

## Village Updates

### Website

The free website management facility is coming to an end in May and we have taken this opportunity to collaborate with Calum and Sue who have managed the current website for the last 9 years, great job guys **THANK YOU**. The Parish Council democratically voted in favour of the Parish Council using a new free supplier to work with on the design and management of the website. Using this as an opportunity to refresh the look and content of the website. The website will become more of a community website and will support all groups and committees within our village area. The website address will continue to be [www.bulkington.org.uk](http://www.bulkington.org.uk).

### Playground Committee

Carla attended the February Melksham Area Board meeting as the committee lead, in seek of some funding to help with small maintenance jobs needed for the Recreational Ground. Carla and the team have been successful in securing £1000 which will be added to the £500 kindly donated by Cllr Andrew Grabham. The Committee have also received a very kind donation of £100 from a resident who wishes to see improvements made to the recreational ground even though she is moving away from the village.

**THANK YOU.**

## Your Parish Council Meetings

We've got some plans underway for the year and would love to see more of you at our meetings. If the timing and or location of the meetings don't work for you, let us know, we can investigate ways to help make these public meeting more accessible for everyone who would like to come along. Please contact Hannah if you'd like to come along and find out more. (our meetings at the moment are online via Microsoft Teams) [TheClerk@Bulkington-pc.co.uk](mailto:TheClerk@Bulkington-pc.co.uk)

## Village Updates

### Daily Exercise Reminder

One of the positive aspects of COVID-19 has been seeing the increase in walkers benefiting from walking around our beautiful village. However, the government guidance is still to **remain local** and not to mix with more than one person outside your household, outside. Therefore, we ask residents to mindful of this guidance when meeting up with other households for walking in our beautiful village.

### Planning applications

We have a regular agenda item for any planning applications at our monthly meeting. Therefore, if you wish to bring any comments about planning applications, you are welcome to come along to discuss. Please note that the Parish Council is **NOT** a planning authority and has no powers over planning applications.

### Census 2021

**Reminder:** March 21<sup>st</sup> Census 2021 the data that is gathered helps inform local authorities of the support that is required that best matches the needs of the community. Therefore, it is in our interest to obtain a high percentage of returns for our village.



Bulkington Parish Council

Wiltshire

Quarterly Parish Council Newsletter

## 2021 the year to catch up with friends and relatives and social events

We welcomed in 2021 on the hope the year will be a better one than the last, it didn't start the way we had all hoped, but there is hope, vaccines are being distributed and things will get better. The snow in January made for a lovely community feeling around the village as families came out to play in the snow, while keeping a social distance from each other it really felt like a small village community should, albeit it for only a day. But Spring is now here, and things are improving, we hope to see more of you as the weather and restrictions improve.

## This Quarterly Issue

- Precept Confirmation for 2021
- Playground Committee
- Dog Fouling
- Day in the life of Alex Breach

- Updates from Wiltshire County Council
- Fine walking weather is back...
- Local Government Elections



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## Precept Confirmation for 2021

In the Winter Newsletter we said that we would only raise the Precept by what was needed to sustain the current level of services that the Parish Council currently provide. This means your Precept contribution will only be going up by £2.67 for the year (for Band D Council Tax). We are conducting a Parish consultation on how the community want to proceed for the 2022 Precept. **Please complete the enclosed survey and return to us for review before the deadline to have your say.**

## Playground Committee

With spring finally here the Playground Committee have started to make progress on the smaller, but critical jobs, that are needed in the Recreational Ground to ensure it is safe for the whole community. We would have liked to have held a community tidy up and planting event but with the COVID restrictions in place at the time of writing, we shouldn't be encouraging larger community events right now.

However, if you have un-used, un-wanted planters in your garden, we'd love to add some annual colour to the recreational ground and encourage our local children and residents to help plant up the playground. The soil that was left onsite from the install of the new play equipment can be upcycled to fill any planters donated. We are working with local nurseries to see if we can obtain some annual plug plants for some added colour to the site. Please contact Carla if you can or want to help in any way.

## Dog Fouling - Pick it up and bin it

We live in a farming community where dog faeces left in grazing livestock fields is a problem. Dog faeces can cause serious problems including abortion in cattle and death for sheep. Grass consumed by livestock is where the problems can start; most diseases that can be passed on from dogs to livestock (and other dogs) come with serious consequences, such as Neosporosis. Let alone the possible health concerns in humans. A very interesting article on [www.kingdon.co.uk/articles](http://www.kingdon.co.uk/articles) '*Issues and dangers surrounding dog fouling*' highlights how serious it can be.

## Dairy Farming in Bulkington with Alex Breach



My fellow councillors have asked me for an insight of what is currently happening on the farm and thought it might be of interest to the community.

We are in full winter routine, with all the cows and youngstock housed in the dry and not making a mess out in our very wet fields. The farm day starts at 4am with either myself or my brother Ed, out in the yard with the cows. First job is to check the group of cows close to calving to see if any have calved though the night or maybe currently calving. A quick check around the rest of the cows, clean up of the muck in the feeding yards and a top up of feed for the milking cows and then we're ready to start morning milking at 5am.

We are currently milking 175 of our 200 cows, they are averaging 30 litres a day, and our highest yielding cow is 55 litres. The milking process takes 3 hours, while someone else cleans up the cubicle sheds where the cow's sleep. There are also around 30 calves to feed twice a day. Plus, young heifers kept down at Lower Farm to feed and straw up during the day.

Afternoon milking then starts at 3.30pm and the cubicle sheds need cleaning out again before the night draws in. 7pm is a good finish time on a good day when all runs like clockwork but it can often be much later than this.

There is one final check to do on the cows at 10.30pm by myself or Ed to help with any calving that might have started.

## Updates from Wiltshire County Council

Our new Area Board.

Our new Community Engagement Manager (CEM) from Devizes Area Board is Andrew Jack (andrew.jack@wiltshire.gov.uk)

Our new local councillor is Tamara Reay for Devizes Rural West, (election results in May, may change this)

## Fine walking weather is back...

The warmer weather is in sight and hopefully people will be venturing back out for walks through our village footpath network. We don't always get the time to check on the quality of the footpaths and stiles through our Parish. Therefore, we would really like the keen walkers of our community to help keep us informed when they come across footpaths that are not as accessible as perhaps, they could be. Please drop Hannah (our Clerk) a message if you find something that isn't quite right, and we'll do what we can to help resolve the matter to ensure the network remains accessible to all.

## Local Government Elections

County Council, Town and Parish Council elections will take place on **Thursday 6<sup>th</sup> May**. Therefore, our 6 Parish Councillors will have to stand down, but they can re-apply alongside anyone else who wishes to stand. If there are more than 7 candidates, then an election will be held. If there are 7 or fewer candidates, then the election is deemed uncontested and all candidates will automatically become Parish Councillors. It is in the interests of democracy that an election is held, and an opportunity provided for parishioners to vote for the candidates of their choice. So, this election provides an opportunity for anyone who lives or works in the Parish, and are on the electoral roll, to become a Parish Councillor. Contact Hannah for details on standing for councillor.