



Environment and Green Spaces committee minutes

Minutes

From the committee meeting at 7pm on Tuesday 25 November 2025

At United Church, Bradford on Avon,

Decision making

The **decisions** made by the committee at this meeting are at minute [27](#) & [30](#).

Present

Councillors:

- Kate Bessant
- Andy Gordon
- Alex Kay (Chair)
- Ghika Savva
- Katie Vigar
- Jack Vittles

Town Council Officers

- Ian Brown – Town Clerk
 - Chris Hogg – Green Spaces Officer
 - Meeting clerk - Sarah Howe – Committee Clerk
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Apologies

From Councillors unable to attend the meeting:

None



25. Pathways to Net Zero

Chair of Climate Friendly Bradford on Avon (CFBoA), Vicky Stone, came to talk to Councillors about a couple of projects she is planning to offer to both local businesses and residents to help reduce their carbon footprint.

- To engage with local businesses by establishing their baseline level of carbon emissions and then work to provide an action plan to reduce emissions further. Vicky has spoken to a local café which is prepared to act as a pilot case. Assuming the trial is successful the hope is both the café and advisors can then help other local businesses. Barriers to implementing any action plan will be cost and time but there is hope that a successful test case will encourage others to take part.
- Vicky has determined that lots of local residents also want to reduce their emissions but are not sure how to contact an advisor who can assist. CFBoA has experts in this area but finding those residents who are keen, difficult to locate. The plan is to link the two using WhatsApp, regular comms and pop-up events. This scheme is also looking for funding options.

Several of the councillors offered their support for the schemes.

26. Declarations of Interest

None.

27. Minutes from the previous meeting of the committee

Proposed by Councillor Vigar

Seconded by Councillor Gordon

And with **all in favour** it was **resolved**: that the Minutes of the last committee meeting held on 16 September 2025 be accepted as a true record of the meeting.

28. Matters arising

None.

29. Agenda item 7 - Chair's Update

The Chair referred to her report as supplied with the agenda.

Councillor Gordon provided a summary of the Wild Summit event which took place in Bristol on 11 September 2025.



He reported that a collection of environmental groups, businesses, campaigners and politicians came together with the central focus to meet the 30/30 target (UK Government aspiration to protect 30% land and 30% sea by 2030). The summit has illustrated there is a profound crisis in the depletion of native species in the UK. Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI's) occupy just 3% of land and 80% of those are in an unfavourable condition. Only 14% of rivers are in good ecological health.

The Summit included 32 presentations, panels and workshops. Positives included the growing power of community groups and from a funding point of view, ideas to unlock the wealth in the private sector.

The council has a summary and You-Tube links which can be emailed to anyone who is interested.

The Chair added that Britain's plentiful supply of back gardens are not included in the 30/30 targets.

30. Agenda item 8 – Natural England and nature-based flooding solutions

Following the Full Council meeting held on 4 November 2025, it was agreed the Mayor would write to the Environment Agency (EA) to request that the EA pursue options 3 and 4 for managing flood risk in Bradford on Avon. These included property resilience measures for residential properties and community and catchment resilience measures using temporary barriers and nature-based flood management solutions.

Councillor Gordon subsequently wrote to a Natural England (NE) Catchment Sensitive Farming Advisor to establish the availability of grant funding for farmers and landowners to help reduce run off into the River Avon. The advisor's response ran to 4 points which were published with the agenda. Overall, the NE are happy to engage and offer advice to farmers and landowners although for the time being grants schemes are closed to future applications. The funding schemes are likely to reopen in 2026. A farm cluster group around Steeple Ashton is being set up however covering a large area of land which drains into the Avon upstream of Bradford on Avon. Councillor Gordon was pleased to see that the NE was already delivering a partnership of groups to help with natural based flood solutions. The Chair thanked Councillor Gordon for writing to the NE and establishing these promising developments.



Proposed by Councillor Gordon

Seconded by Councillor Kay

And with **all in favour** it was **resolved**: the town council flood working group when meeting the Environment Agency, make them aware of how Natural England can help with delivering a nature-based flooding solutions project on riparian land above Bradford on Avon and recommend, they engage with Natural England in helping develop the Environment Agency's options.

31. Agenda item 9 – Poulton Play Area

The Green Spaces Officer provided a verbal update. Poulton play area redevelopments are now complete, Phase 1 was completed August 2024 and following a substantial fund-raising effort Phase 2 was completed in October 2025. The overall cost was £130,000. Both the Chair and Councillor Vigar thanked all involved. A schedule of works for all the town's play areas was drawn up in 2022, and in line with the schedule St Aldhelm play area will be the next to be renovated.

Recently a RoSPA (Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents) inspection has taken place, and a new baseline will be drawn up for the rest of the play areas and the schedule reworked. Replacement swings at Barton Farm have been ordered and the seesaw at Poulton will be reinstalled.

Following the public consultation, the outdoor gym and table tennis tables are still to be considered for one of the green spaces around town.

32. Agenda item 10 – Neighbourhood Plan (NP) update

The Natural Environments & Green Spaces topic group have got off to a good start, despite there being a daunting amount of work, as residents of Bradford on Avon are passionate about wildlife and the protection of their green spaces. The Chair pointed out that the climate and biodiversity runs through all aspects of the NP.

On a disappointing note, Wiltshire Council's Local Plan is still in draft form and the recent hearing to approve it was halted. Significant amendments are needed. This may have a knock-on effect regarding the town's NP.



33. Agenda item 11 – Westbury Garden Wall

The Westbury Garden wall has a crack due to an expanding London plane tree. Surveys have been completed, and it is possible the wall could fall into/towards the river. A permit application has been submitted with the EA who need to provide consent for a strut to brace the wall at its most vulnerable spot. Currently there is a 6 month wait for permits.

34. Agenda item 12 – Green Spaces Update

The Green Spaces Officer provided a verbal update. Alongside all the usual works the town wardens perform, they have been planting trees, assisting at events such as the Fireworks and Christmas Lights switch on, repairs to play equipment, responding to fly tipping, litter and graffiti, clearance of leaves and detritus alongside Wiltshire Council road sweepers and hedge work.

Contractors have carried out tree works at Victory Field, Culver Close and Greenland view. They will move on to the cemetery and Brooklands.

Wiltshire Council will be carrying out tree works along Riverside so the path will be closed 11-13 December 2025.

A plaque will be added to a memorial bench to commemorate local resident Dennis Gilbert.

The green wall has also been pruned. Pied wagtails have been found nesting.

35. Agenda item 13 – Avon Wildlife Trust's Expression of Interest: Species recovery Programme – Beavers.

The report was noted.

36. Agenda item 14 – Tithecote Manor

The residents of Tithecote Manor Estate have taken over the management of the communal areas and green spaces from the previous management company. They have approached the town council to see if the council will take on the liability to maintain these areas. A lump sum would need to come to town council in lieu of Section 106 money. The residents are considering this position.

37. Agenda item 15 -. [South West in Bloom](#)

The town council has been awarded Gold by the SWIB committee. The judge has complimented the council on many areas of management



including the management of vegetation in hard landscapes. The Chair thanked all involved.

38. Agenda item 16 – Confidential Business

Proposed by Councillor Vittles

Seconded by Councillor Bessant

And with **all in favour** it was **resolved**: to start confidential business

39. Agenda item 17 – Poulton Park Drainage

40. Next meeting date

The next committee meeting is arranged for Tuesday 10 February 2026.

End of the meeting

The meeting finished at 8.32pm



Appendix A: Comments and questions from the public

There were 4 questions/comments from members of the public at the meeting. There were 4 members of the public in total.

[Q1] A resident has sent in a couple of questions regarding leaf fall and recycling of fallen leaves and thinks the town council should be doing a better job of clearing up leaves.

The Green Spaces Officer confirmed that the town council has an approved Tree Management Policy but does not 'manage' leaf and fruit fall as such. There is also no legal requirement to prune trees despite leaf fall potentially being a nuisance.

Leaves on roads and pavements: litter is cleared from steps and slopes from a safety point of view. Feedback from residents is also taken into consideration. The town council does compost leaf litter to some degree but in terms of what is best for biodiversity, greenery should largely be left in situ close to the source. The council skips litter from roads due to the presence of microplastics.

[Q2] A resident asked how many new allotments have been let out this year.

The Green Spaces Officer said he did not have that information but 88% of all allotments are currently let.

[Q3] A resident asked whether the town council would help a local Girl Guide complete her Biodiversity Badge. She wants to refurb the bug hotel at Bearfield Orchard.

It was suggested the Girl Guide contact the council via email and the council would help if they could.

[Q4] A resident has pointed out the buses running through Bradford on Avon are half empty and the various bus timetables are not publicised. Local bus services besides the D1 and D1X include: the town bus, bus from Monkton Farleigh, bus from Westwood, bus from Holt and Melksham, bus from Staverton and Winsley.

It was agreed to put one article in Snippets promoting these services and any relevant Apps. Also to speak to Wiltshire Council regarding more publicity from them to promote these services.