting and SW drainage.	No Objection	Awaiting decision
26/00861/HOUSE	<u>1 Broad Lane.</u> Householder extensions and alterations to the existing dwelling. Demolition of existing garage, side and rear extensions to create new kitchen/dining/family area, new pitched roof elements, roof lights, internal reconfiguration and associated works.	No Objection	Awaiting decision

Equally, it is an opportunity to understand the wider challenges: such as balancing public access with farming operations, managing environmental impacts and encouraging responsible use of the countryside.

Recent discussions have reflected some of these broader themes. There is increasing emphasis on making sure that countryside access remains inclusive, so that as many people as possible can enjoy it safely and comfortably. I feel strongly we should be encouraging young families to use outdoor spaces, fostering a love and respect of the countryside in future generations.

AT THE same time, there is a clear need to protect the landscapes we value, ensuring that increased use does not lead to erosion, damage or conflict. Promoting awareness of the Countryside Code is a priority, fostering mutual respect between visitors and landowners.

For residents, the benefits of this work can often be seen in small but meaningful ways: clearer signage, better maintained paths and improved connections between routes. These improvements support everyday activities such as walking, running or horse riding, while also encouraging people to spend more time outdoors.

If you come across issues on local paths, such as obstructions, damaged surfaces or unclear signage please report them through

West Berkshire Council's reporting system. Local knowledge is invaluable in helping us prioritise improvements and respond effectively.

The LAF operates largely behind the scenes but its impact is very visible on the ground. I am pleased to represent Bucklebury in this work and to help ensure that our parish remains well connected both to its countryside and to the decisions that shape it.

If you would like to know more about strategy in this area, you can find the Council's Rights of Way Improvement Plan (ROWIP) on the WBC website, or drop me an email and I will send a copy to you.

If you would like to talk to me about any council services, I run a District Councillor surgery for each parish. For Bucklebury parish this is the third Saturday of most months, from 9-11am at All Saints Church on Broad Lane.

Finally, if you do spot anything which needs addressing from potholes, to fly-tipping, bins, or even works carried out by a utility company, please visit www.westberks.gov.uk/reportaproblem and log the issue, and if need be also tell me. If the issue is an emergency (immediate danger, etc.) please call the 24-hour emergency line 01635 55111.

Stay safe everyone!
chris.read1@westberks.gov.uk
07714 081 565

No need to speed... SID is watching you

By David Southgate

THE Bucklebury Parish Road Safety volunteers have passed a milestone with our speed indicator device (SID) having now recorded more than 1.6million vehicles since 2023. While the speeding issue has not gone away, the past six months of data has shown a reduction in the number of vehicles exceeding 40 mph. The data has been entered into a huge database to allow more targeted activities regarding excessive speeds.

This information is shared with the police and West Berkshire Council and will be available to assist any future traffic studies associated with the NE Thatcham Development. The reports are posted on the Bucklebury Parish council (BPC) website. Community Speed Watch (CSW) activity has been fundamental in driver education with more than 900 motorists receiving letters from the police for exceeding the reporting threshold since we began in 2025. Fords and VWs are the most frequently

recorded vehicles, with cars and vans accounting for 98 percent of the total. Some specific speed related petitions to WBC are being created to address the school zone and Bucklebury village based upon our SID data. WBC have released their guidance on parish-owned SIDs and vehicle-activated signs so we are now looking at the installation of additional units and an automated CSW to reduce the volunteers needed to two per session. Progress to date has been down to a small group of volunteers who deploy SID and CSW. Their contribution is having a real impact and BPC thank them for their efforts. But we need more volunteers to sustain the progress that has been made. It is an issue that impacts all who live and work in the parish and is primarily down to the community to manage. The commitment is small and flexible and training will be given. If you want to make our roads safer please contact the Parish Clerk, or Councillors Southgate or Graham Pask.

Keep Bucklebury beautiful

Come and help clear litter from the paths around the Common.

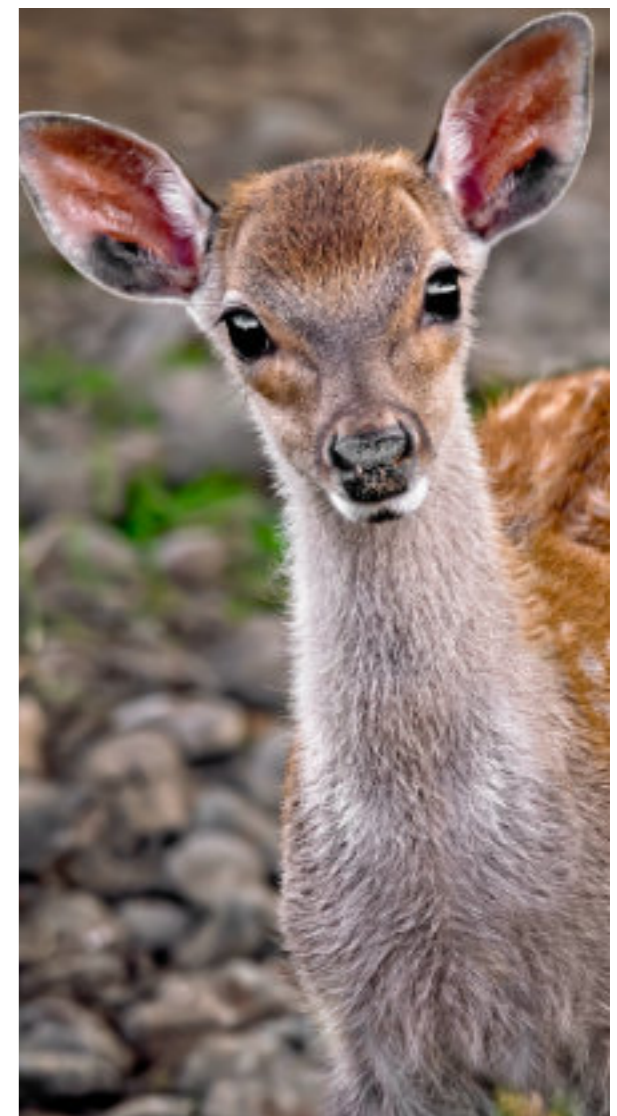
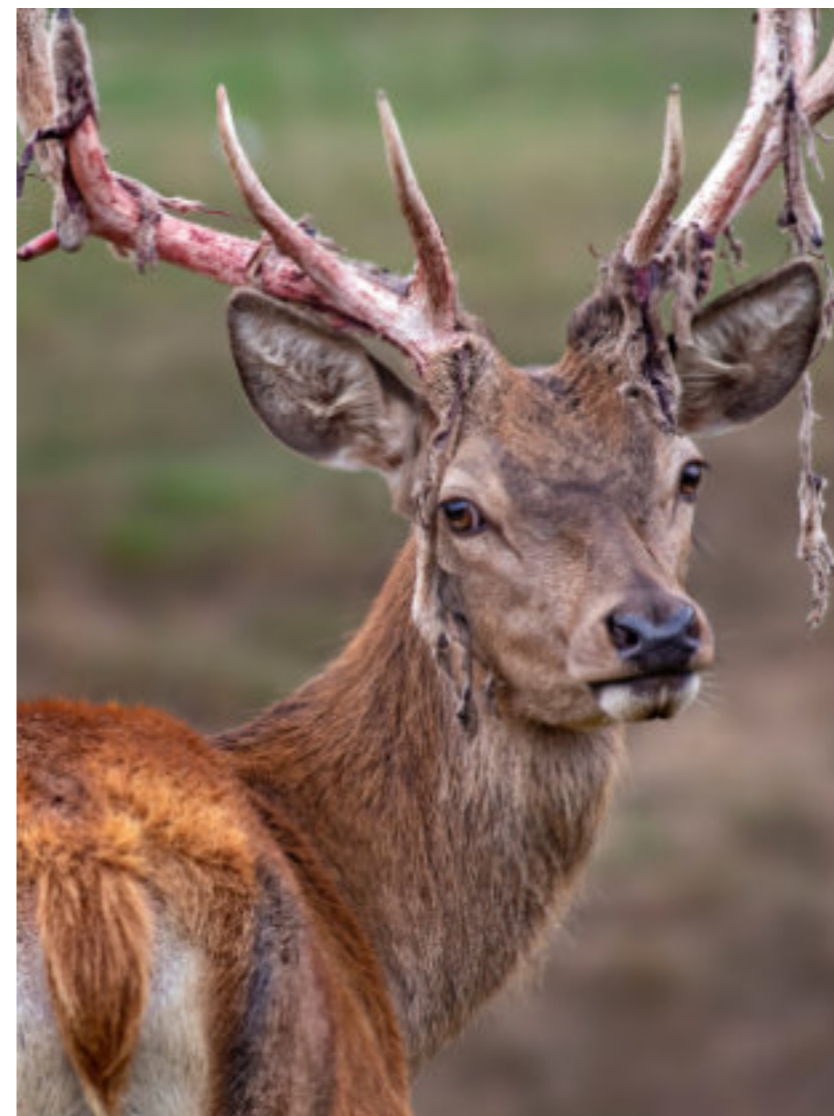
Equipment will be provided, and there will be a skip to take the rubbish. Plus...

FREE refreshments afterwards

Saturday, October 3, 2026
Meet at the Memorial Hall in Upper Bucklebury at 2pm
Mrs. H. Pratt – Parish Clerk
Tel. 01635 863581



The cover photo for this edition of The Oaks was taken by Upper Bucklebury's specialist animal photographer Ben O'Connell. We hope you enjoy this bonus spread of pictures from Ben, whose eye for the perfect shot and patience to get it has resulted in these stunning pictures from Bucklebury Farm Park.





2026 dates for your diary

June

22	Bucklebury planning meeting	7.15pm	Victory Room, Bucklebury
23	Sustainable Bucklebury	7pm	Oak Room, Memorial Hall
25	Community coffee morning	10.30am	Memorial Hall, Upper Bucklebury

July

2	Bucklebury Walkers	10am/10.30am	TBC
4	Horticultural Society Summer Show	2pm	Victory Room, Bucklebury
8	WBCS Nightjar Walk	9.15pm	Meet at car park on the Common closest to Chapel Row
11	Bucklebury Repair Café	10am – 12noon	All Saints Church, Upper Bucklebury
13	Bucklebury Parish Council	7pm	Oak Room, Memorial Hall
14	Tuesday Ladies Club summer tea	2.30pm	Oak Room, Memorial Hall
27	Bucklebury planning meeting	7.15pm	Victory Room, Bucklebury
30	Community coffee morning	10.30am	Memorial Hall, Upper Bucklebury

August

6	Bucklebury Walkers	10am/10.30am	The Cottage Inn, Upper Bucklebury
10	Bucklebury Parish Council	7pm	Oak Room, Memorial Hall
24	Bucklebury planning meeting	7.15pm	Victory Room, Bucklebury
27	Community coffee morning	10.30am	Memorial Hall, Upper Bucklebury
29	Bucklebury Beerfest	1pm – 7pm	Bucklebury Village Recreation Ground

September

3	Bucklebury Walkers	10am/10.30am	The Bladebone - TBC
5	Horticultural Society Autumn Show	2pm	Victory Room, Bucklebury
8	Sustainable Bucklebury	7pm	Oak Room, Memorial Hall
14	Bucklebury Parish Council	7pm	Oak Room, Memorial Hall
17	Community coffee morning	10.30am	Memorial Hall, Upper Bucklebury
22	Tuesday Ladies Club supper	6pm	Cottage Inn
24	Macmillan coffee morning	10.30am	Victory Room, Bucklebury
28	Bucklebury planning meeting	7.15pm	Victory Room, Bucklebury

October

1	Bucklebury Walkers	10am/10.30am	TBC
3	Common clearing	2pm	Memorial Hall, Upper Bucklebury
3	Horticultural Society social	7pm	The Cottage Inn, Upper Bucklebury
12	Bucklebury Parish Council	7pm	Oak Room, Memorial Hall
13	Tuesday Ladies Club	7.15pm	Oak Room, Memorial Hall
26	Bucklebury planning meeting	7.15pm	Victory Room, Bucklebury
29	Community coffee morning	10.30am	Memorial Hall, Upper Bucklebury

The Oaks is published in winter, summer and autumn by Bucklebury Parish Council.

Clerk: Helen Pratt, Jasmine Cottage, Byles Green, Upper Bucklebury, Reading. RG7 6SD.

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