



Okehampton Town Council



Okehampton Town Council
Town Hall
Fore Street
Okehampton EX20 1AA

01837 53179
townclerk@okehampton.gov.uk
www.okehampton.gov.uk

NEWSLETTER – September 2021

Sign up to receive the newsletters electronically by visiting the Council's [website](http://www.okehampton.gov.uk).

Councillor Julie Yelland

“I was co-opted to Okehampton Town Council in January 2014 after a vacancy had arisen due to someone resigning their seat. I successfully stood for election in 2015 and since then have served as Chairman of the Policy & Resources Committee followed by two years as the Town Mayor.

So, a bit about me. I am married with two grown up children. I have lived in Okehampton since I got married to a local builder in 1981 and, prior to that, was brought up on a farm near Belstone so am very local. I was horse mad and wanted to work with horses when I left school but it wasn't to be, so I worked for a firm of local solicitors until my eldest child was born. I then took part time casual work as and when I could fit it in around school hours (there was no childcare available back then!)



More recently, I spent several years working and volunteering for Citizens Advice and I am involved with Okehampton Street Pastors – a charity that cares, helps and listens to people who are out late at night in the town. As the retiring Mayor, I am privileged to be a Trustee of Okehampton United Charities where grants are distributed to many of our wonderful local voluntary organizations who provide such vital services to those of us who live within Okehampton and the Hamlets.

So, what is the best part of being a local Councillor? For me, I find it very interesting and informative as I get to meet lots of people from different walks of life and listen to very diverse opinions on all sorts of subjects. Would I recommend it? Yes I would, though you do need to be prepared to put the time commitment in; maintain an open mind and respect the views of others to be effective. What do I do to relax? Well, with being both a Town Councillor and a West Devon Borough Councillor it is pretty busy, but when I do get some time off I enjoy researching my family tree. We started keeping bees recently but my husband does all the work with them because bee stings and I just don't get along! I am really looking forward to tasting some honey that has been made from pollen collected in our garden later in the year.”

Okehampton Show

The Town Mayor, Cllr Bob Tolley and the Mayoress, Mrs Tolley, represented the Town Council at Okehampton Show having been invited to lunch with the President.



Annual Town Council Civic Service Sunday 19th September 2021

The Service is planned to go ahead in Fairplace Church at 10.30am.

Unfortunately, this year due to the pandemic there will not be a Parade. Invitations have been mainly restricted to representatives of Okehampton organisations and groups, as well as the Church congregation.

Do you want to know what the Council does or have a question to ask?

Councillor Surgery – 16th September and 21st October in the Town Hall (10am-12noon)

Fitbit found in Simmons Park

On around 15th August. Please contact the office if you think it is yours.

Mayor's Coffee Morning

The Mayor's Coffee Morning in aid of Dream-A-Way took place on 31st July. This also marked the first Coffee Morning in the Charter Hall since the start of the pandemic.



A big thank you to all those who supported the event. £283.45 was raised and will be going to Dream-A-Way at the end of the Mayoral year.

CCTV is Operational

The first phase of a CCTV system for the town centre and Simmons Park is operational. There are cameras covering areas of the town centre and Simmons Park. Mobile cameras will be moved as needed to other locations including the Skatepark and BMX Track, the seating area behind Lidl and areas of Simmons Park. More information is available from the Council [website](#) or the Town Hall.



Cllr Leech says "... I would never have thought that when I got involved with putting together options for a CCTV system for Okehampton, that it would take over 12 years before it would actually come to fruition. Over these years, there have been three chances to get the system going, but now that it is finally going ahead, I hope that the wait has been worthwhile. We should now be able to have some control of the anti-social behaviour and other issues that we have encountered over the years, and hope that it will provide some comfort for the people who have felt uncomfortable when out and about in the Town and Park, especially at night."

Hanging Basket Competition Winners

Cllr Bob Tolley, Town Mayor: "In July I had the pleasure, together with the West Devon Mayor Caroline Mott in touring the town to judge the Town Council's hanging basket competition. We did enjoy our walk, particularly meeting with those businesses who entered and I would thank them all for taking part. All the entries were of a brilliant standard and helped to brighten up the town centre. Although the entries were limited, the quality was high and judging very difficult. We eventually chose our top three.

1st Albery & Redstone Independent Funeral Directors, 2nd Trudy's Hairdressers, 3rd Little Gift Company

I'm delighted business's ROSE to the challenge and I'm sure THISTLE be something we'll do again in the FUCHIA. (Sorry)."



Stags Estate Agents, Donalds and The Hair Firm were highly commended.

Okehampton Town Council's Parks Team, who provide and look after the Town Hall hanging baskets, were unable to enter but weren't forgotten by the judges who awarded them with a highly commended certificate.



Council Cemetery Memorial Inspection

Okehampton Town Council staff undertook a routine inspection of memorials in its Cemetery during August. As the landowner the Council is obliged to undertake this work to ensure that the Cemetery is a safe place for the public to visit and staff to work.

A single memorial was found to be unsafe and has been temporarily made safe whilst attempts are made to contact relatives. Are you able to help with this? We are seeking to contact relatives of Christine McKenna. For further information please contact the office.

Good Luck and Welcome

In 2019 the Council embarked on an ongoing initiative to invest in a person's education and career development.

This has proven successful with the first apprentice, George, having successfully completed his course. The Council congratulates and wishes him the very best for the future as he heads off to pastures new to further his career.

Jacob, who is joining James and Neil in the Parks Team and commencing his horticultural apprenticeship in September, is welcomed.

Clapps Wood - Ash Tree Dieback

Unfortunately, this area of woodland has been hit by ash-tree dieback with all the ash trees therein, totalling approximately 60% of its trees, being infected. It is with sadness that the Council, on recommendation of the specialist who carried out a survey earlier in the year, have agreed to the felling of the diseased trees, the cost being met from reserves. The footpath through the woodland will be closed for the duration of the work which is planned to start on 9th November.

Remaining trees, which will suddenly find themselves without the shelter they previously had, will be regularly checked for stability, some may need to be pruned or felled for safety purposes. It is the intention of the Council to replant the woodland and a scheme is being drawn up.

Welcome Back Fund

Okehampton Town Council has been awarded £10,000 from the Welcome Back Fund by WDBC which has to be spent by 31st March 2022. The funding is provided from the European Regional Development Fund to councils across England to support the safe reopening of high streets and neighbourhood shopping areas. It was originally branded 'Reopening of High Streets Safely Fund'.

Criteria for the spending of the funding is restricted and has been agreed with WDBC, the following taking priority:

- ✚ Refurbishment of Town Council benches, and others for public use in the town centre whose owners give permission
- ✚ Planting of insect friendly shrubs
- ✚ Repainting of Simmons Park pedestrian entrance way arches and gates



Do you own a publicly used bench in the town centre that you would like refurbished, or know who does?

Have you spotted the freshly painted 'pig' bike racks or flags and signs on the West Street bridge that have been paid for from this funding?

Painting of the bridge railings in West Street and East Street has been carried out by the Okement Rivers Improvement Group.



Zip Wire Replacement

Replacement of the much-loved zip wire in Simmons Park has been approved by the Council, the cost being in excess of £12,000. An installation date is awaited.

Car Park Closure

Simmons Park car park will be closed from 10th to 18th October for the Carnival fair.

Council Grants

The Council has a budget of £37,358 this year for the award of grants supporting community organisations and groups to the benefit of the residents of Okehampton.

Contact the office for details of how to apply, or find them on the [website](#):

Awarded this financial year: £12,293.85

July & August grants awarded:

- Okey Music Day - £500
- Beating the Bounds – up to £500 towards shuttlebus transport from the town
- Okehampton Church Clock - £5,000 towards replacement clock faces
- Okehampton Duke of Edinburgh - £500 to assist with insurance costs

Coming up... for details see the [website](#)

7 th September	Friendly Circle (Charter Hall)
11 th September	Community Transport Coffee Morning (Charter Hall)
16 th September	Councillor Surgery, 10am to 12noon (Town Hall)
19 th September	Okehampton Town Council Civic Service (Fairplace Church)
25 th September	Big Green Day Coffee Morning (Charter Hall)
2 nd -3 rd October	OkeRail 150 th Anniversary of opening of the railway
5 th October	Friendly Circle (Charter Hall)
9 th October	Cancer Research Coffee Morning (Charter Hall)
14 th October	NHS Blood Donation Session (Charter Hall)
13-16 th October	Rowlands Fair (Simmons Park)
16 th October	Okehampton Carnival
21 st October	Councillor Surgery, 10am to 12noon (Town Hall)
22 nd -24 th October	Wren Music – Folk Festival (Charter Hall)
22 nd -24 th October	Gala weekend (Simmons Park, College Grounds) in aid of Christmas Lights, Craft and Community Wellbeing
28 th October	NHS Blood Donation Session (Charter Hall)
30 th October	Hospicecare Coffee Morning (Charter Hall)
1 st -5 th November	Get Changed Theatre Company (Charter Hall)
6 th November	St Boniface Church Fair (Charter Hall)



Need a venue?

The Committee Room, Council Chamber, and Charter Hall are available to hire for events or meetings.

Microphone conference system available to enable social distancing.

Charter Hall is available on 18th September for a Coffee Morning

Town Council Meeting Dates

Details are available on the [website](#) and the Victorian Arcade noticeboard.

September

6 th	Full Planning Committee
13 th	Policy & Resources Committee followed by the Planning Committee (applications only)
27 th	Full Council

October

11 th	Policy & Resources Committee followed by the Planning Committee (applications only)
18 th	Parks Committee
25 th	Full Council

Contact Us – 01837 53179

www.okehampton.gov.uk

Emma James, Town Clerk

townclerk@okehampton.gov.uk

Caroline Ellis, Assistant Town Clerk (Accounts)

accounts@okehampton.gov.uk

Abi Horn, Admin Officer & Mayor's Assistant (Bookings)

admin@okehampton.gov.uk

James McGahey, Park-Keeper

parks@okehampton.gov.uk

Your Councillors

Cllr Bob Tolley (Town Mayor)

Cllr Deborah Sanger (Deputy Mayor)

Cllr Terry Abbots

Cllr Jan Goffey

Cllr Dr Michael Ireland

Cllr Tony Leech

Cllr Brendan Matravers

Cllr Ann Wood

Cllr Greta Button

Cllr Carole Holt

Cllr Paul Jessop

Cllr Christine Marsh

Cllr Debra Travers

Cllr Julie Yelland

Details of how to contact individual Councillors can be obtained from the Office or the [website](#).