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[www.okehampton.gov.uk](http://www.okehampton.gov.uk)



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Okehampton Town Council

## NEWSLETTER - June 2024

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### Mayor's Award Recipients, Mayor Choosing and Annual Council Meeting



An award ceremony was held on 8<sup>th</sup> May followed by the Annual meeting of the Council which incorporated the appointment of the Mayor, Cllr Allenton Fisher MBE, and Deputy Mayor, Councillor Richard Colman (right), for the 2024/25 council year. (Photos credited to Mike McNally)



Committee Chairmen and Vice-Chairmen were appointed at this meeting by the members of the respective committees: Parks - Cllr Tolley, Planning – Cllr Leech, Policy & Resources – Cllr Yelland and Property – Cllr Colman.

Award recipients were:

Ian Donovan in recognition of almost half a century of dedicated service to the community working for the Fire Service and contribution to charity organising and taking part in many fundraising events and challenges.

David McNeill and Dawn Bell in recognition of your campaigning efforts striving to achieve the best outcome for the town, its residents and economic community.

Karen Percival in recognition of your many years working for Okehampton United Charities and with numerous other groups and charities within the town.

Ryan Arthurs, Immersion in recognition of the provision of opportunities and a safe space for all ages of the community through free social clubs, virtual reality educational courses and disability sessions

Tony Kent for your contribution to support the community, especially to those who rely on you on a Saturday night/early Sunday morning each weekend.

Cdt Radoslaw Polak in recognition of your service to Okehampton Town Council in the role of Mayor's Cadet for 2023/2024



During the meeting a representative from Hospiscare gave an interesting talk about the work of the Charity and was presented with a cheque for £1,800, this being the sum raised by the Mayor, during 2023/24.

raised by the Mayor, during 2023/24.

Okehampton Hamlets Parish Council & Okehampton Town Council commemorates

# 80TH ANNIVERSARY OF D DAY

6TH JUNE

## OKEHAMPTON SHOW FIELD

Made possible with a grant from OUC

STARTING AT 5:45PM

The Hummingbirds

Get Changed Theatre Company

Community Choir

Fly Past by Lockheed MC-130 Hercules  
Combat Tallon II United States SOC  
Subject to operational requirements

Military Vehicles

Excelsior Silver Band Last Post  
Beacon Lighting **9:15PM**

Eddie Kingdom Jazz Collective

Hog Roast  
Taw River IceCream

Lions Food Van  
Syrian Kitchen  
Pies and Pasties

**GATES OPEN AT 5PM**  
**PARKING AVAILABLE**

London Inn Bar

There will be a free shuttlebus to/from this event between the hours of 5.30pm and 10pm from West Bridge.

## Anderton & Rowland Fair and Simmons

### Park carpark closure

In June we will be hosting a Spring Fair once again in Simmons Park which will be open from Thursday 6<sup>th</sup> through until Sunday 9<sup>th</sup> June.

In order to facilitate their visit, the carpark will be closed from 0800 Sunday 2<sup>nd</sup> June until 8am on Tuesday 11<sup>th</sup> June.



## Okehampton Youth Council

The Town Council welcomes and congratulates their first Youth Councillors, Annabell, Ava, Darcy, Ellie, Kathryn, Lily, Meda and Niamh.



Ava says 'I attended my first Okehampton Youth Council (OYC) session on Wednesday 22<sup>nd</sup> May. I am pleased to be a part of OYC and enjoyed meeting the other Youth Councillors. I am looking forward to working with the Council to support community events such as Okehampton Show, and making a difference to the town I live in. Ava Walker (11).'

For more information contact the Town Clerk on 01837 53179 or [townclerk@okehampton.gov.uk](mailto:townclerk@okehampton.gov.uk).

## Caretaker Vacancy (Fixed Term)

Okehampton Town Council is seeking to employ an assistant caretaker for 14 hours p/week on a fixed contract to cover sickness absence.

Flexibility, some evening and weekend working is required.

Further information can be obtained from [www.okehampton.gov.uk](http://www.okehampton.gov.uk), emailing [townclerk@okehampton.gov.uk](mailto:townclerk@okehampton.gov.uk) or calling 01837 53179

Closing date 12noon 7<sup>th</sup> June 2024

## Big Green Week

The Council's Parks Team are inviting members of the public to take part in free events they are hosting as part of Big Green Week. No need to book, just turn up:

**Simmons Park Volunteer Session** - Wednesday 12<sup>th</sup> June, 11am-12.30pm

Meeting point - Simmons Park main pedestrian gate entrance

Please wear gardening attire and bring gardening gloves and a trowel.

**Habitat Creation and Management Park Tour** with the Park-Keeper, James

Thursday 13<sup>th</sup> June, 11am-12.30pm

Meeting point - Simmons Park main pedestrian gate entrance

Please wear clothes and footwear suitable for the weather conditions

## Hedgehog Rehabilitation and Release in Simmons Park

In early May the Council was delighted that Greatfield Hedgehog Rescue chose Simmons Park for the release of two hedgehogs back into the wild after rehabilitation.

*'Thanks to James McGahey (Park Keeper and Hedgehog Champion) Simmons Park is not only a beautiful recreational space but also a wildlife haven. James has allowed areas to rewild alongside the formal planting areas and in doing so has created a wildlife habitat attracting insect life, the hugely important pollinators and of course Britain's favourite mammal - the hedgehog 🦔!*

*With James's help I was absolutely delighted to release 2 large males this evening into the park. Roger who has recovered from a head injury after being treated at North Park Vets North Tawton, has spent several weeks at the rescue. He was also suffering from lung worm - a parasite that causes death if not dealt with. The second hedgehog - Danny, the victim of a Labrador dog attack, suffered puncture wound injuries and had areas of skin ripped off so again had been at the rescue for many weeks receiving necessary painkillers, antibiotics and of course his wounds were treated and cared for several times a day.*

*James was well prepared for the newcomers. Feeding stations for support feeding and shallow bowls of water were placed near each hedgehog house.*

*Thank you, James, for all that you are doing for wildlife - especially hedgehogs 🦔🦔🦔🦔.'* Greatfield Hedgehog Rescue



Greatfield Hedgehog Rescue are local to Okehampton.

They can be found on Facebook or contacted on 07917 054625.

**Hedgehog highways are available to purchase from the Town Hall at the cost price of £3 are.** These can be fixed to fences and indicate the size hole that needs to be provided for a hedgehog to safely fit through to access other gardens and green spaces.



## Councillor Co-option

Following consideration of applications received, Frankee Hart was co-opted as a Councillor to the North Ward at a meeting of the council on 20<sup>th</sup> May. Cllr Hart, who at 19 years of age is believed to be the youngest ever Town Councillor, fills the vacancy left by Mike Harding who resigned earlier in the year due to work commitments. She will initially sit on the Parks and Policy & Resources Committees where there were vacancies.

Councillors are elected every four years during the local council elections. The last local council elections in this area were held in 2023, the next will be in 2027. Casual vacancies can arise during the four-year period should a councillor resign or fail to meet the criteria for remaining a councillor. When this occurs, the council can co-opt to fill the vacancy once it has been confirmed by WDBC that a by-election is not required to be held. There are currently 14 councillor seats at Okehampton Town Council, this number will increase to 15 at the elections in 2027.

The criteria for who can, and can't, be elected or co-opted, is set out in statutory legislation, including the Local Government Act 1972. More information about this can be found on the [electoral commission website](#). Town and parish councils have no control over this and have to abide by legislation.

Once elected or co-opted Councillors cannot be removed from the council by anyone, including the council itself. Councillors should abide by the relevant council's Code of Conduct, Okehampton Town Councils can be found on the [website](#), and any complaints about councillors can only be dealt with by the Principal Authority's Monitoring Officer. In this area, that is West Devon Borough Council, the details of how to make complaint about a councillor can be found on their [website](#).

## Your Councillors and contacting them

There are a number of ways you can talk to one or more of your councillors:

- ❖ By email or phone, or popping into the Town Hall where a message can be passed on for you
- ❖ At the monthly councillor surgery in the Town Hall – other surgeries are sometimes held on different days and times
- ❖ Attending a meeting of the council, all of which are open to the public

Contact details of **your** Town Councillors can be found on the council's [website](#) and are available from the Town Hall.

## Okehampton Railway

Network Rail have agreed to come to Okehampton on Thursday 20<sup>th</sup> June at 10am to give a presentation about railway services in the town, including provision of the new station. This is in lieu of the Annual Town Assembly meeting that they were unable to attend in April.

This presentation is open to the public and will be held in the Council Chamber which is located in the Town Hall. Fire regulations limit the maximum number of persons permitted in the room to 60, so **if you would like to attend it is recommended that you book a seat** by contacting the office on 01837 53179 or emailing [admin@okehampton.gov.uk](mailto:admin@okehampton.gov.uk).

## Living Roofs

They are not easy to spot (or photograph from the ground!), but the roofs of the bus shelters that were replaced last year now have living roofs.

These are the bus shelters at West Bridge, at the bottom of Upcott Hill just off the roundabout by Co-op and Waitrose, and the Exeter Road/Limehayes Road junction.



## Okehampton Community Emergency plan

The Council has developed a Community Emergency Plan. The aim of the plan is to increase community resilience through the development of a co-ordinated approach to large scale major incidents, for example closure of the A30 due to heavy snowfall. Householder self-help information and useful tips are included. A copy of the plan is available from the [website](#) or the Town Hall.

## Okehampton Cemetery (newest cemetery adjacent to All Saints Church carpark)

Annual health and safety inspection of the memorial stones is due to take place during the week commencing 1<sup>st</sup> July 2024. Should any defects be found, we will endeavour to inform the families as soon as possible thereafter. If you have any concerns or questions about this, please don't hesitate to contact the office.

The scattering lawn at the lower end of the cemetery is taking shape and will soon be available for use. Please contact the office or see the website for further information.

## Simmons Park Book Swap

The book swap continues to be an extremely popular addition to Simmons Park. It is currently low on books so if anyone has any they no longer want, please do pop them in for others to enjoy. When taking one please remember that it only works well if it is kept stocked so, please consider returning any books you have borrowed when you have finished reading it.



## Coming up in June

- Simmons Park Volunteer Group – every Wednesday from 11am to 12.30pm
- 6<sup>th</sup> 80<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of D-Day (Show Ground)
- 6<sup>th</sup>-9<sup>th</sup> Anderton and Rowland Fair (Simmons Park)
- 16<sup>th</sup> Okehampton Primary School PTFA Circus (Simmons Park 11am-4pm)
- 20<sup>th</sup> Network Rail Presentation (10am, Town Hall)

## Town Council Meeting Dates - June

- 3<sup>rd</sup> Planning and Property Committees
- 10<sup>th</sup> Policy & Resources Committee
- 17<sup>th</sup> Planning Committee
- 24<sup>th</sup> Full Council

Meeting dates for 2023/24 and 2024/25 can be found on the [website](#).

Some Planning Committee Meetings have been scheduled; others will be convened as needed. Council meetings normally start at 7pm in the Council Chamber, Town Hall, Fore Street. Occasionally meetings are subject to change, details can be found on the [website](#) or noticeboard in the Victorian Arcade.

**HAPPY'S CIRCUS**  
Even the kids will love it!

A fun packed comedy show for all the family supported by amazing International Circus Artists  
[www.happyscircus.co.uk](http://www.happyscircus.co.uk)

Okehampton Primary School PTFA at Simmons Park, Okehampton  
**CIRCUS FUN DAY**  
Sunday 16th June 2024 - 11am-4pm - Circus at 2.00pm  
Tickets available from Red Lion Bazaar and PTFA members  
[okehamptonprimarypta@yahoo.com](mailto:okehamptonprimarypta@yahoo.com)

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## Contact Us – 01837 53179

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Caroline Ellis, Assistant Town Clerk (Accounts)  
[accounts@okehampton.gov.uk](mailto:accounts@okehampton.gov.uk)

Abi Horn, Admin Officer and Mayor's Assistant  
(Bookings and Invitations for the Mayor)  
[admin@okehampton.gov.uk](mailto:admin@okehampton.gov.uk)

James McGahey, Park-Keeper  
[parks@okehampton.gov.uk](mailto:parks@okehampton.gov.uk)

## Your Councillors

Cllr Allenton Fisher (Town Mayor)  
Cllr Richard Colman (Deputy Mayor)

Cllr Laura Bird	Cllr Christine Marsh
Cllr Terry Cummings	Cllr Mark Richards
Cllr Frankee Hart	Cllr Lynne Rogers
Cllr Carole Holt	Cllr Bob Tolley
Cllr Dr Michael Ireland	Cllr Simon Weekes
Cllr Tony Leech	Cllr Julie Yelland