

John Chilver (County Councillor, Winslow Division)

Annual Report April 2015

Roads and Pavements

Transport for Buckinghamshire's road capital investment programme is in its fifth year after it was identified that substantial investment in Buckinghamshire's roads was urgently required. Since 2011 in excess of £50 million has been invested to improve, maintain, and prolong the life and condition of the Buckinghamshire road network. Between April 2015 and March 2016 a further £25 million will be invested.

Roads chosen for treatment in 2015/16 are a combination of those chosen by local Members, and those shown by road condition survey data to require priority treatment.

Recently completed capital maintenance programmes in the Winslow division include Shucklow Hill, Little Horwood, Sheep Street Winslow, and Stratford Road Whaddon. Work scheduled for 2015/16 includes the A413 through Padbury, and High Street and Buckingham Road Winslow.

A budget of £ 1.7m was allocated for pavements and footways in 2014/15 and local Members invited to submit priority areas. Pavement improvements scheduled in the Winslow Division include Stratford Road Nash and Stock Lane Whaddon.

High Speed 2

The provisional dates for the Select Committee visits to Buckinghamshire have been announced. The visit to the Buckingham Constituency is scheduled for 22nd May.

The County Council will be working with local councillors and community representatives in order to achieve a co-ordinated and successful visit by producing handouts, suggesting speakers, and finding ways to visualise the route.

The original HS2 proposals include a tunnel through the southern 13.2 km of the Chilterns Area of Natural Beauty with the northern 11km at ground level, which would have serious impact on the environment, landscape, local communities and businesses. The County Council supports the proposal for an extended bored tunnel through the entire AONB which would emerge near Wendover.

East West Rail

Ground investigation surveys are taking place along the line between Bletchley and Steeple Claydon. This involves some vegetation clearance along the mothballed railway, installing temporary drainage at locations prone to flooding and drilling bore holes for geotechnical surveys and water table investigations.

A temporary site compound has been set up in a field at Verney Junction in December 2014 and will be operational for around 40 weeks. The Verney Junction compound has offices and will serve as a storage site for large machinery and a vehicle parking site whilst work is being carried out on the mothballed section of track.

The scheduled date for reopening of the line is March 2019.

A 413 Cycle Path

Funding has been secured from the Government for a new cycle path along the A413 from Winslow to Buckingham to connect with the new Winslow station. Design work and consultation will take place later this year, with construction starting in 2016.

The future timetable is as follows:

Review Feasibility and Prelim Design July 2015
Consultation August 2015
Detail Design Dec 2015
Implementation March 2016
Completion of cycleway Sept 2016.

Sir Thomas Fremantle Secondary School, Winslow

Negotiations on a new school site are continuing, with a view to opening at the new site in Sept 2016. A Combined Cadet Force (CCF) has been approved for the school starting in Sept 2015.

Furze Down School, Winslow

The school is about to move into new, state-of-the-art school premises which will enhance its commitment to Specialist Status in Communication and Interaction.

Bedford and Milton Keynes Healthcare Review

A formal consultation started in Dec 2014 on the future of services at Bedford and MK hospitals. North Bucks has been included in the consultation with a recent public meeting in Buckingham.

Thrift Farm

Thrift Farm near Mursley is run as an income generating activity by Buckinghamshire Care and provides activities for adults with learning difficulties. There is a farm, shop, café and horticulture sales. New investment this year will improve the café, shop and parking. It is now open at weekends and bank holidays.

Well Street Centre Buckingham

The Well Street day opportunities centre in Buckingham reopened in October 2014 after a £ 1m refit with new facilities to welcome customers for its day services. The centre is one of six new or refurbished centres in the county which are designed to provide day services to the elderly and people with learning disabilities.

Do It Online

Buckinghamshire County Council has embarked on a 'Bucks Online' digital campaign with a view to increasing take-up of council services available online.

It has invested significant funds on overhauling its website, enabling more people to access services and complete transactions online more quickly and easily.

There are around 64 different services already available on the website, from renewing library books or applying for a school place, to reporting a pothole or booking tickets for events.

It is intended that all the new online services will be as simple and easy to use as possible.

Other initiatives include the extension of live web chat, which is already a feature on the schools and libraries web pages.

To promote its digital campaign the Council is engaging directly with people at libraries, children's centres, shopping centres, supermarkets and community events such as coffee mornings.