



Figure 1: photo of the River Avon at Barton Farm Country Park, Bradford on Avon

Bradford on Avon Town Council

Welcome to Bradford on Avon Town Council, the parish council for the town.

In Wiltshire, there are 2 levels of local government — Wiltshire Council the unitary authority and parish councils like us — both work to serve residents but in different ways.

We're a progressive town council with aspirations to use our influence, capacity and resources to ensure we work for the whole community. We promote the best interests of the town for the betterment of all its residents.

We strive to support and strengthen our community by leading by example, ensuring that every decision considers the climate and ecological emergencies.

We hold the Quality Gold Town Council award from the National Association of Local Councils, and we're committed to providing high standard, cost-effective services to help meet the needs of residents.

Since the last local election, the town council has grown and changed considerably.

In April 2022, we agreed a transfer with Wiltshire Council to take over the management of assets and services in the town (strategic asset transfer). Ultimately, it allowed us to take control of local services and ensure they're done to a high standard we set for ourselves.

As of 2025/26 the town council has an annual budget of £1.5m. The precept, which funds most of the town council budget, represents around 11% of the overall council tax

bill, the remainder is for Wiltshire Council, Wiltshire Police and Dorset & Wiltshire Fire Service.

How we work is just as important as what we do. So, to meet these growing responsibilities, the town council has expanded its services. Here are the key services we provide:

- empty litter bins
- look after most of the town's green spaces and play areas
- manage the cemetery, burials and interments
- manage allotments
- look after some buildings/pavilions/chapels
- street cleaning
- grass cutting
- public open spaces
- youth and summer holiday clubs
- community events.

Town council structure

The Town Council is made up of 12 councillors who are elected every 4 years. The council is chaired by the Mayor who, with the Deputy Mayor, is elected at the Annual Town Council meeting in May each year.

The Town Council has a Full Council and five main committees:

- Community & Wellbeing
- Environment & Green Spaces
- Resources
- Sustainable Travel
- Town Development.

There is also 1 permanent sub-committee:

- Delegated Planning.

We hold 6 Full Council meetings a year, with the other committees meeting 4 or 6 times a year. All councillors are members of the Full Council, the other committees consist of 8 councillors, apart from resources which has 6 councillors. Additional meetings can be called between meetings if the need arises.

Each committee has a chair elected annually. The chair has the casting vote if required, other than this all councillors are equal. As a councillor you can put yourself forward for whichever committees you wish to sit on.

We welcome the public to attend these meetings, and those that attend can speak for up to 2 minutes during the public questions section at the beginning of each meeting.

However, town council meetings are just that, town council meetings held in public, not public meetings.

Being a town councillor

Parish councils are made up of elected councillors who represent the people in their ward and the town itself.

No 2 weeks will be the same, but your time as a councillor will be incredibly fulfilling. Some of your time as a councillor may involve:

- talking with residents
- answering questions and queries from residents
- keeping the community informed
- reading town council agendas, minutes and reports
- attending Full Council or committee meetings
- working with local people, groups and organisations.

Councillors are expected to uphold high standards of conduct and show leadership at all times. Like other elected officials, councillors must adhere to their town council's code of conduct.

Councillors shall have regard to the standards of the **7 Principles of Public Life**, also known as the **Nolan Principles**.

These principles are:

- selflessness
- integrity
- objectivity
- accountability
- openness
- honesty
- leadership.

A copy of our code of conduct is available upon request. You can learn more about the Nolan Principles and the role of a councillor on the Local Government Association's website: local.gov.uk

Councillors, social media and the press

Being a councillor involves keeping residents informed — not just about your own work but also about town council activities. Social media is a key tool for this, but it's important to distinguish your roles: are you speaking on behalf of the town council, as a councillor or as an individual?

This distinction becomes even more crucial when engaging with media outlets, for example BBC Radio Wiltshire or the Wiltshire Times. The town council is accountable to

the community, and effective communication plays a vital role in maintaining transparency and trust. The town council has a Media & Communications Policy that will help in this area.

To ensure clear and consistent messaging, councillors should inform officers when approached by the media, especially regarding town council business.

Your relationship with officers

The relationship between town council officers and councillors is a fluid one. There is a marked difference between the roles, councillors are elected to represent their constituents, while officers are employed for their expertise and knowledge.

Where elected councillors set policy direction — officers are responsible for implementation of the policies and providing impartial advice to councillors.

In doing this, town council officers are politically neutral with most posts, with regular contact with councillors, being politically restricted.

Your town council officers

The town council officer team is led by the Chief Executive & Town Clerk, who is both the town council's Proper Officer and Responsible Financial Officer — both of which are statutory positions.

This position is responsible for the staff and day to day management of the town council. The Chief Executive & Town Clerk is supported by the Deputy Town Clerk and Accountant.

The Chief Executive & Town Clerk is professionally qualified and has obtained the Certificate in Local Council Administration which allows the town council to use the Section 7 General Power of Competence (September 2014).

We've resolved to use this power, as it allows us to have a greater role in serving the community and lets us act where it would not otherwise be possible.

The General Power of Competence allows the town council to do anything an individual can legally do, provided it does not break the law. It is intended to be a first resort, not a last.

We, often, refer to town council employees as officers. The town council has an establishment of 16 full time posts and 12 part time posts — supported by local volunteers.

Most of our officers are based at our office at Kingston Road but others, like the town wardens, you'll see out and about.

Our town warden team work across the town in all the spaces and places we look after.

Some tasks, events and projects will also see officers working in St Margaret's Hall, the Youth & Community Centre or our other places and spaces.

You can find out more about our incredible team at:
bradfordonavontowncouncil.gov.uk/town-council/your-officers

Financial Information

The town council has a budget of £1,556,910 for 2025/26, which is funded by the precept of £1,243,870 (for a Band D household £297.74 per year), and fees & charges. We always look at innovative ways of raising money to allow us to deliver its plans, to minimise the impact on the precept.

We adopt a balanced approach to our levels of reserves that are reviewed annually or more frequently if necessary. We will maintain our reserves at a level equivalent to 3 to 6 months of operating costs.

The town council is registered for VAT and is therefore able to recover this element.

Our charities

The town council is the sole trustee of 4 charities, the Colonel William Llewellyn Palmer Educational Charity (CWLPEC), Festival Garden, Bearfield and the BOA Playing Field Association.

The CWLPEC, has been managed by the council since its transfer from Wiltshire Council in 2017. Established to benefit the young people of Bradford on Avon, the charity plays a key role in community development.

The CWLPEC accepts grant applications for projects or initiatives that benefit the young people of the town.

In 2024, we launched the BOA Playing Field Association to help improve playing fields, recreation grounds, and play areas throughout the town. The charity enables us to apply for community funds that are not accessible to the town council, but meets the charities aims.

Bearfield and Festival Garden are sites in Bradford on Avon we look after.