



the NEWS

Bradford on Avon Town Council

Winter 2026



St Margaret's Hall set to reopen soon – and our Tourist Information Centre will be moving in too

Work has been continuing in St Margaret's Hall over the spring – and by the time you read this, the hall should be close to reopening.

The hall has been closed for over a year now, after the entire ground floor was flooded in November 2024.

Since then, we've been working with our insurance company, a loss adjuster, builders, contractors and consultants to repair and reinstate the hall.

A great deal of the building will be as it was before, for example radiators and doors have been replaced on a like for like basis.

However, as part of the reinstatements, we've made some changes to help improve the flood resilience and recoverability of St Margaret's Hall. These include:

- raising electrical sockets and routing electrical wiring down and across to sockets (rather than up)
- and installing vinyl flooring rather than carpets.

We've also updated the toilets and the kitchen – and replaced the boiler and the heating system.

The final works happening will be a new floor in the main hall and the seating system rebuilt and installed.



The hall is also set to be the new home for Bradford on Avon's Tourist Information Centre (TIC). We'll be starting the work moving the TIC into St Margaret's Hall after Easter, but it will remain open in Westbury Garden until the move is finished. We'd like to thank everyone for their patience and understanding while the hall has been closed. The complexity of the project means that everything has taken longer than we expected – but we can't wait to welcome everyone back again soon.

Talk of the town: news in brief

• We are working with Wessex Water to become a Watermark Town, with councillors unanimously backing the application at the Environment & Green Spaces Committee on 27 January. If approved, we will receive grant funding to support community projects that improve water use, protect

the environment and build on initiatives like the Healthy Rivers Project.

• In March we worked in Becky Addy Wood clearing fallen trees and vegetation like brambles from the footpath – work that makes the woodland easier for people to enjoy. This work follows the Woodland

Management Plan we adopted in September 2025.

• When road closures or roadworks are announced, Wiltshire Council usually sends us the details. We do our best to publish this information on our website as soon as it is received so residents can plan their journeys in advance.

Sometimes these notices are issued several weeks ahead of the closure.

• We're currently finalising the meetings calendar for our 2026/27 administrative year. We'll publish the calendar as soon as it's approved. You can also find meeting agendas and reports on our website before meetings.

Keep up to date on what we're doing at bradfordonavontowncouncil.gov.uk

Events round up



Let the music play

The Bradford on Avon Live Music Festival returns from 29 to 31 May, bringing three days of outstanding live music to venues across the town.

We're delighted to announce that Bruce Springsteen tribute act Bruce Juice will headline Westbury Garden on Saturday. On Sunday, the UK's number one Britpop tribute band, The Brit Pop Boys, will close the festival.

Save the dates in your diary and keep an eye on our website for more news on bands and venues.

It's time to Join In!

BOA Join In! returns this June to celebrate the wide range of groups, charities, clubs and social activities available to the community. Join us on Saturday 6 June, from 11am to 3pm, at Westbury Garden and St Margaret's Hall.

The event is an opportunity for not for profit groups across the town to showcase themselves to local residents of all ages.

Whether you're looking for a new club to join, volunteering opportunities or just a way to meet new people, there's sure to be something for everyone.

Over 30 groups and organisations are currently signed up and will be offering information, and in some cases, a little taster of what they do.

If your organisation hasn't signed up yet, there's still time if you'd like to take part. Please contact George Tomlinson for more information gtomlinson@bradfordonavontowncouncil.gov.uk

Latest traffic scheme update & FAQs

Work continues to improve the traffic situation and pedestrian safety in the town, as we work collaboratively with Wiltshire Council. Wiltshire Council are the highways authority and have responsibility for the roads in the town. Since 2021, we have sought broad agreement among residents on a way forward on traffic to present to Wiltshire Council.

This came to fruition in late 2024 as we outlined our vision for improving pedestrian safety in the town. Wiltshire Council has since allocated the project time and budget, and continues to meet regularly with us to update on progress. Wiltshire Council has a red line that to allow any one-way traffic downhill on Silver Street, buses must be able to continue uphill to keep the current service level.

As such, Wiltshire Council is currently undertaking a feasibility study on bus contraflow systems which would allow for pavement widening without affecting the bus route. This is being funded by Wiltshire Council and results are expected this summer.

In the meantime, we continue to look at ways to improve pedestrian safety in the town.

There are plans to look at possible improvements to Market Street this summer through the Local Highways & Footpath Improvement Group (LHFIG).

These ideas will be reviewed, then costed and budgeted for future delivery - mitigation measures for any affected areas will also be looked at to be implemented at the same time.

Chair of the Sustainable Travel committee, Councillor Sam Blackwell, said: "I'm pleased that we are further along in improving our traffic situation than we have been in decades.

"I am as frustrated as any resident about

the time these things take, and as a town council we have constantly conveyed the urgency to Wiltshire Council. We will keep reporting back as we make progress." For the latest updates on the traffic scheme, please visit our website.

Traffic FAQs

What progress has been made since 2021?

The Future of Transport survey took place in 2021 and had thousands of responses from across the town. This formed the basis for further modelling and public consultation. In September 2024, we passed a unanimous resolution outlining the aims for a new traffic system for the town.

Why can't we just go back to the one-way system?

During COVID there was a temporary one-way system in the town. A return to a one-way system has not been ruled out, and our resolution of 2024 - reiterated in summer 2025 by the new town council - asked for one-way downhill on Silver Street and one-way (as per the COVID scheme) or priority uphill working on Market Street. However, for one-way on Silver Street to be introduced, Wiltshire Council is insisting the bus service must continue to operate uphill on Silver Street. This is why a contraflow system for the bus is being modelled first. Any new system needs to be carefully implemented. Traffic levels during the pandemic were a lot lower and Wiltshire Council modelling showed that the system under projected traffic levels would likely cause significant peaks in evening traffic and longer journey times.

Westbury Garden wall repairs

The first stages of the work to repair Westbury Garden wall are well underway.

We have consent from the Environment Agency to start the work, and we're happy to say that a temporary prop has been installed to hold a slab of the wall in place (pictured).

Contractors will work this summer to remove the top of the wall the tree is pushing against and to stabilise the wall.

Work on the tree is complete including pruning and the installation of new cable braces.

We did this because the old cables have

supported the tree for decades and it has grown relying on those braces.

We added modern braces that remain loose but will hold the branches if any break.



Traffic FAQs continued...

Who is funding all of this?

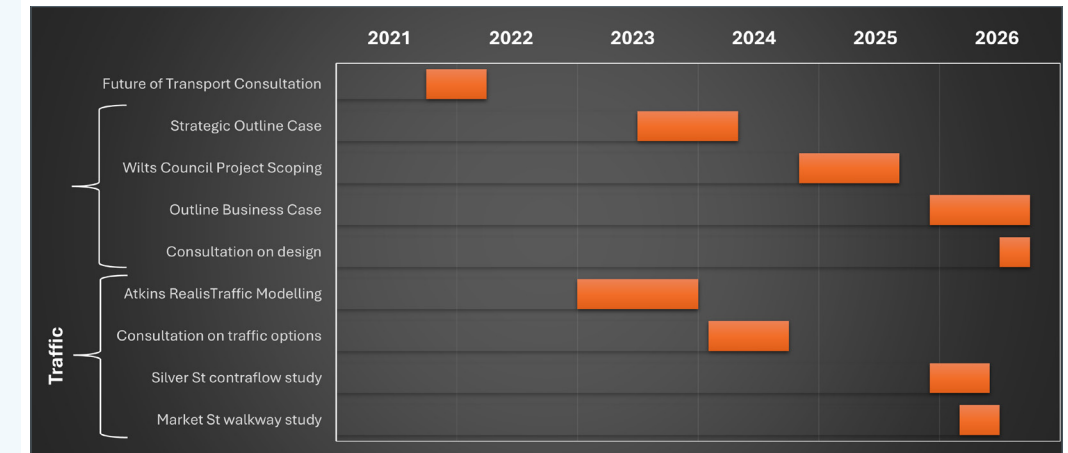
Wiltshire Council is funding the entire current bus feasibility study. And any future traffic scheme would likely be funded by Wiltshire Council. We could part-fund some small improvements through the LHFIG process.

How are the councils working together?

We meet regularly with Wiltshire Council to monitor progress and ensure all projects align with our aims. We give residents updates at each meeting of our Sustainable Travel committee.

What is the timeline?

The chart on this page shows the progress so far and expected future dates. We will hear back



from Wiltshire Council on the bus contraflow feasibility study this summer.

Free Park Tennis is a smash hit

Culver Close saw its first Free Park Tennis session on Sunday 1 March - and it was a smash hit.

The free, hour-long session booked up quickly and was enjoyed by children and adults who came along to hone their skills or try out tennis for the first time.

During the session, volunteer Colin Payton guided participants through fun drills and practical skills.

Weather-permitting, there'll be an hour of Free Park Tennis on the first Sunday of every month throughout spring and summer. Keep an eye on our website for more updates.

Free Park Tennis 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 in the park.

We'd also welcome more volunteers to help run the sessions. You don't need to have any previous coaching experience - just energy, enthusiasm and a love of community sport!



New vehicle for the Town Warden team



The new Town Warden vehicle out and about

We're pleased to invest in a new Euro 6 truck for the Town Wardens. It will help us move materials between our sites, work safely off road, and tow trailers and equipment such as our digger.

Much of the Town Wardens' work is seasonal. We have started renovating Millie's Garden in the centre of town, which we will plant up this spring.

Groups begin work shaping next Neighbourhood Plan

So far, the five topic groups supporting the Neighbourhood Plan review have been thinking about the key aims and aspirations to include in the new Neighbourhood Plan. This work has involved thinking about the challenges and opportunities related to the different topics being considered. Working with Place Studio, these aims and aspirations will turn into the policies that will make up the new plan.

Alongside this - beginning at a workshop this month - the topic groups started looking at the sites

assessment report that we've received from a consultant called AECOM.

One of the things we're expecting to do in the new Neighbourhood Plan is to allocate the site or sites that would be most suitable (or more suitable) for the future development of the town.

AECOM's team has already completed an independent assessment of a number of sites put forward for possible development in the future - and now the topic groups will be considering these sites and AECOM's report.



Neighbourhood Plan topic group workshop in March

Spotted a problem in the town? Give us a call on 01225 864240

Get in touch with us at office@bradfordonavontowncouncil.gov.uk

Journey to become Town of Culture

Recently, we asked for your thoughts about putting the town forward for the Town of Culture 2028 competition. Since then we've been considering the responses and have submitted our expression of interest!

Based on the survey nearly 90% told us they supported the BOA bid.

Like the City of Culture programme, this scheme celebrates the cultural impact of towns across the country, and how they contribute to our national story. One winner will receive £3m to

deliver a summer 2028 programme, while two runners-up will be awarded £250,000 each.



If we're one of the shortlisted towns we'll then receive £60,000 to develop a full bid by autumn. And we can look at how the funding would make a positive impact to BOA based on what you've told us.

We're grateful to Dr Brian Mathew MP for supporting the town's bid, but we know there will be strong competition. We'll keep you updated on the application as it progresses.

Town council 2026/2027 budget

The town council set its budget for 2026/27 at £1,673,500 at Full Council on 6 January.

This budget will allow us to continue supporting and developing the community by focusing on the following priorities:

- a Thriving Town – successful economically, socially and environmentally
- a Flourishing Community – where individuals thrive best
- a Greener Place – working towards carbon neutrality and improved biodiversity
- an Engaged & Efficient town council – listening and engaging because that is how the best decisions can be made.

These aims, set out in our Business Plan 2025 to 2029, includes services and assets transferred from Wiltshire Council.

We've planned for the budget to cover rising costs, including increases in business rates (17%), insurance (20%), utilities (29%) and waste disposal from litter bins (up nearly 50% since 2024).

Alongside increased costs, we've

planned to rebuild our general reserves and invest in a new public toilet and amenity store at Victory Field.

While we charge for some services, like venue hire, to reduce reliance on Council Tax (the precept), our income has been affected by St Margaret's Hall being out of action. For 2026/27, we need £1,353,026 from the precept to produce a balanced budget.

This results in an average Band D Council Tax charge of £324.54 per year – which is up an extra 51p per week or £26.80 per year. This means a Band D household pays £6.22 per week to support the services we deliver for Bradford on Avon.

Our services and assets include managing green spaces, play areas, managing and collecting litter bins, caring for street furniture and town council buildings, as well as running the youth service and Tourist Information Centre.

We also care for woodlands, the green wall, and public water fountains, while organising or supporting community events such as the Duck Race, Pancake Race, BOA Fireworks Display, and the Live Music Festival.



(l-r) Winners Lianne and Harry with their goodie bags

Congratulations to Lianne Barnard (Bowline Communications) and Harry Webb (Three Horseshoes), winners of this year's Pancake Race! Well done to Westview and Shambles nurseries for being part of the first-ever children's race. Lastly, thanks to Bonne Maman for supporting this year's race!

New bridge case in progress

We're delighted to announce that Wiltshire Council has agreed to fund an outline business case for a new pedestrian bridge.

This work will allow for a more in-depth study on the project and to look in more detail at the type of bridge which would be deliverable and at exactly what location and cost. The business case is expected to be completed this autumn.

This then allows Wiltshire Council and the town council to apply for funding following further public consultation.

Support for the local fire station

At the Full Council meeting in March, councillors agreed to oppose the proposed closure of the fire station in the town by Dorset & Wiltshire Fire and Rescue.

We hope to work with the fire authority, firefighters and other stakeholders to try to find a solution that avoids closure.

Following the decision we also wrote an open letter to the fire authority which is available for you to read on our website.

We will also write an open letter to Dorset & Wiltshire Fire and Rescue setting out our objections.

The public consultation is open until Friday 15 May, so please make sure your views are heard via the fire services website.



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