



**ANDOVER TOWN COUNCIL
ANNUAL REPORT
2024 / 2025**

Date: 5 March 2025

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Introduction from the Town Mayor

I was delighted to be elected as Town Mayor for 2024/25 by fellow Councillors in May 2024. It is an honour and privilege to serve Andover residents, taxpayers and businesses.

Our activities in spring and summer 2024 were overshadowed by a surprise general election called for July. The election brought us a new government with new priorities, although there was no change to our sitting MP in Andover. Applications to government funding for community projects were closed and therefore curtailed our efforts to buy land at Picket Piece for the benefit of the community. However, feedback from the consultation exercise will prove useful as we move into 2025/26.

In June 2024, we delivered the first ever Pride event in Andover, followed by a Jerk Jam festival at the end of August. Both were free events and well attended. I was proud to represent the Town Council at Remembrance Day events in November. For Christmas 2024, we held carols around the Christmas tree, supported by the Andover Town Band. We also extended our Christmas lights display to include Western Avenue, George Yard and Black Swan car parks, as well as adding new Christmas tree lights, all of which survived Storm Bert.

Our financial management remains sound, and the Council is debt free. The External Auditor's Report and Certificate for 2023/24 raised no concerns, nor did the interim audit report for 2024/25. I have been keen to promote our grants funding and for 2024/25, we set the budget at £20,500 and increased it by a further £12,000 during the year. We allocated this to Andover Carnival, 20th Andover Guides, Andover Community Engage, Saxon Fields and Artists Way Community Association, More Education's Koala Community Hub, and Unity, with more applications being submitted.

We continued to deliver allotment services to 561 tenants in 533 plots at 9 different sites and considered 179 planning applications and 9 licences. To promote community safety in 2024/25, we added nine new speed indicator locations to the Andover rota and helped fund a new defibrillator in Picket Piece.

Following resignations and casual vacancies late in 2024, we welcomed three new Councillors in 2024/25 by co-option: Councillors Andrew Horsnell (St Mary's), Graham Walters (Millway) and Tony Burley (Millway).

Councillors have worked together to draft a business plan for 2025/27 and acknowledge we can improve our local reputation through good governance, civility and respect. Furthermore, I have contacted key community stakeholders for their views on our proposed business plan and as well as publishing the draft business plan for comment, we held two informal councillors 'tea and biscuits' events to gather

feedback from residents. Our budget for 2025/26 will therefore be supported by an ambitious business plan to put the Andover Community First.

Finally in 2024/25, we have consolidated our staffing structure and reviewed job roles to make sure we can deliver our priorities in the future. I thank our Officers, past and present, for their support, advice and knowledge.

Cllr Heather Neate, Andover Town Mayor

5 March 2025.

Annual Town Electors Meeting

The annual meeting for the electors of Andover is held on 5 March 2025. The meeting is an opportunity for parish electors to raise and discuss issues affecting the community as well as hearing reports from council committees.

Committee Reports

- Allotments Committee

Chair: Cllr Kevin Hughes

Deputy: Cllr Ted Reynolds

Members: Cllrs John Cockaday, Luigi Gregori, Andrew Horsnell, Joseph Hughes, Robin Hughes, Richard Kidd

The role of the Allotments Committee is to deliver allotment services to 561 tenants in 533 plots at 9 different sites.

Report of the Chair:

Throughout 2024/25, the Allotments Committee continued to hold regular meetings and surgeries, and members completed several ad-hoc site visits.

Progress at the new site at Picket 20 has slowed considerably, with staff and councillors making several site visits to meet the developer. The handover of this site was expected to take place in mid-2024 but this was delayed and is now likely to take place in mid-2025. The council continues to work with the developer's legal teams to ensure the site is handed over as soon as possible and is of a high standard when received.

New perimeter fences have been installed at the Admirals Way and Churchill Way allotment sites. The fences at these two sites were identified as those most in need of replacement. This has provided a higher level of security compared to the low and aging chain-link fences that were replaced. The next site to have the fencing replaced will be Old Winton Road. This work will be completed in 2025, once quotes have been received and a contractor is selected.

The water trough at Ox Drove was replaced with a tap to allow tenants to water their plots. A water trough was chosen when the site was built as it presented a greener solution. In practice, the water trough was not used enough to prevent water from becoming stagnant. This information will feed into our new-site requirements to ensure that the issue does not re-occur.

An annual review of rules and regulations took place in 2024/25. The committee also dealt with several rules and regulations change requests from tenants throughout the year, including a request to allow dogs on sites. This was discussed in detail by the committee, and it was unanimously decided to keep the rules as they are.

I would like to end this report by thanking the council staff, along with our team of Wardens for all their hard work throughout the year. Without their tireless work and dedication, the allotments would cease to function. I would also like to thank all the members of the allotments sub-committee for their contributions throughout the year. As with last year special thanks go to Councillor Reynolds, who has continued to go above and beyond to help with the smooth running of all the allotment sites.

Cllr Kevin Hughes, Chair, Allotments Committee

- Community and Events Committee

Chair: Cllr Katherine Bird

Deputy: Cllr Mark Farren

Members: Cllrs John Cockaday, Luigi Gregori, Andrew Horsnell, Joseph Hughes, Robin Hughes, Heather Neate and Ted Reynolds

Report of the Chair:

Firstly, I would like to thank the members of the committee who have engaged with the committee, and been involved in the debates, always lively and robust and making sure that the Council looks at the best ways to support the Andover community.

Events

We have supported both the Andover Town Council's involvement in external events, and running our own events throughout the year, some of the highlights have been:

- Running Andover's first Pride event, which was very well received. It helped to bring together different sections of the community and show explicit and positive support for everyone.

- Sponsoring Andover's first Jerk Jam, a different event for the town, a family focussed multi-cultural experience for all the family, which attracted a 9,400 footfall throughout the day.
- Being an integral part of the Christmas Light Switch on event
- Attending the town centre Halloween event

Communications

The Committee has reviewed the appropriate policies, and made sure that they are fit for purpose, and achieve what is needed from them. They are then passed to Full Council for ratification. Over the last year members of the committee have worked with officers to ensure that there is ongoing good communication with external partners. The new website still needs to be developed, and this is something that the committee needs to look at in the coming year.

Grants

The Committee has had oversight of the Grants Policy and made changes to how the scheme is run and publicised. We have also heard and approved grant applications and been delighted to support a wide range of organisations and events across the year and have given out £29,172.33 in grants.

Finance

Throughout the year the Committee has ensured that everything that is carried out is within budget, and that it is clear where the funding is coming from, and that it is fiscally responsible. We have fed into the Full Council budgeting for 2025/2026 to ensure that the good works carried out by the Committee can continue.

Report by:

Councillor Katherine Bird, Chair of Community and Events Committee 2024/2025

- Planning Committee

Chair: Cllr Luigi Gregori

Deputy: Cllr John Cockaday

Members: Cllrs Steven Hardstaff, Andrew Horsnell, Richard Kidd, Heather Neate, Jason Sangster, Graham Walters

Report of the Chair:

The role of the Planning Committee is to make observations on all planning applications and planning issues for the Andover Town area, Since May 2024 to date, the Planning Committee has considered 179 planning applications and 9 licences.

The Planning Committee has been diligently reviewing all submissions and proposals throughout this term, commenting and objecting where necessary and within our remit. The Planning Committee has highlighted where applications have fallen short and not provided enough information or details to help properly form coherent decisions and commenting. The Planning Committee has also fed back our support for certain proposals which were for the betterment of the town. We have particularly focused on ensuring new homes are future proofed to take into account sustainability.

We have continued to make progress on the Speed Indicator Devices (SIDs) project which contributes towards the safety of Andover's roads. The SIDs are providing additional data which helps to aid better understanding and we intend to increase SID provision.

Test Valley Borough Council (TVBC) is the Planning Authority and makes the final decision on a quasi-judicial basis. We have expanded our relationship with the TVBC planning department and have had additional training sessions with senior officers including Head of Planning and Head of Planning Policy, to better understand and cooperate with TVBC to deliver the best outcomes possible for our residents.

The Planning Committee has contributed on a number of consultations representing the Andover view, including such diverse areas such as hospitals and the local plan for housing. We also carried out one site visit.

The Planning Committee has diligently carried out its duties and responsibilities throughout this term and I am grateful to all Councillors and Officers for their continued support and time, to ensure we are providing the necessary scrutiny for the town and community.

Councillor Luigi Gregori, Chair of Planning Committee 2024/2025

- **Policy and Resources Committee**

Chair: Cllr Steven Hardstaff

Deputy: Cllr Katherine Bird

Members: Cllrs Mark Farren, Luigi Gregori, Joseph Hughes, Robin Hughes, Richard Kidd, Heather Neate and Ted Reynolds

Report of the Chair:

The role of the Policy and Resources Committee is to introduce and review Town Council policy, identify resources to deliver our commitments and prepare the annual budget and precept.

Firstly, I would like to thank the members of this committee, our meetings have been thoughtful and challenging this year and as always, we have questioned the value for money we are delivering as a Council.

The 2024-25 budget was set by us and agreed at full Council. It created a little scope for us to work with. We are pleased to report that as we present this report, we are due to come in roughly in line with what the budget we set last year.

When it came to setting the budget for 2025-26, we had a very constructive meeting and a great discussion around some of the ambitious projects the council is aiming to do this coming year. Some of which are:

- Allotment fencing - During 2024, we Council began the replacing the fencing on some of the older allotment sites. This project will continue in 2025.
- Websites – the Council is committed to ensuring that we operate a useful and informative website. As such, a small amount of money has been set aside to do this.
- Young and older people services – with budgets constraints and cuts being seen across the area, Andover Town Council voted to set aside some money to help support these vital services.
- Election costs – we are committed to ensuring that there are suitable funds set aside to cover the projected future costs.

The Policy and Resources Committee has again ensured that the Town Council remains on a stable financial footing. We continue to work with other local authorities to help fund events and services that benefit Andover residents.

Councillor Steven Hardstaff, Chair of Policy & Resources Committee 2024/2025

- [Human Resources Sub-Committee](#)

Chair: Cllr Steven Hardstaff

Deputy: Cllr Katherine Bird

Members: Cllrs Mark Farren and Ted Reynolds

Report of the Chair:

The role of the Human Resources Sub-Committee is to ensure compliance with employment legislation, review staffing and manage staff performance management.

The Human Resources Sub-Committee continues to monitor staff training, workloads and staffing structures to ensure adequate resources for current and future requirements. This includes work to assess the impact of new regulations on the Council.

Staffing levels continue to be reviewed and agreed with the Policy and Resources Committee. Staff appraisals have been agreed, and appraisals are ongoing.

The Sub-Committee will continue to meet on a regular (six monthly) basis to monitor the above with additional meetings if required.

Report by:

Councillor Steven Hardstaff, Chair of the Human Resources Sub-Committee
2024/2025

Councillors

Following co-options to three vacancies during 2024/25, I have included a full list of current councillors at **Appendix A** for information. Councillors are also listed on our website.

Attendance

Councillor attendance at committee meetings is shown in the chart below:

ATTENDANCE AT ANDOVER TOWN COUNCIL MEETINGS May 2024 to Current (28/02/25)

Councillor	Full Council	Policy & Resources	Planning	Community & Events	Allotments
(max number of meetings in period)	10	3	13	5	3
H Neate (Town Mayor)	9	3	11	5	n/a
K Bird (Deputy Mayor)	6	3	n/a	5	n/a
T Burley	1	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
J Cockaday	10	n/a	13	5	2
M Farren	10	3	n/a	5	n/a
L Gregori	9	3	10	1	3
T Gregory	4	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
S Hardstaff	10	3	10	n/a	n/a
A Horsnell	3	n/a	2	2	n/a
J Hughes	9	3	n/a	4	3
K Hughes	6	n/a	n/a	n/a	3
R Hughes	9	3	2 (resigned from planning)	5	3
R Kidd	7	3	6	n/a	3
M McGarry	0	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
R Meyer	7	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
E Reynolds	10	3	n/a	4	3
J Sangster	8	n/a	7	n/a	n/a
G Walters	3	n/a	1	n/a	n/a
S Waue	3	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a

No longer Councillors
New Co-opted Councillors
n/a = not member of Committee

Training

Councillor training is essential to ensure we keep our skills and knowledge up to date. During 2024/25, councillors have undertaken the following training:

- Managing Employees in Local Councils (May 2024) – Cllrs Steven Hardstaff, Heather Neate and Ted Reynolds
- Tree inspection (May 2024) – Cllr Ted Reynolds
- Tree Preservation Orders (August 2024) – Cllrs Gregori, Heather Neate, Ted Reynolds
- Roles, Responsibilities and Working Relationships (February 2025) – Cllr Graham Walters
- Civility and Respect (February 2025) – Cllrs Katherine Bird, John Cockaday, Mark Farren, Luigi Gregori, Steven Hardstaff, Andrew Horsnell, Joseph Hughes, Robin Hughes, Rebeca Meyer, Heather Neate and Ted Reynolds.

English Devolution

Government published its English Devolution White Paper in December 2024, setting out its plans to expedite transferring powers, funding and programmes from Westminster to local areas, thereby empowering local communities. In February 2025, Hampshire County Council was accepted onto the Government's fast track English Devolution Priority Programme, a significant milestone on the path to establishing a combined County authority and potential administrative reorganisation. The next step is for Andover Town Council, along with all Andover residents, to proactively respond to the government's public consultation on [Hampshire and the Solent devolution](#), which closes in April 2025.

Our business plan for 2025/27 includes opportunities for Andover Town Council to work closely with local stakeholders throughout this process of considerable change and will provide support and communication as well as reducing unnecessary speculation, especially for staff.

For ease of reference, I include at **Appendix B** an updated list of the powers, duties and functions available to a parish council, although Andover Town Council does not currently hold or exercise them all.

Appendix A - List of Councillors as at 5 March 2025.

Councillor (alphabetically)	Ward
Cllr Katherine Bird	St Mary's
Cllr Tony Burley	Millway (from 19 February 2025)
Cllr John Cockaday	St Mary's
Cllr Mark Farren	Millway
Cllr Luigi Gregori	Harroway
Cllr Steven Hardstaff	Romans
Cllr Andrew Horsnell	St Mary's (from 20 November 2024)
Cllr Joseph Hughes	Winton
Cllr Kevin Hughes	Downlands
Cllr Robin Hughes	Harroway
Cllr Richard Kidd	Romans
Cllr Rebecca Meyer	Winton
Cllr Heather Neate	Downlands
Cllr Ted Reynolds	Harroway
Vacant	Romans
Cllr Graham Walters	Millway (from 20 November 2024)

Appendix B – powers, duties and functions of a parish council

Taken from the National Association of Local Councils: The Good Councillors Guide 2024.

Functions	Powers and Duties	Statutory Provisions
Allotments	<p>Powers to provide allotments.</p> <p>Duty to provide allotment gardens if demand unsatisfied and if reasonable to do so</p>	Small Holding & Allotments Act 1908, s.23
Borrowing money	Power for councils to borrow money for their statutory functions or for the prudent management of their financial affairs	Local Government Act 2003, Schedule 1, para. 2
Baths (public)	Power to provide public swimming baths	Public Health Act 1936, s.221
Burial grounds, cemeteries and crematoria	<p>Power to acquire and maintain</p> <p>Power to provide</p> <p>Power to contribute towards expenses of cemeteries</p>	<p>Open Spaces Act 1906, Sections 9 and 10</p> <p>Local Government Act 1972, s.214</p> <p>Local Government Act 1972, s.214 (6)</p>
Bus Shelters	Power to provide and maintain shelters	Local Government (Miscellaneous Provision) Act 1953, s.4
Byelaws	<p>Power to make byelaws for:</p> <p>Places of public recreation</p> <p>Cycle parks</p> <p>Public swimming baths</p> <p>Open spaces and burial grounds</p>	<p>Public Health Act 1875, s.164</p> <p>Road Traffic Regulation Act</p> <p>Public Health Act 1936, s.223</p> <p>Open Spaces Act 1906, s.15</p>

	Mortuaries and post-mortem rooms	Public Health Act 1936, s.198
Charities	Duties in respect of parochial charities Power to act as charity trustees	Charities Act 2011, ss. 298–303 Local Government Act 1972, bs.139 (1)
Clocks	Power to provide public clocks	Parish Councils Act 1957, s.2
Closed Churchyards	Powers to maintain	Local Government Act 1972, s.215
Commons and common pastures	Powers in relation to inclosure, regulation, management and provision of common pasture	Inclosure Act 1845; Small Holdings and Allotments Act 1908, s.34
Conference facilities	Power to provide and encourage use of facilities	Local Government Act 1972, s.144
Community Centres	Power to provide and equip buildings for use of clubs having athletic, social or educational objectives Power to acquire, provide and furnish community buildings for public meetings and assemblies	Local Government Act 1972 (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 s.19 Local Government Act 1972, s.133
Crime Prevention	Power to spend money on crime detection and prevention measures	Local Government and Rating Act 1997, s.31
Ditches and ponds	Power to drain and maintain ponds and ditches to prevent harm to public health	Public Health Act 1936, s.260
Duties		
Entertainment and the arts	Environment Provision of entertainment and support of the arts	Local Government Act 1972. s.145
Environment	Power to issue fixed penalty notices for litter, graffiti and offences under dog control orders	Clean neighbourhoods and Environment Act 2005, s.19, s.30, Part 6
General Power of Competence 2024	Power for an eligible council to do anything subject to statutory prohibitions, restrictions and limitations which	Localism Act 2011, ss.1–8

	include those in place before or after the introduction of the general power of competence	
Gifts	Power to accept	Local Government Act 1972, s.139
Highways	<p>Power to repair and maintain public footpaths and bridleways.</p> <p>Power to light roads and public places</p> <p>Power to provide parking places for vehicles, bicycles and motorcycles.</p> <p>Power to enter into agreement as to dedication and widening</p> <p>Power to provide roadside seats and shelters</p> <p>Power to consent to a local highway authority stopping maintenance of a highway or stopping up/ diverting a highway</p> <p>Power to complain to district council about the protection of rights of way and roadside waste</p> <p>Power to provide certain traffic signs and other notices</p> <p>Power to plant trees and shrubs and to maintain roadside verges</p>	<p>Highways Act 1980, ss.43, 50</p> <p>Parish Councils Act 1957, s.3; Highways Act 1980, s.301</p> <p>Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984, ss.57, 63</p> <p>Highways</p> <p>Parish Councils Act 1957, s.1</p> <p>Highways Acts 1980, ss.47, 116</p> <p>Highways Act 1980, s.130</p> <p>Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984, s.72</p> <p>Highways Act 1980, s.96</p>
Honorary Titles	Power to admit to be honorary freemen/ freewomen of the council's area persons of distinction and persons who have, in the opinion	Local Government Act 1972, s.249

	of the authority, rendered eminent services to that place or area.	
Investments	Power to participate in schemes of collective investment	Trustee Investments Act 1961, s.11
Land	Power to acquire by agreement, to appropriate, to dispose of Power to accept gifts of land	Local Government Act 1972, ss.124, 126, 127
Litter	Provision of bins	Litter Act, 1983, ss.5, 6
Lotteries	Powers to promote	Gambling Act 2005, s.252, 258
Markets	Power to establish or acquire by agreement markets within the council's area and provide a marketplace and market building	Food Act 1984, s.50
Mortuaries and post-mortem rooms	Power to provide mortuaries and post-mortem rooms	Public Health Act 1936, s.198
Neighbourhood Planning	Powers to act as lead body for a neighbourhood development plan or a neighbourhood development order	Localism Act 2011, Schedule 9; Town and County Planning Act 1990, ss. 61E-61Q, Schedule 4B; Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, s.38A
Newsletter	Power to provide information relation to matters affecting local government	Local Government Act 1972, s.142
Nuisances	Power to deal with offensive ditches	Public Health Act 1936, s. 260
Open Spaces	Power to acquire and maintain land for public recreation Power to acquire and maintain land for open spaces	Public health Act 1875, s.164 Power to receive and retain Open spaces act 1906, ss.9 and 10
Parish Property and documents	Power to receive and retain	Local Government Act 1972, s.226

	Duty to deposit certain published works in specific deposit libraries	Legal Deposit Libraries Act 2003, s.1
Public buildings and village hall	Power to acquire and provide buildings for public meetings and assemblies	Local Government Act 1972, s.133
Public Conveniences	Power to provide	Public Health Act 1936, s.87
Recreation	Power to provide a wide range or recreational facilities Provision of boating pools	Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976, s.19 Public Health Act 1961, s.54
Right to challenge services that are provided by a principal authority	The right to submit an interest in running a service provided by a district, county or unitary authority	Localism Act 2011, ss.81–86
Right to nominate and bid for assets of community value	The right to nominate assets to be added to a list of assets of community value and the right to bid to buy a listed asset when it comes up for sale	Localism Act 2011, ss.87–108
Town and Country Planning	Right to be notified of planning applications if right has been requested	Town and Country Planning Act 1990, Sched.1, para 8
Tourism	Power to encourage tourism to the council's area	Local Government Act 1972, s.144
Traffic Calming	Power to contribute financially to traffic calming schemes	Local Government and Rating Act 1997, s.30
Transport	Powers to spend money on community transport schemes	Local Government and Rating Act 1997, s.26–29
War memorials	Power to maintain, repairs, protect and adapt war memorials	War Memorials (Local Authorities' Power) Act 1923, s.1
Water	Power to utilise wells, springs or streams for obtaining water	Public Health Act 1936, s.125
Websites	Power for councils to have their own websites	Local Government Act 1972, s.142

