

# Bradford on Avon Town Council



Annual report 2025/26



# Welcome from outgoing BOA Mayor, Councillor Jack Vittles



Our Annual Report offers a snapshot of the town council's work over the past year – highlighting the projects we've completed, progressed and set in motion.

It's also a valuable opportunity to reflect on the projects that have helped shape the town and recognising just how much has been achieved in the space of 12 months.

Looking back has been both rewarding and insightful – a chance to celebrate successes and learn from challenges along the way.

One of the biggest changes in that time is the election of new Bradford on Avon councillors to town council and Wiltshire Council seats.

The report is organised around four key objective identified in our new Business Plan:

- a Thriving Town
- a Flourishing Community
- a Greener Place
- an Engaged Town Council.

These themes broadly set out our priorities as a town council up to the 2029 election. Some of the objectives are new such as starting the refurbishment of the Youth Centre, supporting volunteer groups and further invest in our green spaces and play areas – while others continue on.

I'd like to thank all our officers for their hard work and commitment in making the town council a cohesive and inclusive organisation that works for the betterment of the town.

I'd also like to give special thanks to our Town Wardens and the BOA Youth Team for the fantastic services they provide to the community.

I hope you enjoy reading this report. If you'd like more detail about any of the projects mentioned in this report, please scan the below QR code or visit [bradfordonavontowncouncil.gov.uk](http://bradfordonavontowncouncil.gov.uk)

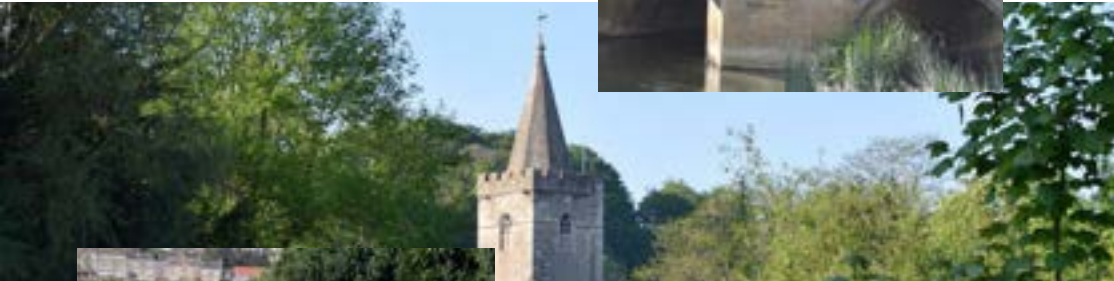


# What we do

Below is a set of examples of we do at the town council. The list isn't exhaustive but these are some of the things that what we recieve frequent enquiries about.

- manage buildings and venues, including St Margaret's Hall
- manage parks and green spaces, including Barton Farm
- manage play areas and the skatepark
- manage the cemetery on Holt Road
- manage allotments
- support community groups and local charities
- support and work with volunteers in the town
- check and empty bins in the town, keeping Bradford on Avon clean and tidy
- run the weekly town market each Thursday
- provide information about what's on and what's happening in Bradford on Avon
- run the Tourist Information Centre – and the Explore BOA website
- manage the youth centre and BOA Youth.

You can find more information about what we do on our website.



# Thriving Town

Bradford on Avon is a special town, with historic buildings and independent shops, set within a beautiful rural landscape. We want to protect and celebrate our heritage and environment, while supporting a thriving community for residents, businesses and visitors.





# A thriving Bradford on Avon

Supporting an active community in Bradford on Avon includes improving traffic flow and pedestrian safety.

We're pleased to be making progress with Wiltshire Council on plans for a new pedestrian bridge over the River Avon, linking the library car park with Bridge Yard to improve safety and access, and provide an alternative route during flooding. Wiltshire Council is also preparing an outline business case for the bridge, funded by Active Travel England, to support a future bid for construction funding.

We're also working with Wiltshire Council on a town-wide traffic scheme, including a feasibility study into a possible bus contraflow. The results of this study are expected in summer 2026.

Wiltshire Council has agreed to meetings with us prior to key town council meetings - so that we can give residents more regular updates.



*“The best is yet to come”*

It's hard to believe it's been over a year since St Margaret's Hall flooded, but we're delighted to say the reinstatement works are now complete and the hall is open again. We're building bookings back up, and we can't wait to see St Margaret's return as a real hub for the community.

You may have spotted some changes to help the hall with flood resilience, so the hall will be easier to recover if there is another major flood in the future.

The town market continues to flourish every Thursday, three years after we took over the management from Wiltshire Council.

In early summer, we also hosted a Flood Forum, bringing together the Environment Agency, Wiltshire Council, Wessex Water and others. It was a valuable opportunity where over 300 residents asked questions, shared concerns, and be part of the conversation around flooding in the town.

One of our most significant pieces of work has been reviewing the Neighbourhood Plan, as the current plan period runs until 2026.

This doesn't mean the plan simply stops or becomes redundant at that point. However, plans that aren't regularly updated can become less relevant and less effective over time. Refreshing it gives the whole community the opportunity to shape a shared vision for how the town develops in the future - this time looking ahead to 2038.

# Flourishing Community

We support residents to help the community flourish by tackling social isolation and promoting both physical and mental wellbeing. We want to create an inclusive town that encourages involvement and supports community spirit through activities like volunteering.



# Flourishing BOA

One of the on-going services we're proud to offer is BOA Youth – our dedicated youth service. Since we started managing the youth service in 2024 the team has gone from strength to strength now offering two sessions on Tuesdays and Thursdays. Two of the sessions focus on primary school aged children and two focus on young people from ages 11+.

The annual Summer Holiday Club proved to be as popular as ever with over 120 children enjoying a variety of activities from circus skills, magic and dance to cookery, pottery and crafting

Thanks to fundraising efforts by officers, we managed to complete the improvements to Poulton play area in October 2025. The first half of which was opened in 2024 with our Play Day event.

Our regular events continue to grow in popularity, attracting thousands of people to the town each year.

This was especially important following the cancellation of the 2024 Christmas lights event due to flooding. In fact, our Christmas and Fireworks event went on to exceed expectations, welcoming thousands of residents and visitors alike. A massive success, and a boon for town centre businesses.

In March this year, we started the first stages of the work to repair the Westbury Garden wall are well underway, and a temporary prop has been installed to hold a slab of the wall in place.



At the Culver Close tennis courts we launched Free Park Tennis on 1 March, with a fully booked session for all ages. The sessions are open to all ages and abilities – whether you're picking up a racket for the first time, looking to up your game, or simply fancy a free and friendly session. Weathering permitting – these monthly sessions will continue through spring and summer.



Last year's Dog Show & Spring Fete was a huge success. Hundreds of people and their furry friends turned out to help us raised money to take the Poulton Park improvements over the line. During the event we raised well over £2,600 toward the project. Now the local Lions Club is leading the event – with our support and guidance.

Contractors will be back this summer to remove the top of the wall that the tree is pushing against and to stabilise the structure. We also approved the Becky Addy Wood Management Plan – which we agreed to put in place following the High Court case last year.

The plan, independently produced for the town council by Johns Associates and Duramen Consulting and now formally adopted, sets out a positive way forward for the conservation and management of Becky Addy Woods.

It replaces the original management plan from November 2021. We're now working on a detailed first-year action plan for the woodland.

And this year we've been investing in our green spaces too, with the launch of a dedicated bench scheme. This will see benches made from recycled materials installed across town, each with a dedication to someone special in a place they loved.

Over at Victory Field we're investing in new public toilets and an improved facility for our Town Warden team. The plans also include a specialised Changing Places facility and disabled toilet.

We're submitting a loan bid for the work – and hope to begin work as soon as possible. Councillors also agreed that we, as a town council, would oppose the planned closure of the local fire station. We hope to work with the fire authority, firefighters and other stakeholders to try to find a solution that avoids closure.



# A Greener Place

The town council recognises it has an important role to play in addressing the global climate and ecological crises at a local level, by working towards carbon neutrality and enhancing the biodiversity of our green spaces.

# Green for go

As a town council, we've always taken pride in being green. This green ethos shows in how we look after our green spaces, improve the efficiency of our buildings, and deliver initiatives that support the town. And while we still cut the grass, clean up the town and order the seasonal hanging baskets – there's plenty more we do every year.

Over the last year, we were once again awarded Gold in the South West in Bloom competition following a summer visit.

We also carried out a carbon audit of the town council's buildings and operations, and we're now working through the results. Next, we'll be putting a plan together to act on the report's findings and recommendations to see how we can move towards our goal of being carbon neutral by 2030.



As a town council we're also continuing to promote the ecological and climate crises we declared in 2018 and 2019 respectively. This includes introducing policies that change how people use our green spaces in order to minimise climate and ecological impacts – such as banning barbecues on our land.

In more biodiversity news, we also planted a weeping birch as part of the Baum Challenge that swept some parish councils in the south west.

Our Mayor was nominated by his Trowbridge counterpart to take part in a tree-planting challenge that originally started in Germany. The birch also marked our long-standing link with Norden.

We've also been working to strengthen our ecological and environmental credentials in other ways – including applying to become a Watermark Town through Wessex Water, and planting wildflowers across the town, most recently in the Springfield area.

At Barton Farm, our Nature Volunteers have been hard at work caring for the tree nursery. We also helped a Siberian elm in the country park re-establish after being uprooted during Storm Darragh. Alongside this, we've carried out a wide range of tree and green space work across the town – far too much to cover here – but you can find more on our website, including how to get involved with our Nature Volunteers, who make a real difference to our green spaces.

As part of our efforts to reduce waste in Bradford on Avon, we've continued regular food collections from the Bridge Yard Co-op and Sainsbury's for the Community Fridge. This initiative helps cut food waste while supporting those in need.

We're also a donation point for Wiltshire Digital Drive, a charity that refurbishes old tech for people who need it. In 2025/26, residents donated 186 devices – a remarkable 239% increase on the previous year.



## Engaged town council

An engaged town council means creating a culture where people feel able to have their say and play a real part in the decisions that affect their lives.

Building a town council that's engaged, works well together, and feels like one team. All for the benefit of Bradford on Avon.





With a new town council elected in May 2025, we've had the chance to set a clear way forward for Bradford on Avon, building on the progress made over the last four years. Since completing the asset transfer in 2022, our responsibilities have grown hugely – and we've grown with them to meet those new demands.

The previous business plan focused on capturing the community spirit that emerged during the COVID pandemic and turning it into lasting action.

That strong foundation now gives us the opportunity to go further, by making sure residents can benefit from what we do and have meaningful ways to contribute to community life.

Most importantly, it means people can have a real say in shaping Bradford on Avon's future. In recent years, we've really stepped up how we engage with residents, asking for your views on everything from a new pedestrian bridge to traffic schemes – and plenty in between.

We also refreshed our Residents' Panel this year, bringing in a new cohort of panellists and updating the format.

Building on the success of the panel, we're now opening up the membership to bring in more voices. To be eligible to join the panel you simply need to be over 16 years old and live in Bradford on Avon.

The next survey is planned for summer 2026. But their first set of responses has already helped shape a potential bid to become a Wellbeing Town, gathered views on accessibility in the town, and informed early thinking around the toilets and public amenity building on Culver Close.

Alongside this, we launched a separate consultation on plans for new public toilets – as well as a storage area – at Victory Field.

All of this work has been guided by our Business Plan – a document that sets out what we aim to achieve over each four-year council term. This shared vision has been brought to life by councillors, staff and volunteers working together across a wide range of projects, helping to build a strong foundation for how we deliver our services.

## Your views

Here are some of the things we've consulted with residents on over the administrative period:

- how we should shape our expression of interest for the Town of Culture competition
- whether or not we should take out a public loan to build new public toilets at Victory Field
- what residents wanted from the play area at St Aldhelm's
- tennis coaching
- our Summer Holiday Club activities
- how our events were received by attendees and stall holders throughout the year
- the launch of the Neighbourhood Plan Review.

You can find more information about what we do on our website.

# Here for you



# Your town council

Bradford on Avon is divided into two wards: South Ward and North Ward. Each ward is represented by six elected town councillors. Town councillors are volunteers elected by residents of the town.

## South Ward

Councillor Jack Vittles  
Councillor Kate Bessant  
Councillor Andy Gordon  
Councillor George Simmonds  
Councillor Kevin Elliot  
Councillor Ben Reed

## North Ward

Councillor Alex Kay  
Councillor Sam Blackwell  
Councillor Katie Vigar  
Councillor Chris Spence  
Councillor James Atkinson  
Councillor Ghika Saava

Councillors Sam Blackwell and George Simmonds also represent their respective wards at a unitary level at Wiltshire Council.

*“We aim to create a strong resilient community...”*

## Your officers

The town council currently employs officers (town council staff) to ensure the day-to-day running of the town council. This includes delivering services and functions, such as litter bin collections and running the youth service.

### Office staff

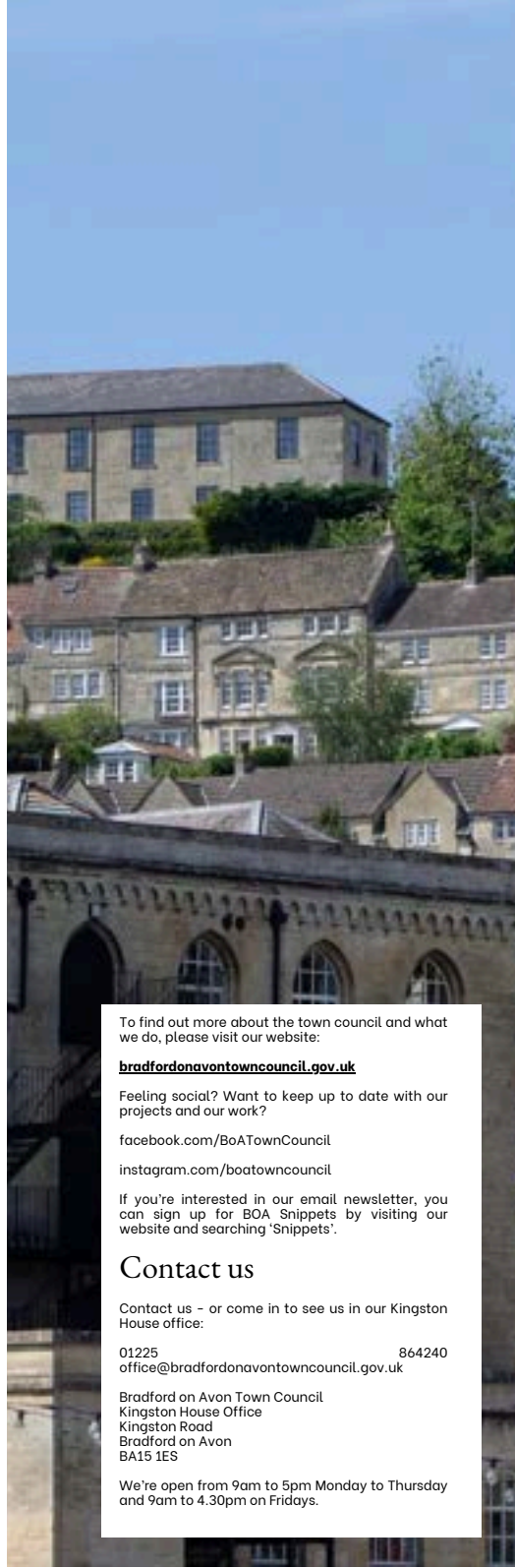
Ian Brown – Chief Executive & Town Clerk  
Chris Stringer – Deputy Town Clerk  
Sarah Hawkins – Accountant  
Matthew McLaughlin – Communications Officer  
Chris Hogg – Green Spaces Officer  
Katie Ponsford – Tourism & Events Officer  
Sarah Howe – Committee Clerk  
Charlotte Davidson – Events Officer  
George Tomlinson – Community Engagement Officer  
Lucia Sheppard – Projects Officer  
Val Baker – Planning Assistant  
Gill Murray – Senior Administrator  
Jackie Brown – Administrator  
Roger Collett – Caretaker

### Town Wardens

Richard Snarr – Town Warden Supervisor  
Kelvin Purnell – Town Warden  
Simon Sutton – Town Warden  
Andy Martin – Town Warden  
Matthew Powell – Town Warden  
Mike Hayward – Town Warden  
Steve Grimes – Town Warden  
Mark Jones – Town Warden

### BOA Youth team

Amanda Wiffen – BOA Youth Coordinator  
Jamie Benjamin – BOA Youth Deputy Coordinator  
Dan McGauley – BOA Youth team member  
Elena Amador – BOA Youth team member



To find out more about the town council and what we do, please visit our website:

[bradfordonavontowncouncil.gov.uk](http://bradfordonavontowncouncil.gov.uk)

Feeling social? Want to keep up to date with our projects and our work?

[facebook.com/BoATownCouncil](https://facebook.com/BoATownCouncil)

[instagram.com/boatowncouncil](https://instagram.com/boatowncouncil)

If you're interested in our email newsletter, you can sign up for BOA Snippets by visiting our website and searching 'Snippets'.

## Contact us

Contact us - or come in to see us in our Kingston House office:

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We're open from 9am to 5pm Monday to Thursday and 9am to 4.30pm on Fridays.