Minutes

From the committee meeting at 7pm on Tuesday 13 October 2026

At St Margaret's Hall, St Margaret's Street, Bradford on Avon,

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Decision making

The **decisions** made by the committee at this meeting are at minutes 11, 20 & 21.

Present

Councillors:

- Kate Bessant
- Sam Blackwell
- Kevin Elliott
- Alex Kay (Chair)
- Ben Reed (sub) * arrived 7.40pm
- Chris Spence (sub)
- George Simmonds (sub)

Town Council Officers

- Ian Brown – Town Clerk
- Chris Stringer – Deputy Town Clerk
- Chris Hogg – Green Spaces Officer
- Sarah Hawkins - Accountant
- Meeting clerk - Sarah Howe – Committee Clerk

Apologies

From Councillors unable to attend the meeting:

- Andy Gordon
- Ghika Savva
- Katie Vigar
- Jack Vittles

10. Declarations of Interest

None.

11. Minutes from the previous meeting of the committee

Proposed by Councillor Kate Bessant
Seconded by Councillor Kevin Elliott

And with **all in favour** it was **resolved**: that the minutes of the last committee meeting held on 30 June 2026 be accepted as a true record of the meeting.

12. Matters arising

None.

13. Agenda item 6 - Chair's Update

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

- Wessex Water rainwater management grants - the Chair is helping prepare grant applications for St Margaret's Hall and the Youth Centre to capturing rainwater to flush the toilets and for rainwater capture for the St Laurence garden project. Applications will be submitted week beginning 16 October 2026.
- Climate Community Plan with Climate Friendly BoA – a year of community evaluation and engagement following receipt a grant from the National Lottery Fund. A plan to make Bradford on Avon and surrounding parishes more climate resilient and carbon neutral, with pop up events, drop-in sessions and public workshops. The first of these will be weekend of the Sunday 22 November 2026, Wallington Hall.
- The 20th Anniversary of Climate Friendly BoA will have Arthur Snell as a guest speaker at the event on the 20 October 2026.
- The People's Emergency Briefing from 6.15pm on the 18 November 2026, St Margaret's Hall is almost sold out. A waiting list will be prepared to see what sort of demand there might be for a second viewing.

14. Agenda item 7 – Green Spaces Update

The Green Spaces Officer provided an update as supplied with the agenda. Additionally:

- Millie's Garden has been renewed with local and drought resilience plants. A public art display has been installed linked to David Attenborough's 100th birthday.
- Becky Addy Wood – work continues under the management plan. Some paint marks have been made in the wood for trees to fell and also to split the site into parts.
- There have been two fires recently in the town's green spaces, a picnic bench in Barton Country Park on 10/10/26, this has been reported to the Police and trees caught fire at Sladesbrook a few weeks ago. The trees are to be checked for Health and Safety purposes.

The Chair thanked the Green Spaces Officer and the town wardens for all their work, commented how horrified she had been by the recent vandalism in the country park and added a tree is down at Barton Bridge. It was reiterated it is important to report all cases of antisocial behaviour to the police.

15. Agenda item 8 – Play Areas refurbishment programme

The Green Spaces officer introduced his report as supplied with the agenda.

St Aldhelm's play area is currently under renovation, which has been designed with younger children in mind. Contractors have been engaged and the hope is the equipment will be in place by the end of the year. The play area should benefit from a new playhouse and tunnel, a refurbishment of existing equipment and additional landscaping. The town wardens are expected to help with some of the installation to ensure funds are spent to maximum benefit.

Overall, the Green Spaces Officer highlighted the budgets set out for all the remaining play areas which require refurbishment over the next few years.

Councillor Blackwell thanked the Green Spaces Officer and other officers involved in pushing ahead with the refurbishment plans. The play areas had come over to the town council as part of the asset transfer process from

Wiltshire Council and were generally in a very poor condition. The town wardens were also thanked for fixing broken play equipment at Barton Farm.

It was asked if any more body weight machines might be introduced, similar to those at Victory Field. The Green Spaces Officer is trying to find extra funding and if successful would like to dot additional equipment at other sites around town.

16. Agenda item 9 – Site Management Summaries: Barton Lawn and Poulton Park

The Green Spaces Officer referred to his management summaries as supplied with the agenda.

The Town Council manage a lot of sites around town and is looking to formalise the management plans of the town's green spaces starting with Barton Lawn and Poulton Park. Management summaries have been compiled covering current and future general management, potential and replacement planting strategies, management of the grass/lawns, guidelines for vehicular access (Barton Lawn).

Poulton Park also has specific management requirements such as maintenance of the football pitches with potential strategies to hold rainwater drainage back to assist with drought issues, longer term hedgerow planting including around the play area, development of paths around the sites.

The Green Spaces Officer concluded that these management documents would nominally provide direction covering the next 5 years or so.

17. Agenda item 10 – Street cleansing regime in Bradford on Avon

The Green Spaces Officer referred to his report as supplied with the agenda briefing the councillors on the town council's strategy to keep Bradford on Avon's streets as clear as possible from detritus, litter, fly tipping and graffiti etc with the help of the town wardens and to some degree CLuB (Clean up Bradford on Avon).

Councillor Spence asked for clarification on the delegation of street cleansing by Wiltshire Council to the town council. The Green Spaces Officer confirmed the arrangement in place does not come with any funding. It was also confirmed urgent jobs would still take priority regardless of location and the clearance of drains was still the responsibility of Wiltshire Council.

18. Agenda item 11 – Westbury Garden Wall (and tree).

A programme of works is underway to 'sure up' and complete the renovation of the wall next to the large plane tree which has been ongoing for some months. The stone wall will not be reinstated entirely as leaving the roots exposed to light will naturally inhibit their growth. So, metal attachments, metal rope, a membrane and a packing of organic material is required instead. A new fence around the tree will secure the site. The process has been lengthy due to multiple considerations and permissions including from the Environment Agency.

19. Agenda item 12 – Residents Panel results: Garden Wildlife Survey results

The survey is still ongoing, and the link is on the town council website. The survey will close at the end of January 2027. Raw data from the Residents Panel has been compiled but the full results will allow for the mapping of green corridors locally and could be incorporated into the Neighbourhood Plan.

20. Agenda item 13 - St Margaret's Hall Sustainability project with Climate Friendly BoA – carbon reduction study.

The Town Clerk prepared a report supplied with the agenda detailing the quotes obtained from contractors prepared to survey St Margaret's Hall and provide solutions to help with its decarbonisation.

Proposed by Alex Kay
Seconded by Kate Bessant

And with **6 in favour and 1 abstention** it was **resolved**: to appoint contractor 3 in the Carbon Reduction Study report.

Bids are being considered by Climate Friendly BoA and the town council together.

21. Agenda item 14 – St Margaret's Hall resilience project: greening an exterior wall

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

Following a suggestion that an additional living green wall could be installed on St Margaret's Hall to provide a cooling effect, the Chair has revised the plan to planting appropriate climbing plants instead. This would be a fraction of the cost of a new living wall. Plants would be planted at the back of the hall and then be trained along the south side wall.

Councillor Blackwell was interested in the sourcing of resilient plants. He was assured the Green Spaces Officer would be involved.

The Green Spaces Officer asked that the recommendation was passed without the time frame of this winter. This was agreed.

Proposed by Alex Kay
Seconded by George Simmonds

And with **all in favour resolved**: to work towards greening some of St Margaret's south facing wall for heat alleviation and biodiversity and explore the most manageable and expedient way forward.

22. Agenda item 15 – Future Fireworks Events

The report compiled by Councillor Bessant was considered and a discussion followed. Councillors recognised the need for an upbeat event at this time of year. A range of alternative autumnal creative community events were considered, which have less negative impact on domestic animals and wildlife and less polluting. It was agreed to ask the community in the residents panel for feedback on alternative events and the fireworks in the context of the climate emergency. As it had been questioned whether this should be discussed in E&GS, it was agreed to refer the matter to Full Council for fuller discussion in the new year, with more information and options.

Councillors did not vote on the report.

23. Date of the next meeting

The next committee meeting is arranged for Tuesday 8 December 2026.

End of the meeting
The meeting finished at 8.37pm

Appendix A: Comments and questions from the public

There was 1 question from members of the public at the meeting. There were 8 members of the public in total.

[Q1] A resident asked whether it is possible to save the St Laurence playing fields from potential development. She and a group of local residents have explored various options to try and protect the space?

The Chair sympathised with the resident's concerns but confirmed that without an actual submitted plan it is hard for the town council to comment.

Councillor Blackwell confirmed that following some previous email exchanges with the resident he is happy to arrange a meeting to discuss concerns next week.