



BRADFORD ON AVON
TOWN COUNCIL

ANNUAL REPORT

2020-2021



**BRADFORD
ON AVON**
TOWN COUNCIL



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**BRADFORD
ON AVON**
TOWN COUNCIL

Pandemic Response

Responding to the COVID-19 pandemic has been a priority throughout 2020 and the early part of 2021. Ahead of the announcement of the national lockdown in late March, Town Councillors and officers began planning to ensure that the Town Council could respond effectively to support the community and, if necessary, statutory agencies in handling public health and other impacts. Huge praise must go to the Community Emergency Volunteers who worked tirelessly to help residents requiring assistance.

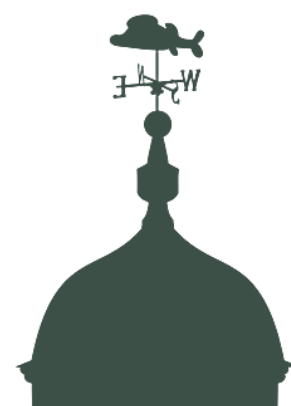


As well as enabling the Town Council team to work from home with provision of online systems and equipment, councillors and officers worked with the Community Emergency Volunteer coordinator and other local volunteers to help to co-ordinate the hundreds of 'street champions' who came forward to assist their neighbours with tasks; from shopping, to picking up prescriptions, to just having a friendly socially distanced chat.

This was supported with an innovative communications campaign, designed to give a local emphasis to national government guidance. The teams decision making often pre-empted and foreshadowed other public authority actions — from closure of parks to prevent spreading the virus through contact with equipment, to providing direct financial support to more vulnerable individuals in our community.

We also set up a community support fund, which raised over £5,000 in the first few weeks of lockdown.

This amount was matched and then more than doubled over the remainder of this year, with grants to support the BOA Hub, local schools and other organisations providing direct support to those impacted in our community.



Pandemic Response continued....



Alongside addressing the direct impacts, the Town Council has sought to support local businesses. The launch of the #ShopLocal card in August, supported by a refresh of the Explore website (www.bradfordonavon.co.uk) provided both listing and local offers to encourage residents and visitors alike to use local businesses. The scheme and new website section was subsequently featured on BBC Points West.

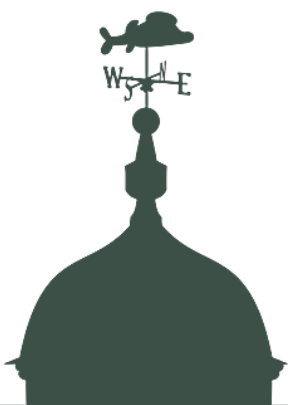
This was also supported by the creation of the social distancing system, allowing for safer access in the town centre. While the rollout of the Wiltshire Council designed and implemented system was not without its problems, improved pavement widths in the town centre have enabled residents to use the local businesses far more safely during this period.



Preparing for recovery

While the pandemic and accompanying restrictions are not yet over, thoughts have now turned to helping our town to recover, economically and socially.

The Town Council has invested in projects like BOA Unlocked, partnering with the Natural Theatre Company, the Kingfisher Trail and others to help residents to process the experiences of the last year, and to start to encourage visitors to the town again, as restrictions ease.



Ecological Emergency



A specific area of work arising from the experience of the pandemic, and a growing awareness within the community of the need to further protect our local environment, was the declaration in July of an Ecological Emergency, extending the declaration of a Climate Emergency in 2019. Bradford on Avon became the first Town Council in the UK to do so, following cities like Brighton and Bristol.

The declaration supported policies on Biodiversity in early June, which halted the use of peat compost and glyphosate on Town Council controlled land, and also commissioned a Biodiversity Survey, which was delivered in early 2021 as a Nature Recovery Report for the town.

Wildlife protection

It also paved the way for improvements to mowing patterns on Town Council controlled land, to create partially re-wilded areas in the town, improving local habitats, and, in October for the publication of a Wildlife Protection Policy Statement.

This has led the Town Council to refuse permission for hunting across its land. The Town Council is expecting an Asset Transfer of green spaces from Wiltshire Council imminently which will include creation of a lighting strategy to limit human impact on light sensitive species such as protected bat populations.

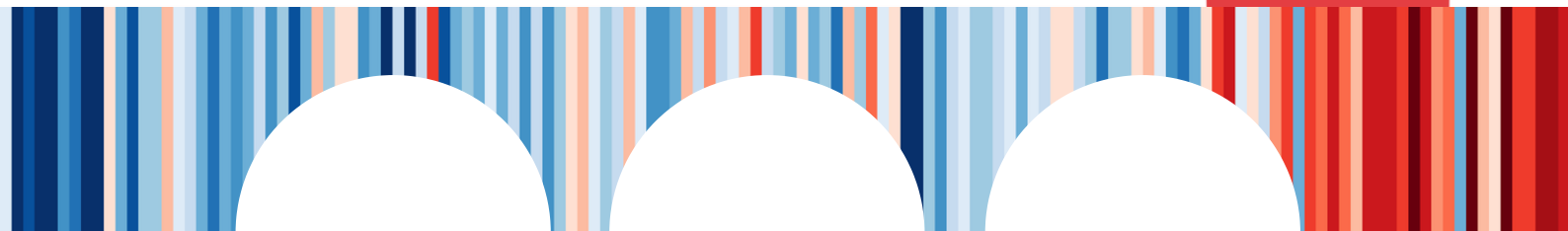
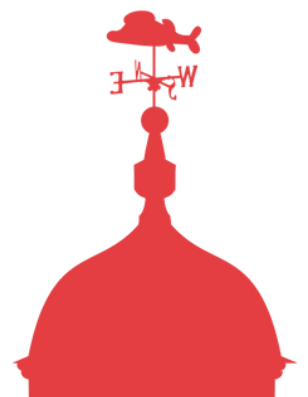
In February 2021, Town Councillors unanimously supported a Climate and Ecological Emergency Strategy for 2021-2025.

Upcoming projects

A commitment has been made to the installation of Electric Vehicle Charging Points at Town Council locations, the creation of a Terracycling Station to take difficult-to-recycle waste, and a commitment to continue communicating and providing information about the emergencies.

In the latter half of 2020, the Town Council co-hosted and co-funded an online Climate Action Day conference between Bradford on Avon Town Council and Bath and North East Somerset Council, which brought together around 50 attendees from more than 20 councils in BANES and west Wiltshire.

The event helped to showcase the work that the Town Council had been doing over the last two years as well as the dedicated area of our website, providing information about actions we've taken and what organisations and individuals can do to help tackle the joint emergencies.



Projects 2020-21



Grow Bradford on Avon

As part of the Town Council's pandemic response in providing activities and supporting wellbeing during lockdown, In May the Town Council set up the Grow BOA project, with the installation of two seed swap stations.

Created out of reclaimed wood by one of our Councillors, the two stations, in the telephone box at the Whitehill/Sladesbrook junction, and the planter at the Trowbridge Road/St Laurence Road junction house seeds, seedlings, plants and other supplies gifted by the community, councillors and the council — helping people to discover and enjoy their own gardens, and have a go at growing!

Becky Addy Wood

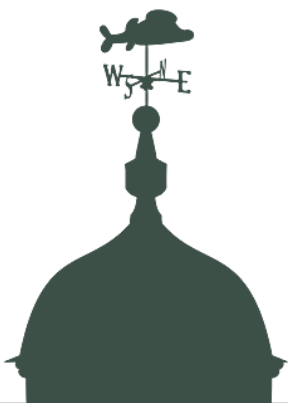
In 2020 the Friends of Becky Addy Wood came to the Town Council to request assistance in the purchase of the wood. At more than 1000 years old, it has been an area used by generations of Bradfordians for walking and, although just over the parish line, Councillors worked with Friends of Becky Addy Wood, the Area Board and other organisations to raise more than £30,000 toward the purchase.



Nature Recovery Report

In February 2021, Town Councillors received the final version of the Nature Recovery Report, commissioned in July 2020 as part of the Biodiversity Policy. The report highlights nine 'high value natural assets' around the town, covering areas like Poulton Meadow, the Strips, Becky Addy Wood and the town cemetery.

It will be used to develop management plans for these and other areas in the town, to improve biodiversity and habitats, informing future decision-making, for years to come.



Projects 2020-21 continued....



Avoncliff Weir

In September 2019, Councillors on the Environment and Planning Committee were alerted to the poor state of the weir at Avoncliff, and the risk of it collapsing, with potentially huge impacts on the up-river habitats and amenity of the Avon as it passed through the town.

With the Town Council providing a small amount of funding and logistical and project support, a campaign was set up to fund a temporary and partial repair, which is expected to last around 5-10 years, while a more permanent solution is found. Volunteers then worked with charity Serve On, who specialise in in-water rescue, to install the repair, which was completed in August 2020.



Skatepark update

Planning and fundraising for the replacement of the Skatepark on Poulton Field has continued throughout the year, albeit with delays due to the pandemic.

Online meetings have been held with local skaters, young people and representatives from BoA Youth to consult on the design of the park, which will form part of investment in the surrounding area, including tree planting, repairs to the existing play area, improvements in access and replacement of the existing pavilion.

With confirmation of permitted development status in December 2020, fundraising was also able to commence in earnest, with more than £10,000 raised from the community by the end of April; including a grant of £3,000 from local firm AB Dynamics.



Other projects to note

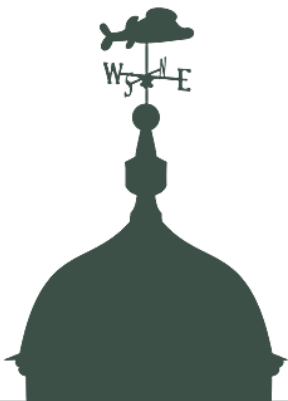
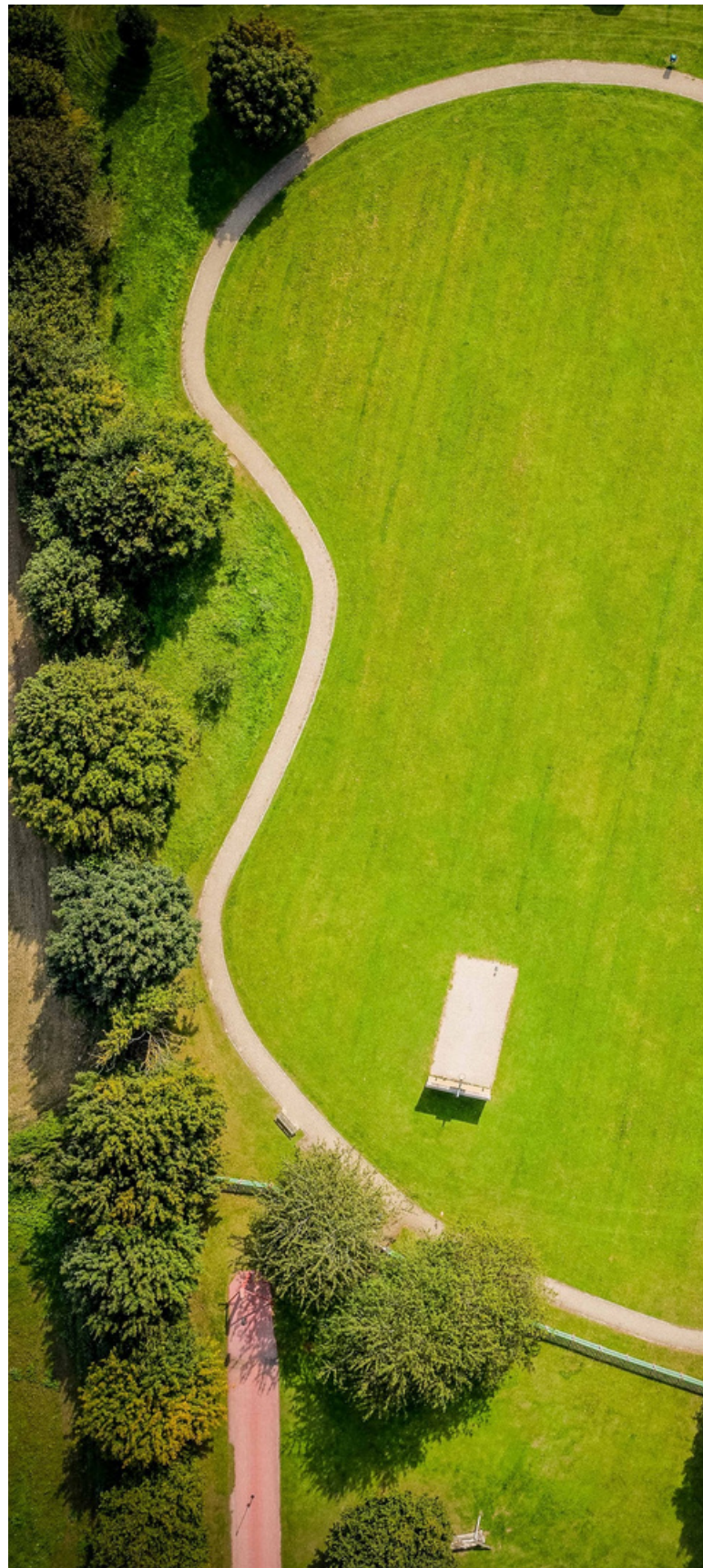
- Naming and opening of 'Thunberg' science lab at St. Laurence School;
- Selection of architect for Cricket Pavilion replacement;
- Provision of free Christmas Trees for businesses and further investment on the Christmas lights.



Facilities & Green Spaces 2020-21

The Town Council is responsible for St Margaret's Hall, the Youth & Community Centre, Westbury Garden, Victory Field and Culver Close Recreation Ground offering affordable rates for private, commercial and organisational hire.

We are currently working with Wiltshire Council as part of their Asset Transfer process, which will see several extra locations and facilities being brought over to our stewardship, under management of our Director of Operations.





Tourism & Events 2020-21

Tourism and Events have been curtailed this year, due to the pandemic – however, investment has continued with the refurbishment of the Tourist Information Centre, the 'Come Back Later' campaign, and the publication of a new town map for visitors.

Events are now starting to be booked for the second half of 2021

For more information visit:

www.bradfordonavon.co.uk

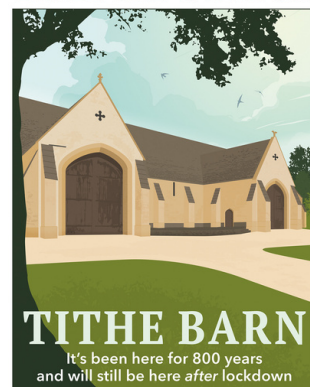


Follow @ExploreBoA on social media



Explore our iconic Lock Up - after lock down
www.bradfordonavon.co.uk

BRADFORD ON AVON



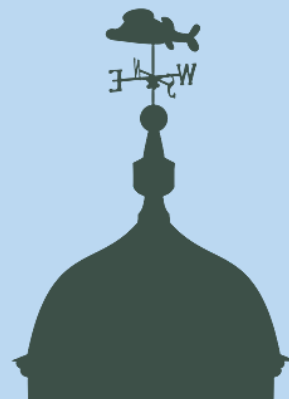
www.bradfordonavon.co.uk

Shop Local

As part of our response to the Pandemic, the Town Council has worked with local businesses to set up the ShopLocal scheme, which was featured on BBC regional news in December. The scheme is designed to keep money in the local economy, highlighting local businesses while providing them with freedom to decide on specific offers. Free to residents and visitors, the cards are available from the TIC and some retailers.



The scheme also links up with the re-vamped shopping section of the Explore website, which provides free listings to local businesses, and in response to feedback from early in the pandemic, also allows businesses to show their trading hours and any online retail offering.



Online

The Town Council's website and social media websites have continued to develop over the last year, as the primary means of communicating accurate and timely information to residents. We have also developed two dedicated areas; one providing information about our COVID-19 response, and one covering the Climate and Ecological Emergencies.

Both Town Council operated websites have had their carbon footprints audited and reduced.



We have continued to improve access to governance and policy information, with additional content and documents, providing for greater accountability, while Councillors have provided further guidance on availability of supporting information, meetings, and improving transparency on decision-making.

With face-to-face meetings impossible throughout this year, we have also provided access to meetings via Zoom and, since September, recordings of Council meetings have been available on YouTube.

Social media feeds have continued to grow strongly, becoming an indispensable tool for getting messages out quickly and effectively during the early stages of the the pandemic, providing news and policy updates, and at times providing light relief with stories on local ducks and swans.

Communications

2020-21

Quarterly Newsletter

We continue to produce and distribute our Newsletter on a quarterly basis, to every household in the BA15 area.



As well as providing information on Town Council initiatives, the Newsletter enhances visibility for community groups that have received grants or other support from us.

Community Engagement

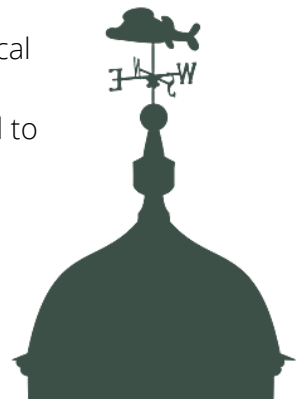
We regularly liaise with community groups, providing marketing & graphics where appropriate to help to promote local voluntary groups and charities. We work closely with the Town Council Community Emergency Volunteers to provide logos, branded equipment and identity cards and to enlist volunteers.



As well as online Town Council meetings, we have hosted a range of other meetings and evenings, particularly in relation to the declared Climate and Ecological emergencies

We provide information to local and national press on Town Council policies, and respond to media enquiries.

**Follow
@BoATownCouncil
on social media**



Accounts 2020-21

Section 2 – Accounting Statements 2020/21 for

BRADFORD ON AVON TOWN COUNCIL

	Year ending		Notes and guidance					
	31 March 2020 £	31 March 2021 £						
1. Balances brought forward	874,605	582,478	Total balances and reserves at the beginning of the year as recorded in the financial records. Value must agree to Box 7 of previous year.					
2. (+) Precept or Rates and Levies	744,390	885,590	Total amount of precept (or for IDBs rates and levies) received or receivable in the year. Exclude any grants received.					
3. (+) Total other receipts	344,169	250,983	Total income or receipts as recorded in the cashbook less the precept or rates/levies received (line 2). Include any grants received.					
4. (-) Staff costs	414,281	497,358	Total expenditure or payments made to and on behalf of all employees. Include gross salaries and wages, employers NI contributions, employers pension contributions, gratuities and severance payments.					
5. (-) Loan interest/capital repayments	18,339	18,339	Total expenditure or payments of capital and interest made during the year on the authority's borrowings (if any).					
6. (-) All other payments	948,066	409,426	Total expenditure or payments as recorded in the cashbook less staff costs (line 4) and loan interest/capital repayments (line 5).					
7. (=) Balances carried forward	582,478	793,928	Total balances and reserves at the end of the year. Must equal (1+2+3) - (4+5+6).					
8. Total value of cash and short term investments	603,981	841,046	The sum of all current and deposit bank accounts, cash holdings and short term investments held as at 31 March – To agree with bank reconciliation.					
9. Total fixed assets plus long term investments and assets	4,190,157	4,235,157	The value of all the property the authority owns – it is made up of all its fixed assets and long term investments as at 31 March.					
10. Total borrowings	241,016	231,315	The outstanding capital balance as at 31 March of all loans from third parties (including PWLB).					
11. (For Local Councils Only) Disclosure note re Trust funds (including charitable)			<table border="1"> <tr> <td>Yes</td> <td>No</td> <td rowspan="2">The Council, as a body corporate, acts as sole trustee for and is responsible for managing Trust funds or assets. N.B. The figures in the accounting statements above do not include any Trust transactions.</td> </tr> <tr> <td><input checked="" type="checkbox"/></td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> </table>	Yes	No	The Council, as a body corporate, acts as sole trustee for and is responsible for managing Trust funds or assets. N.B. The figures in the accounting statements above do not include any Trust transactions.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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I certify that for the year ended 31 March 2021 the Accounting Statements in this Annual Governance and Accountability Return have been prepared on either a receipts and payments or income and expenditure basis following the guidance in Governance and Accountability for Smaller Authorities – a Practitioners' Guide to Proper Practices and present fairly the financial position of this authority.

Signed by Responsible Financial Officer before being presented to the authority for approval

[Signature]
SIGNATURE REQUIRED

Date 18/05/21

I confirm that these Accounting Statements were approved by this authority on this date:

18/05/21

as recorded in minute reference:

MIN 13 REFERENCE

Signed by Chairman of the meeting where the Accounting Statements were approved

[Signature]



Grants Awarded 2020-21

Recipient Body	Date	Amount	Purpose
BOA Bowls Club	April 20	£4,000	Annual Grant- Maintenance of Bowls Club
Age UK	April 20	£5,346.75	Age UK Living Well Grant 20/21
Walkers Are Welcome	April 20	£250	BOA Walking Festival 2020
Monday Wednesday Club	Sept 20	£250	For running of club
BOA Literary Festival	Sept 20	£2,450	Set up costs of online festival 2020
The HUB	Nov 20	£2,000	Donation/Christmas Box Project
BOA Football Club	Nov 20	£500	Donation towards fundraising for HUB
Help Counselling	Nov 20	£500	2 x Tablets for online counselling
Floaty Boat Fund	Dec 20	£500	Fuel Poverty Grant
West Wiltshire Radio	Dec 20	£750	Temporary FM License

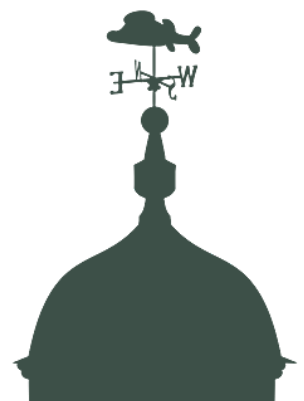
Helping in other ways

Despite the Bradford on Avon Dementia Action Alliance being unable to organise any public events during the pandemic, contact was maintained at a distance with many people, and support provided when needed.

In order to assist, the Town Council hosted and promoted an online awareness session in late March 2021, which was attended by over 20 people. Other sessions are due to be arranged later in 2021.



For more information about grants awarded and how to apply for a grant visit:
<https://bradfordonavontowncouncil.gov.uk/grants-funding/>



Your Councillors 2020-21

Bradford on Avon is divided into two wards: South Ward and North Ward, each represented by six elected councillors.

Councillors are volunteers who are elected by the people of Bradford on Avon.

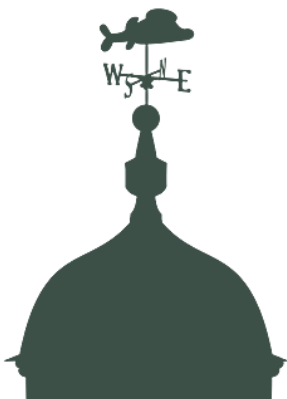


North Ward 2020-21

Simon McNeill-Ritchie
Alex Kay
Dom Newton
Tom Lomax
Jim Lynch
Dan Taylor

South Ward 2020-21

Emma Franklin
Sarah Gibson
Jennie Parker
Dave Garwood
Mike Roberts
Laurie Brown



Please note that local elections were held in May 2021
To find out who your current Town Councillors are, or get in
touch with them, visit:
www.bradfordonavontowncouncil.gov.uk/your-councillors

or contact them via our office (see page 14)

Your Officers 2020-21

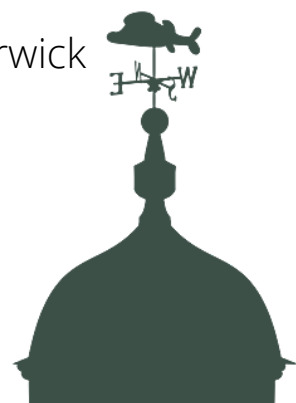
Town Council Officers ensure the day to day running of the organisation, as well as the delivery of council services and functions. Council staff are responsible for providing advice, implementing council's direction and taking action on council decisions.

Council officers also provide advice and expertise that help the council to form policy, along with delivering services and implementing decisions.



- Town Clerk** - Sandra Bartlett
- Director of Operations** - Ian Brown
- Communications Manager** - Lydia Booth
- Tourism & Events Officer** - Steph Shearing
- Green Spaces Officer** - Chris Hogg
- Accountant** - Sarah Hawkins
- Facilities Manager** - Tim Yeomans

- Deputy Hall Manager** - Keith Draper
- Senior Administrator** - Val Baker
- Administrator** - Gill Murray
- Administrator** - Jackie Brown
- Town Warden** - Simon Sutton
- Town Warden** - Stewart Heatherwick
- Town Warden** - Keith Denmark
- Town Warden** - Richard Snarr
- Caretaker** - Roger Collett





Contact us

We'd love to hear from you on how you think we are doing, what you would like us to focus on in the future, and how we can make our services even better.

Our phone line and email are staffed
9am - 5pm Monday - Thursday
9am - 4:30pm Friday

Email:

office@bradfordonavontowncouncil.gov.uk

Telephone: 01225 864240

By Post:

St Margaret's Hall, St Margaret's Street,
Bradford on Avon, Wiltshire BA15 1DE

You can also reach us and find out lots more information online:

Visit our website::

www.bradfordonavontowncouncil.gov.uk

We are closed on weekends & public holidays (unless otherwise stated).



**BRADFORD
ON AVON
TOWN COUNCIL**