



Okehampton Town Council
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www.okehampton.gov.uk

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NEWSLETTER - June 2024

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



An award ceremony was held on 8th 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:

lan 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.

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

<u>Karen Percival</u> 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.

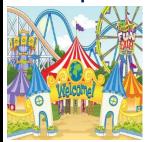


There will be a free shuttlebus to/from this

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 6th through until Sunday 9th June. In order to facilitate their visit,

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

Okehampton Youth Council

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



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, emailing townclerk@okehampton.gov.uk or calling 01837 53179

Closing date 12noon 7th June 2024



Ava says 'I attended my first Okehampton Youth Council (OYC) session on Wednesday 22nd 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.

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 12th 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 13th 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

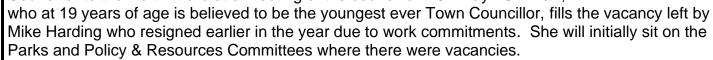
Greatfield Hedgehog Rescue are local to Okehampton. They can be found on Facebook or contacted on 07917 054625.



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 20th May. Cllr Hart,



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 <u>electoral commission website</u>. 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 <u>website</u> and are available from the Town Hall.

Okehampton Railway

Network Rail have agreed to come to Okehampton on Thursday 20th 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.

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 1st 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.



Simmons Park Volunteer Group – every Wednesday from 11am to 12.30pm

6th 80th Anniversary of D-Day (Show Ground) 6th-9th Anderton and Rowland Fair (Simmons Park)

16th Okehampton Primary School PTFA Circus (Simmons Park 11am-4pm)

20th Network Rail Presentation (10am, Town Hall)

Town Council Meeting Dates - June

3rd Planning and Property Committees

10th Policy & Resources Committee

17th Planning Committee

24th 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.

A fun packed comedy show for all the family supported by amazing International Circus Artists www.happyscircus.co.uk at Simmons Park, Okehampton Okehampton Primary School PTFA Ciacus fun da i Sunday 16th June 2024 - 11am-4pm - Circus at 2.00pm Tickets available from Red Lion Bazaar and PTFA members okehamptonprimaryptfa@yahoo.com Thanks to our main sponsors (1) Hedgerow Print London INN

Contact Us - 01837 53179

Emma James, Town Clerk & RFO townclerk@okehampton.gov.uk

Caroline Ellis, Assistant Town Clerk (Accounts) accounts@okehampton.gov.uk

Abi Horn, Admin Officer and Mayor's Assistant (Bookings and Invitations for the Mayor)

admin@okehampton.gov.uk

James McGahey, Park-Keeper parks@okehampton.gov.uk

Your Councillors

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

Cllr Laura Bird Cllr Terry Cummings Cllr Frankee Hart Cllr Carole Holt Cllr Dr Michael Ireland Cllr Simon Weekes Cllr Tony Leech

Cllr Christine Marsh **Cllr Mark Richards** Cllr Lynne Rogers Cllr Bob Tolley Cllr Julie Yelland