



WITNEY
TOWN COUNCIL

www.witney-tc.gov.uk



Witney Town Council
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Town Hall, Market Square,
Witney, Oxon OX28 6AG



Witney Town Council Summer Newsletter 2025



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OUR NEW MAYOR



If you need this newsletter in any other format, please contact communities@witney-tc.gov.uk

COUNCILLORS AT THE CAFÉ



FIRST
SATURDAY
OF THE
MONTH

Your regular opportunity to chat with Councillors from Witney Town Council in the Corn Exchange.

No purchase or booking required!

Don't forget our Councillors are at The Carnival on 12th July for this month's meet up



Councillor Joy Aitman
Witney East

Labour Party
Deputy Leader

joy.aitman@witney-tc.gov.uk



Councillor Thomas Ashby
Witney West

Conservative

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Councillor Andy Bailey
Witney East

Labour Party
Mayor

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Councillor Owen Collins
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Councillor Rachel Crouch
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Councillor Jane Doughty
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Councillor Geoff Doughty
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Councillor David Edwards-Hughes
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Councillor Duncan Enright
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Councillor Georgia Meadows
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Abdul Mubin
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Councillor Denis Newcombe
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Councillor James Robertshaw
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Councillor Sandra Simpson
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Councillor Ruth Smith
Witney East

Labour Party
Leader

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Councillor Jack Treloar
Witney South

Conservative

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Councillor Dean Temple
Witney North

Conservative

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**Who are your
councillors?**

Witney's New Mayor

Cllr Andy Bailey



Andy Bailey was elected Mayor of Witney at the Annual Meeting of the Town Council in May, bringing over a decade of experience in public policy, human rights, and governmental advocacy to his role. He has lived in Witney for the past 12 years with his wife Hannah and their young son Aedan.

Professionally, Andy is recognised as a leading expert in Freedom of Religion or Belief (FoRB). He has advised governments, parliamentarians, and international organisations on issues including atrocity prevention, minority rights, modern slavery, and supply chain accountability. His roles in Parliament have included Director of the All-Party Parliamentary Group on Genocide Prevention and Senior Parliamentary Officer for the APPG on FoRB. He has contributed to UK foreign policy and United Nations initiatives focused on conflict prevention, Artificial Intelligence, and human rights.



Mayor Andy Bailey at SERFCA Oxfordshire & Buckinghamshire Armed Forces Briefing 12/06/25 Crown Copyright

Closer to home, Andy is an active member of St Mary's Church in Witney, has been involved in efforts to tackle pollution in the River Windrush and support refugees.

Andy studied History at the University of Leicester and has qualifications from the University of Oxford, Intrac, and Bond in advocacy strategy and project management.

As Mayor, Andy wants to ensure that Witney continues to be a welcoming, forward-looking town that values its heritage, supports families, and listens to every voice. His priorities include supporting young people, safeguarding the local environment, and promoting openness and compassion in local government.



Mayor Andy Bailey (left) at the renaming of the Elizabeth II Le Touquet-Paris-Plage International Airport 19/05/25

To request the Mayor at an event please complete the [Booking the Mayor Form](#) on our website or contact the Mayor's Diary secretary loraine.harwood@witney-tc.gov.uk



The 80th anniversary of VE Day in Witney was a day full of dancing, singing, feasting, bell-ringing and remembrance, where groups of all ages gathered to celebrate a momentous date in history.

The Candy Girls sang their finest hits in perfect harmony for our Afternoon Tea guests in the Corn Exchange. Witney Town Band were at their very best on Market Square for the street party-goers, and Swing Dance Summertown Lindy Hoppers gave us some lively dances. We were very grateful that all of these amazing performances were captured on national TV by BBC Oxfordshire, BBC South Today and BBC Radio Oxford. We couldn't be prouder!



Church Green echoed with the joyful sound of bells as Cllr Owen Collins led a Mexican wave of sound, leading into a Ring for Peace performed by St. Mary's Church bell ringers. This touching moment recaptured that day 80 years ago that the bells were heard ringing out, having remained silent throughout the war.

Finally, a service of reflection and commemoration began as we heard readings from the Mayor of Witney, Cllr Andy Bailey, the Rector of St. Mary's, Rev Dr Hester Jones, humanist celebrant, Jacqui Dickenson, and Cllr Owen Collins. WOAPA Singing Group performed some beautiful songs for the crowd and the Witney Town Band led us to the finish with the Last Post and the two-minute silence with our Army and Air Cadets present.

We sincerely thank everyone that took part in the day, and hope that you enjoyed yourselves.



Splash Park

Refurbishment



Witney Town Council is thrilled to announce the official opening of the upgraded Splash Park at The Leys! The park is now open, offering a perfect destination for all your splashing enjoyment.

Before



Deputy Mayor of Witney, Councillor Jane Doughty, led the opening ceremony with heartfelt thanks to families who gave their thoughts during the consultation and Ustigate, the council's contractor. She was joined by young Rylee, who enthusiastically helped start the water features using the interactive "jump on me" button.

Councillor Ruth Smith, Leader of the Council, commented: "We are thrilled to bring this much loved splash park back into use in time for summer 2025. I know families will really enjoy it."



After



The Splash Park offers a wide array of features, from playful dams to exciting jets, ensuring fun for everyone. Importantly, the park is designed to be more accessible with a wheelchair-friendly start button, allowing children of all abilities to enjoy the facilities. With 5 to 6 jets operating at any given time, children can engage in energetic and varied play across different areas. Please refer to our social media and website announcements for opening times.





What's happening in our Green Spaces?

The dragonfly area at Mill Meadow is developing nicely, with an array of new flora and fauna starting to grow around the space. Some examples you may be able to find are Mayflies, Damselflies, Diving Beetles, Pondskaters, and the breath-taking Emperor Dragonfly.

You can also discover various wildlife around Witney Lake by exploring the informative boards available. These boards serve as an excellent resource for learning more about the local fauna.

The recently established Lady's Orchard is thriving with beautiful blossoms, and Witney Lake welcomed a delightful group of visitors, all under the age of four! They learned numerous facts from our knowledgeable Biodiversity and Green Spaces Officer, Carl, and enjoyed an unforgettable experience.



Information Board at the Southern part of the Lake



Lady's Orchard located at Snipe Meadow



Biodiversity and Green Spaces Officer Carl with Planet Kids at the Witney Lake

Interested in volunteering?

The Green Spaces team are always looking for help with the many tasks they do on a daily basis. If you like working outside with the rich nature of Witney, contact info@witney-tc.gov.uk.



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Witney Town Council Announces Strategic Partnership with Witney Town Football Club

Witney Town Council is pleased to announce the formation of a strategic partnership with Witney Town Football Club (WTFC), marking a significant step forward in supporting grassroots football, community physical and mental health, and inclusive recreation across the town.

Witney Town FC, reformed in 2024, has rapidly become a cornerstone of the local sporting community. Their inaugural season saw exceptional on-pitch success and strong community engagement, positioning the club as a vibrant symbol of local pride. The club's ambitions are matched by a commitment to inclusivity, youth engagement, and providing opportunities for all residents

The Council recognises the challenges the club faces in meeting growing demand for high-quality facilities. Strengthened community ties through joint initiatives and outreach supports the Council's commitment to empowering local organisations that share its vision for a healthier, more connected, and more inclusive Witney.



Witney Town Councillors with representatives of Witney Town FC

Be Free Young Carers have now expanded into West Oxfordshire!



Hi! Hope you are doing ok! We are pleased to let you know we have expanded into West Oxfordshire! 🎉🎉

Be Free Young Carers is dedicated to assisting young individuals aged 8 to 17 who have caregiving responsibilities. They offer FREE respite trips during school holidays to a variety of fun destinations, including theme parks, trampoline parks, and many other thrilling locations. Additionally, they provide a customised befriending service, one-to-one emotional support, counselling, and much more. Witney Town Council is proud to offer financial support to this invaluable service and eagerly anticipates the positive impact it will create.

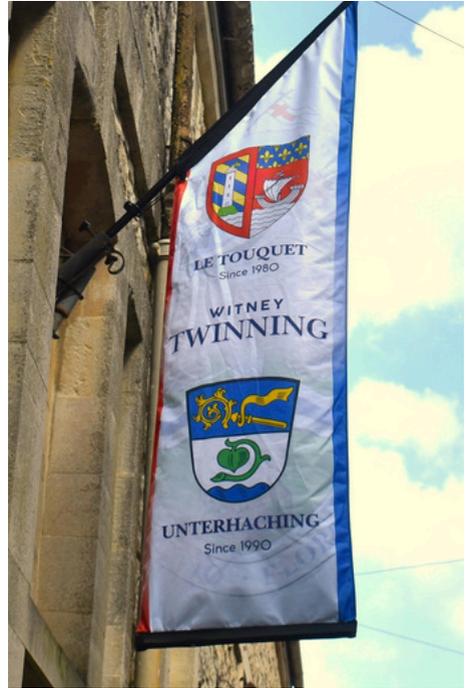
Twinning Reception

On Friday 2nd May, the Mayor of Witney and the Town Council had the honour of welcoming representatives from our twin towns, Le Touquet (France) and Unterhaching (Germany), for a very special occasion.

Organised by the Witney & District Twinning Association, they came together to reaffirm a solemn promise of friendship and cooperation, marking the 45th anniversary of our twinning with Le Touquet since 1980 and the 35th with Unterhaching since 1990.

Throughout these years we have had a great number of shared events both civic and cultural, participated in friendly games of all kinds, have visited great places but most of all have made great friends along the way.

During the weekend visit, the delegation also enjoyed events at King's School, Witney Blanket Hall, Witney & District Museum, and the Witney Beer Festival.



Witney Twinning Flag hanging on the side of the Corn Exchange

These long-standing partnerships are a celebration of unity, cultural exchange, and shared values. Here's to many more years of connection and collaboration!



Witney Twinning Reception at the Corn Exchange



Re-signing the Twinning Documents

Great Big Green Week

For this year's #BigGreenWeek next week, themed "Let's Swap for Good", Witney Town Council organised a book swap! From the 7 June to the 15 June, 10am to 4pm, residents could bring an unused or pre-loved book to the Corn Exchange Café and exchange it for another book that piqued their interest.

It is important to not only reuse and encourage longer lifetimes of the objects we own for the benefit of the environment, but it is also great to share the things you love with other people. This was a wonderful chance to experience someone else's favourite story.

You can read more on the Big Green Week initiative on their website here: www.greatbiggreenweek.com ★

New Clothing Recycling Bin

Witney Town Council is happy to announce the installation of a clothing recycling bank at Burwell Hall in support of Thames Valley Air Ambulance.

Thames Valley Air Ambulance is an independent charity, working as a team with other emergency services to deliver the best possible care for thousands of patients a year. Every flight mission costs the organisation £3,950 and they receive no regular government or NHS funding, relying on donations from supporters. Donated clothes, shoes and textiles have earned the charity over £1,000,000 so far, keeping them at the frontline of saving lives.

Chair of the Halls, Cemeteries and Allotments Committee, Cllr Rachel Crouch said: *"We are delighted to support an incredibly valuable charity by enabling air ambulance to put a clothes bank in our community. We hope this will encourage the disposing of textiles and shoes in a sustainable way that benefits a charity who are there for everybody."*



We encourage residents to visit Burwell Hall and donate any good quality, unused clothing and shoes towards the cause.

JOIN WITNEY TOWN COUNCIL AT THE CARNIVAL

Councillors at the Café is changing to Councillors at the Carnival for Saturday 12th of July. You won't miss the Witney Town Council stall - just look for all the beautiful wheelbarrows entered by local schools for our Schools in Bloom competition! So, not only can you meet and chat with councillors you can also vote for your favourite barrow to win the Schools in Bloom "People's Choice" award.

COUNCILLORS AT THE CARNIVAL

Saturday 12th July 2025
After 12 noon

Join the people that represent you on the Town Council and visit stall for a chat.

- no booking required



Witney Youth Council will be bringing some great crafts to the Carnival. We have wood slices to decorate and also some wooden beads for bracelet making. They are not making a charge but would appreciate a donation to cover costs, with any money raised being used for future projects.





AGE 11 TO 17?

**WANT TO HELP MAKE
CHANGES TO WITNEY?**

Join the Witney Youth Council!



**FOR AN APPLICATION FORM AND
MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE SEE OUR WEBSITE:**

WWW.WITNEY-TC.GOV.UK/THE-COUNCIL/YOUTH-COUNCIL



**WITNEY
TOWN COUNCIL**



BRASS ON THE GRASS

**Bring a blanket or chairs & join Witney Town
Band for an afternoon of Brass on the Grass!**

**27th July - Oxlease
2.30PM - 4.30PM**

**24th August - The Leys
2.30PM - 4.30PM**

Thank you for taking part in our Annual Residents' Satisfaction Survey

We like to demonstrate that we do listen
and respond to feedback as much as possible.

We have posted a selection of comments made by our residents
and actions taken by Witney Town Council in response to these.
Stay tuned for future You Said We Did posts on social media 🗨️

**Keep up with
news and
updates on our
social media!**



Witney Town Council



witneytc



Witney Town Council



witneytc

summer activities

FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

FOR OUR LIST OF SUMMER ACTIVITIES - CHECK OUR WEBSITE AND SOCIAL MEDIA

COMING SOON!

Christmas Light Competition

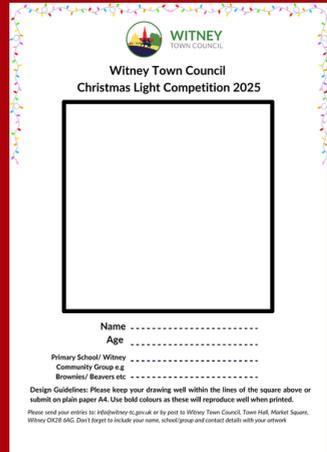
It may seem early to start thinking about Christmas, but we have a light to design in time for the holidays!

Our Christmas Light Competition is open to any child of primary school age attending school or resident in Witney. We also welcome entries from children enrolled in Witney community groups, such as Brownies, Beavers and others.

The winning design will be turned into a super-size 1.5m x 1.5m light, which will be installed on the Town Hall this year as an integral part of the town's Christmas display. The Town Council also displays some, still serviceable winning lights, from previous years.

Entries can be submitted by email, post or delivered to the Town Council office. Download the Witney Town Council Christmas Light Competition 2025 template from our social media or you can simply draw a square on a sheet of A4 paper.

Please submit your entries to: info@witney-tc.gov.uk or Witney Town Council, Town Hall, Market Square, Witney, OX28 6AG.



WITNEY TOWN COUNCIL
Christmas Light Competition 2025

Name

Age

Primary School / Witney
Community Group e.g.
Brownies / Beavers etc

Design Guidelines: Please keep your drawing well within the lines of the square above or submit on plain paper A4. Use bold colours as these will reproduce well when printed.
Please send your entries to info@witney-tc.gov.uk or by post to Witney Town Council, Town Hall, Market Square, Witney OX28 6AG. Don't forget to include your name, school/group and contact details with your artwork.

Design Template



Last year's winner and their design of the butterfly





Witney Play & Activity Day 2025

Thursday 7th August 2025

11am – 3pm

Burwell Meadow Recreation Ground,
Thorney Leys, Witney. OX28 5NP

FREE ENTRANCE AND FREE ACTIVITIES



**Ride on Time Toddler Vehicles * Junk Modelling - Art Avalanche *
Go Kart Party * Body Zorbing * Smoothie Bike * Muzo Akademy * DIY
Face Painting * Giant Bubbles * Creating Art * Homestart *
Fabric Upcycling - Groovy Su * Active Communities Team and more!!**

This is an open access event / NO childcare is provided / This event will be photographed /

Food and drinks will need to be purchased or please feel free to bring a picnic

**For further information please contact martin.gillett@oxonplay.org.uk / www.oxonplay.org.uk /
07436 270267**



THIS EVENT IS FUNDED AND SUPPORTED BY

WITNEY TOWN HALL CHARITY



BLENHEIM

TUNES ON THE SQUARE



CORN EXCHANGE
WITNEY

CORN EXCHANGE WITNEY AND
SMARTS FISH & CHIPS

LIVE MUSIC OUTSIDE THE CORN EXCHANGE
EVERY FRIDAY FROM 8PM

STARTING FRIDAY 13TH JUNE

13TH JUNE - MATT RUSS

20TH JUNE - WILDFLOWER WHISKY

27TH JUNE - TORRIN

4TH JULY - JODIE DOUGLAS

MORE ACTS TBA!
RAIN MOVES PERFORMER INSIDE THE BAR AT THE CORN EXCHANGE

THE DEALS

£14.50

FISH & CHIPS MEAL
WITH MUSHY PEAS OR CURRY SAUCE

£12.50

BOTTLE OF PROSECCO

£10

4 BOTTLED LAGERS





CORN EXCHANGE WITNEY WHAT'S ON?

REGULAR EVENTS

2025

Daytime Cinema
Every other Tuesday
1:00PM



Tea Dance
Every Wednesday
1:00PM



Open Mic Night
First Thursday of Every
Month
7:00PM



JULY

Friday 4 July
Witney Jazz

Saturday 5 July
*Witney Photo Group
Exhibition*

Tuesday 8 July
Daytime Cinema

Saturday 12 July
Mynt Image Craft Market

Saturday 12 July
Witney Blues

Saturday 19 July
Chicago Teen Edition

Tuesday 22 July
Daytime Cinema

Tuesday 30 July
Counters Creek (Folk Band)



MORE SHOWS TO BE ANNOUNCED!
For full listing, tickets and more info visit:
www.cornexchangewitney.org.uk





Friday 15th August 2025 Schedule

**9am: Official Town Cry (Corn Exchange) and afterwards
Flag Raising (Town Hall)**

**11am - Wreath Laying at the Church Green War Memorial.
Reinstating plaque and placing of Tribute flowers -
Arthur Titherington's memorial Bench on Church Green**

**10am - 4pm Witney Museum will be displaying some of the
photographs and books from the collection of
Arthur Titherington (Local Japanese POW and Chair of the
Japanese Labour Camp Survivors)**

**Royal British Legion will be selling poppies in the Market
Square**

Sunday 17th August

**Civic Service VJ Day 80 service at 10:45
St Mary's Church
Church Green - details to follow**

