



Okehampton Town Council



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NEWSLETTER – June 2025

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2025/26 Town Mayor, Councillor Richard Colman – “The run up to being chosen as Mayor goes by before you can blink. So much so that the reality of it doesn't sink in until after the ceremony. It's a real whirlwind much like your wedding day. Over before it's begun.

We tried a new format this year and as a council we have yet to discuss the pros and cons. In some ways it was a little less formal than previous years. Having our tea and cake first and finishing with the actual ceremony. Using the Charter Hall has allowed us to host many more guests and allow more public participation.



I am very pleased to have been selected to represent Okehampton Town. To become Mayor is a truly humbling honour. I am very much looking forward to the work ahead. I hope the people of Okehampton are aware that both myself and the council as a whole are here for them.

Cllr Fisher has done a remarkable job as Mayor over the past two years and I will endeavour to do my very best for the town and the people.”

Photograph to the right is of the Mayor, Cllr Colman and Deputy Mayor Cllr Bird.

Deputy Mayor – Councillor Laura Bird “When I decided to become a town councillor I had lived within the local area of Okehampton for 27 years having grown up in Scotland and spent 6 years in Liverpool prior to moving to the South West of England.

My primary reason for becoming a Town Councillor was my decision to become Self Employed and therefore allowing me the time to serve the local community. Since joining the Town Council in April 2023 I have enjoyed learning about the structural operations of the town and being part of the decision making that goes on behind the scenes which enables the residents, businesses and the visitors to the town to enjoy the services and beauty Okehampton offers.

As I continue to serve on the council this year as Deputy Mayor I hope to continue to represent values of: offering kindness to others; representation to all; accessibility of services; and promoting an environment which promotes wellbeing and health.”

Outgoing Mayor – Councillor Allenton Fisher “I have considered it a great honour and a genuine pleasure to have been your Mayor for the past two years.

As our town expands those just arriving will be spoilt for choice of clubs, societies, sports teams and young person's groups that are available in our wonderful town. With our new second station due for completion next year, our wonderful Simmons Park, a great museum wonderful sporting facilities and Dartmoor only minutes away we are all truly blessed to live in such a lovely area.

Thank you for allowing me to represent you both in and around the town and all over Devon. I have thoroughly enjoyed telling everyone in our county what a wonderful town we have, and I will continue to sell Okehampton to anybody who will listen.”



2024/25 Mayoral Award Recipients

Immediately prior to the Annual Council Meeting on 14th May, the outgoing Mayor, Cllr Fisher presented Mayoral Awards, including a young person nominated by the Youth Council and RAF Air Cadet Corporal Alex Ford with a certificate of appreciation for service as Mayor's Cadet. Award recipients were:

- ❖ Jacob, nominated by Okehampton Youth Council in recognition of his fundraising activities including Cake sales and doing 100 skips a day throughout October which raised over £1,000 towards the Turkish earthquake appeal, Ukrainian Refugees, the Devon Air Ambulance and in aid of Breast Cancer.
- ❖ Alan in recognition of the contribution he has made to Okehampton, especially in the continued running Okehampton PLAIT group.
- ❖ Reg in recognition of his contribution and commitment to Okehampton Excelsior Silver Band for over 50 years, including as Musical Director and teaching numerous other players.

Cllr Fisher also presented Hospiscare with a cheque for £3,821, the amount having been raised from his fundraising events throughout the year.



80th Anniversary of VE Day Thank you to everyone who helped with the event organisation, to those who took part and who came along. Of course, the biggest thanks goes to the weather which remained dry and sunny.



A few photographs of the day with thanks from Kemp Digital Photography.



Council Committees - At the Annual Meeting of the Town Council on 14th May the Committee Chairmen and Vice-Chairmen for 2025/26 were appointed as follows:

Committee	Chairman	Vice-Chairman	The Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Personnel Sub-Committee, which reports to the Policy & Resources Committee, will be appointed at the next meeting of the Sub-Committee.
Parks	Cllr Tolley	Cllr Marsh	
Planning	Cllr Leech	Cllr Ireland	
Policy & Resources	Cllr Yelland	Cllr Tolley	
Property	Cllr Bird	Cllr Cummings	

Full details of the Council's Committees and their appointed councillors can be found on the website or obtained from the office.

Okehampton Youth Council

Youth Councillors have been preparing questions for the CEO of the Dartmoor Multi-Academy Trust who has agreed to meet them in June.

[A page on the Council's website](#), which has seen gradual improvement over the last few months, has been provided for the Youth Council.

If you are interested in joining the Youth Council or can assist in any way, please email youthcouncil@okehampton.gov.uk or contact us through the council office



Okehampton Castle - The Council is aware of the partial closure of the Castle and is working with Okehampton Hamlets Parish Council, within whose boundary it lies, and other organisations to investigate possible solutions for the way forward.

Okehampton Cemetery, Headstone Inspections - Annual safety inspections of the headstones in the Council owned Cemetery adjacent to All Saints Church will take place in August. Should you have any concerns about this, please get in touch with the Council.

Simmons Park Parking Fees

Parking fees increased slightly in May, the first in over 15 years. The charging periods have not changed and remain as follows:

- Monday to Friday 8am - 6pm
- Saturday 8am - 12 midday
- Saturday 12 midday to Monday 8am FREE
- Bank Holidays FREE

Daily Car Park Charges at Simmons Park Car Park:

Duration	Charge
30 minutes	50p
1 hour	70p
2 hours	£1
3 hours	£1.50
4 hours	£2.00
24 hours	£4.00

Car parking signs will be replaced when other related matters have been resolved.

Spring/Summer Annual Fair

Simmons Park Car Park will be closed from 8am Sunday 1st June to 8am Tuesday 10th June 2025 for the Anderton & Rowland Fair.



No Mow May and BMX Track Improvements - Areas of Simmons Park, the BMX/Skatepark and the verge at West Bridge will be left to nature in the next new weeks for No Mow May.

Apologies if it means that these areas will look a little untidy over the next few weeks, but this will allow the grasses and plants to do their own thing helping to provide vital food needed by bees and butterflies who play a very important role in our ecosystems.



Ten Tors - The Council congratulates all those who took part in the event this year and thanks the Ten Tors Director for acknowledging the traffic issues and promising a review before the 2026 event.

Mayoral Chain of Office - Okehampton Town Council's Mayoral Chain of Office dates all the way back to 1885 and has significant historical importance for the town. With this in mind, combined with its increasing fragility, the Council decided recently that it would be retired and only used for specific Civic events held within the town – these being Mayor Choosing/Annual Town Council Meeting, Civic Service, Remembrance Parade and on Commonwealth Day.

A replacement Chain of Office, which will be worn at other Civic Events has been purchased, the cost partly covered by additional precept received from the second homes council tax levy.

Skate Jam - PCSO Sean Jones says "We would like to say a huge thank you everyone who came to support the event. We were overwhelmed by the support we received from local charities, business and youth clubs who provided prizes and helped to organise this fantastic event. Over £1,000 was raised, which will go towards much-needed renovations to the skatepark. I think the Skate Jam is a great example of what we can achieve when we work together, and this event has really strengthened the relationship between police and the Okehampton community. Devon and Cornwall Police would like to thank the Community Recreation Association, Men in Sheds, Okehampton Community Kitchen, Skate Warehouse, Immersion, Okehampton United Charities, and Okehampton Town Council who supported Sean to organise a successful community event."

Future date for the diary - Wildlife Day in Simmons Park, 21st August at 1pm with Dartmoor National Park pond dipping and riverbed dredging.

Coming up in June

- **Tuesdays:** West Devon Folk Choir, Charter Hall
- **Mondays and Wednesdays:** Clubbercise, 6pm-8pm Charter Hall
- **Wednesdays:** Simmons Park Volunteer Group, 11am-12.30pm, meet at pedestrian entrance gates
- **Saturdays:** Parkrun, 9am Simmons Park
- 4th Community Links Parenting Pop-Up Session, morning (Charter Hall)
- 6th NHS Blood Donation Session (Charter Hall)
- 5-8th Anderton and Rowland Amusement Fair operational (Simmons Park)
- 14th Big Green Week Eco Fair (Charter Hall)
- 21st St John Ambulance Coffee Morning (Charter Hall)
- 22nd Okeford Veterinary Centre Charity Dog Show (Simmons Park)
- 28th Girl Guides Coffee Morning (Charter Hall)

Town Council Meeting Dates

Members of the public are welcome to attend council meetings and have the opportunity to address the council. Alternatively, meetings are livestreamed through the council Facebook page where they are available to view.

June

- 2nd Planning Committee followed by Full Council
- 9th Policy & Resources Committee (consideration of grant applications)
- 16th Property Committee
- 30th Full Council

Meeting dates for 2025/26 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 added or subject to change, details can be found on the [website](#) or noticeboard in the Victorian Arcade.

Contact Us – 01837 53179

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Your Councillors

Cllr Richard Colman (Town Mayor)
Cllr Laura Bird (Deputy Mayor)

Cllr Terry Cummings	Cllr Christine Marsh
Cllr Allenton Fisher	Cllr David McNeill
Cllr Frankee Hart	Cllr Mark Richards
Cllr Carole Holt	Cllr Bob Tolley
Cllr Dr Michael Ireland	Cllr Simon Weekes
Cllr Tony Leech	Cllr Julie Yelland