



Okehampton Town Council



Okehampton Town Council
Town Hall
Fore Street
Okehampton EX20 1AA

01837 53179

www.okehampton.gov.uk

NEWSLETTER – AUGUST 2026

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Okehampton Youth Council

If you are interested in joining the Youth Council, please email youthcouncil@okehampton.gov.uk or make contact through the council office.



Community Green Flag Award for Simmons Park

Simmons Park was assessed for the Community Award in May, and the Council is delighted to announce that it has received a mark in the 80+ category, the highest level. The report summary concludes:



‘Simmons Park is managed to a very high standard and is highly deserving of the Award. There are multiple strengths, especially including the mix of landscapes, habitats and facilities - all within easy reach of the town centre and also the train station. The Park is a very important destination and significant asset for the Town. I was really impressed with the Park and how it is being managed, and so only a few recommendations

have been made, some (if not all) of which may already be being considered. Thank you and well done to everyone involved.’

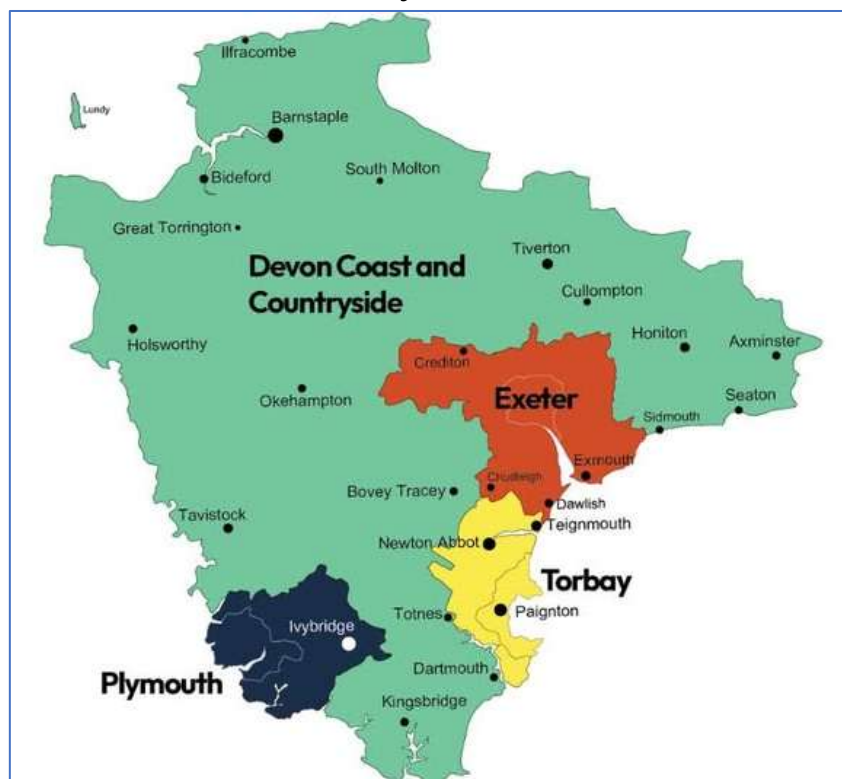
Lloyds Banking Group has agreed to restore cheque deposit services at Post Offices and Banking Hubs

Lloyds Banking Group has confirmed that it wants cheque deposits to be accepted again at Post Office branches and Banking Hubs until the end of 2030, although this is subject to agreement with the Post Office.

The Council continues to support the requirement for the provision of a full banking hub in Okehampton.

Local Government Reorganisation – Four Unitary Councils for Devon announced by the Government on 16th July

The Government has announced its decision on the future structure of local government in Devon, confirming that four unitary authorities will be created for the county.



It is understood that in 2027 shadow unitary councils will come into existence following elections. These new unitary councils will, on Vesting Day in 2028, replace the existing county, district and borough councils.

Town and parish councils will remain and will continue to operate as they do today, although they may well take on additional responsibilities or provide more services.

Town Council Grants

At the June meeting of the Policy & Resources Committee, the majority of the 2026/27 grant budget was awarded to local groups and organisations. Following these grant awards, the remaining budget stood at £270.45. In July the Committee agreed to increase the current year's grant budget by transferring the unspent funds from the 2025/26 Grant Budget, an amount of £1,541, to top up the amount available this year. Later in the July meeting the following small grants were awarded:

- Okehampton Fairtrade Group - £100
- Parochial Church Council of the Ecclesiastical Parish of All Saints Church Okehampton - £400

Simmons Park Diesel Spillage Update

Following the spillage from the railway a few months ago, GWRs contractor undertook a site inspection the very heavy rainfall on 16th July. The contractor continues to monitor the situation which is unchanged and diesel still remains in the soil.

GWRs contractor has placed booms and pads at the location where the diesel would enter the river, so hopefully this will capture what's left. Access to the river in Simmons Park is therefore still restricted.

The Planning Committee – what does it do?

Committee Membership

Cllr T Leech (Chairman) (right)	Cllr L Bird
Cllr M Ireland (Vice-Chairman)	Cllr B Tolley
Cllr R Colman	Cllr T Cummings
Cllr M Richards	Cllr M Ricketts
Cllr J Yelland	



Meetings of this Committee are scheduled approximately 4 times per year; however additional meetings are called as and when needed for the consideration of planning or licensing applications.

Town and parish councils are consultees only when it comes to matters relating to planning and licensing applications – the decisions are made by West Devon Borough Council (WDBC).

When considering applications the committee must do so in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework, produced by the Government, and other local authority plans and guidance. Applications must be considered based on their compliance with this legislation and guidance – not on personal views and opinions. Comments that do not fall within the ‘material considerations’, legislation and other planning documentation, will be discounted by WDBC during their review process.

Officer Support – The Town Clerk is normally present at these meetings.

Responsibilities - To consider applications received that relate to planning and the licensing of premises to serve and/or sell alcohol or food, and matters relating to highways issues

Payment of Expenses – Like the council’s other committees, this committee has been delegated authority to authorise payments.

Skills Day

In July, the Youth Council and Town Council worked together to host a Skills Day, primarily aimed at young people. A variety of local businesses and individuals came along to share practical everyday skills, including budgeting and managing finances, wiring a plug and sewing on a button.

Thank you to everyone who came along and supported the event. Feedback from anyone who attended, whether they came to share their skills or to learn new ones, would be very welcome. Your comments will help us build on the event and make next year’s Skills Day even bigger and better.



We are looking forward to Okehampton Show where you will find the Council on stand D6 alongside WDBC and the Mayor's Civic Service on 13th September

Coming up in August

- **Mondays and Wednesdays:** Clubbercise, Charter Hall
- **Wednesdays:** Simmons Park Volunteer Group, 11am main gates
- **Saturdays:** Parkrun, 9am Simmons Park

August

4th Friendly Circle (Charter Hall)

21st Vintage Quest Jewellery Roadshow (Charter Hall)

22nd RBL Coffee Morning (Charter Hall)

28th Cheeky Monkeys 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.

August

3rd Planning Committee

17th Full Council

September

7th Policy & Resources Committee

21st Full Council

28th Parks Committee

Meeting dates 2026/27 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

Emma James, Town Clerk & RFO

townclerk@okehampton.gov.uk

Abi Horn, Assistant Clerk

admin@okehampton.gov.uk

Tracey Bryant, Finance Officer

accounts@okehampton.gov.uk

Rosi Wills, Facilities Officer

facilities@okehampton.gov.uk

James McGahey, Park-Keeper

parks@okehampton.gov.uk

Your Councillors

Cllr Richard Colman (Town Mayor)

Cllr Laura Bird (Deputy Mayor)

Cllr Terry Cummings

Cllr David McNeill

Cllr Allenton Fisher

Cllr Mark Richards

Cllr Carole Holt

Cllr Mike Ricketts

Cllr Dr Michael Ireland

Cllr Bob Tolley

Cllr Tony Leech

Cllr Simon Weekes

Cllr Christine Marsh

Cllr Julie Yelland

Contact details available from the website
or council office