



**WITNEY**  
TOWN COUNCIL

[www.witney-tc.gov.uk](http://www.witney-tc.gov.uk)



Witney Town Council  
Tel: 01993 704379  
Town Hall, Market Square,  
Witney, Oxon OX28 6AG

# Witney Town Council Autumn Newsletter 2025



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## **From Benches to Boardwalks: Discover What's New!**

Explore the latest developments and events in this edition of our Autumn Newsletter, covering everything from signage to cemeteries.



If you need this newsletter in any other format, please contact [communities@witney-tc.gov.uk](mailto:communities@witney-tc.gov.uk)

# COUNCILLORS AT THE CAFÉ

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

No purchase or booking required!



FIRST  
SATURDAY  
OF THE  
MONTH



Councillor Joy Aitman  
Witney East

Labour Party

Deputy Leader

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Mayor

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Councillor Owen  
Collins  
Witney South

Labour Party

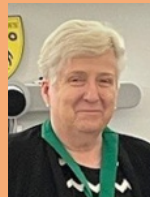
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Councillor Duncan  
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Witney North

Labour & Co-  
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Leader

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Councillor Dean  
Temple  
Witney North

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Who are your  
councillors?





**CORN EXCHANGE**  
WITNEY

# WHAT'S ON?

Theatre - Music - Cinema - Markets - Community Events

## Regular Events

Tunes on The Square  
Every Friday 8 - 10pm  
(until 5<sup>th</sup> Sept)

Tea Dance  
Every Wednesday  
1PM

Summer Holiday Cinema  
Every Tuesday  
5<sup>th</sup> Aug - 2<sup>nd</sup> Sept

## UPCOMING PROGRAM

Counters Creek - UK Folk  
30<sup>th</sup> July

Witney Jazz  
1<sup>st</sup> August

Mynt Image Market  
9<sup>th</sup> August

Quantum Theatre: Tale of  
Jemima Puddle Duck  
14<sup>th</sup> August

Open Mic Showcase  
28<sup>th</sup> August

Witney Jazz  
5<sup>th</sup> September

BTP: Radio Play  
11<sup>th</sup> - 13<sup>th</sup> September

Daytime Cinema  
16<sup>th</sup> September

Witney Blues  
19<sup>th</sup> September

The Denotones 60's  
Experience  
20<sup>th</sup> September

WhatYouWill Presents  
As You Like It  
27<sup>th</sup> September

Daytime Cinema  
30<sup>th</sup> September

Witney Jazz  
3<sup>rd</sup> October

Thrill Collins  
4<sup>th</sup> October

Cheltenham Singers  
5<sup>th</sup> October

Mynt Image Market  
11<sup>th</sup> October

Daytime Cinema  
14<sup>th</sup> October

Witney Wine Festival  
18<sup>th</sup> October

Witney Dramatic Society  
Bleak Expectations  
30<sup>th</sup> Oct - 1<sup>st</sup> Nov

Daytime Cinema  
4<sup>th</sup> November

Lady With The Hammer  
6<sup>th</sup> November

Witney Jazz  
7<sup>th</sup> November

Break The Rules  
Feat John Coghlan  
8<sup>th</sup> November

Witney Town Band  
16<sup>th</sup> November

Daytime Cinema  
18<sup>th</sup> November

Witney Blues  
21<sup>st</sup> November

Mynt Image Market  
22<sup>nd</sup> November



## PLUS MORE EVENTS TBA!

For full listing, tickets and more info visit:  
[www.cornexchangewitney.org.uk](http://www.cornexchangewitney.org.uk)





Thank you to everyone who joined us on Friday to mark the 80th anniversary of VJ Day. From wreath laying and guided walks at Tower Hill Cemetery to the moment of reflection at Arthur Titherington's bench, we hope the day offered a meaningful opportunity to remember those we lost and the end of WW2.

Paper cranes could be found decorating the Corn Exchange Café. Inspired by Sadako Sasaki, a young Japanese girl who folded over a thousand origami cranes in hope of healing, they serve as a global symbol of peace and remembrance.



The reinstating of Arthur Titherington's Bench with, from left to right, the Town Crier, the Mayor of Witney, a representative from the Round Table, the Deputy Lieutenant and the Mayor's Mace Bearer.

We also reinstated the plaque on Arthur Titherington's bench at Church Green. A World War II veteran and former Far East prisoner of war, Arthur dedicated his life to raising awareness of POW mistreatment and campaigning for justice. Alongside the Mayor of Witney, the Deputy Lieutenant, town councillors, and members of the public, purple flowers were laid, and Arthur's daughter shared a few moving words.



The Witney and District Museum's Exhibition at the Tower Hill Cemetery Chapel







A Jeep was featured on Market Square, courtesy of RBL Witney

Thank you to the Witney and District Museum for their support with our chapel exhibition, and to Sonia for leading the informative cemetery walks, which were particularly significant for one of the attendees, who was the nephew of a fallen soldier.

We are also deeply grateful to everyone who took the time to attend, participate, and support the day's events. Your presence made the commemoration truly special and helped ensure that the stories and sacrifices of the past are never forgotten.



The Union Flag was raised by the Mayor, Cllr Andy Bailey, above the Town Hall

# Schools In Bloom Winners

This year's contest was open to all Witney Primary Schools, featuring a specially invited 'guest barrow' entry from The Ice Centre. The theme was "fairy gardens," with schools tasked to create a barrow suitable for donation to a care home to look after once the voting has taken place.



As always, our participating schools exceeded expectations with their submissions. The barrows showcased vibrant, pollinator-friendly plants, a detail that consistently impresses our judges. Furthermore, all entries were eco-friendly, with no plastic components.

Almost 400 people voted for their favourites enduring the sweltering heat at the Witney Carnival!

**Mayor's Choice:** Councillor Andy Bailey selected Our Lady of Lourdes for their fern-filled, beautifully natural garden featuring tiny wooden figures.

**People's Choice Award:** The 'Secret Garden' by Windrush Primary School garnered the highest number of votes from stall visitors.

**Most Unusual Garden:** Madley Brook Primary School captured the attention of independent judges with their imaginative fairy school playground.

Once again, Witney Town Council has been truly impressed by the creativity, effort, and enthusiasm displayed by all entrants. Each barrow is simply stunning.



In Bloom Wheelbarrow Entries at the Witney Town Council Witney Carnival Stall





Madley Brook  
School Most Unusual  
Garden winner



Windrush  
Primary School  
People's Choice  
winner



Our Lady of Lourdes  
School Mayor's Choice  
winner

The wheelbarrows will soon be delivered to their respective care homes, where we are confident they will be cherished and nurtured as they were last year. The Mayor will visit the winning schools to present awards for the top entries, including the Most Unusual Garden and the People's Choice Award. Additionally, every participating school will receive a small token of appreciation for their involvement.

Congratulations to all entrants for another remarkable year of exceptional barrow designs! Thank you for your commitment and participation.



Town Councillors behind the In Bloom Wheelbarrows

# Investing in our Young People

## Witney Town Council's Youth Services Grants



Witney Town Council is proud to announce the allocation of its annual Youth Services Grant to eight youth-focused organisations across the town.

With a total grant budget of £20,000, the Council was unable to fund all applications in full. However, each submission was carefully considered, and funding was awarded to projects that most closely aligned with objectives of the scheme. Priority was given to inclusive, preventative initiatives that offer open-access support and benefits to young people in Witney—programmes that are clearly signposted, accessible, and provide measurable impact.

The successful applicants and their awarded projects are:

**Witney Buttercross Scouts** received £3,500 to purchase activity equipment. As one of the largest scout groups in the UK, with over 400 young people and 40 adult volunteers, they recently secured a 6.3-acre activity site and will use the funding to purchase tents, gazebos, and rope bridge-building supplies.

**4th Witney Girl Guides** were awarded £1,000 to help purchase tents and camping gear to support their outdoor activities.

**West Oxfordshire Levellers**, a not-for-profit Rugby League club, were granted £1,000 to run a Girls Rugby League Activity Day for school years 2–11. The event will promote inclusivity and break down barriers for girls new to team sports, focusing on enjoyment, teamwork, and confidence-building rather than athletic ability.



*Witney Town Council's 2024 VR Day in celebration of its 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary*



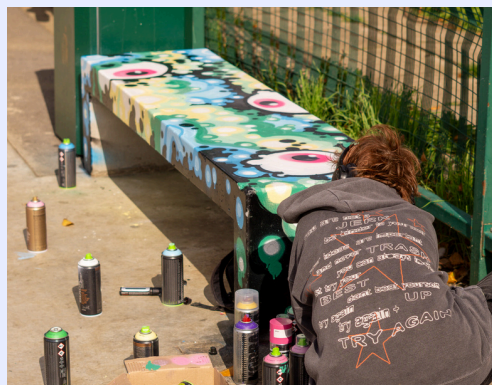
**Yellow Submarine** will receive £2000 to run its Witney Youth Club summer activities, which directly support families with learning disabled children aged 11-18 in Witney and West Oxfordshire in small groups of 12- 16 young people at a time. They offer families respite and provide stimulating, fun activities for their children out and about in the local community, building their confidence and friendships.

**Bright Futures Oxfordshire** was awarded £3,648 to expand the youth work of The Station by introducing parenting courses. The initiative will offer courses across schools and community settings— aimed at parents of children in Years 5 and 6, and for parents of teenagers—to provide much-needed support during critical transition periods.

**Witney Food Revolution** received £2,150 to run a food skills programme for teenagers. The initiative addresses the growing gap in essential cooking and meal-planning skills, aiming to reintroduce basic food knowledge through hands-on workshops.

**The Parish of Witney** received £2,500 to deliver an inclusive Enrichment Summer Camp in partnership with Abingdon and Witney College. Aimed at post-16 students, the programme will help young people build the skills and confidence needed to transition into further education, training, or employment.

**Friends of Springfield School** were granted £2,850 to fund therapeutic horse-riding sessions. These sessions, delivered in partnership with Riding for the Disabled, provide significant physical and emotional benefits to the children.



**Witney Town Council's 2024 Street Art Event at the Leys Skate Park**

31<sup>st</sup> OCTOBER 2025  
4:00PM - 6:00PM

More info at  
[cornexchange.org.uk](http://cornexchange.org.uk)



# Witney Youth Council Welcomes Le Touquet Youth Council

The Witney Youth Council were thrilled to welcome their counterparts from the Le Touquet Youth Council as part of a fantastic three-day visit to Witney under our town twinning partnership. We were grateful and privileged to be joined by the High Sheriff of Oxfordshire as a special guest, who arrived in full formal attire and gave a skilful introduction in French alongside the Mayor of Witney.

During their stay, our French guests enjoyed a true taste of British culture including a classic fish and chip supper at the Corn Exchange, explored some of our local attractions and visited Oxford with all its history.

It was a brilliant exchange of ideas, games (including everybody freeze in both languages!), culture, and friendship between our young people making connections and lasting memories - captured through a collection of polaroid photos!



Polaroid taken by the two youth councils



Polaroids taken by the two youth councils



Witney Youth Council and Le Touquet Youth Council during their Fish and Chip Supper





WITNEY  
TOWN COUNCIL  
at

# OPA Play Day

We had a great time last week painting and colouring with some of the young residents of Witney at the Burwell OPA Play Day

Witney Town Council is proud to be a partner in supporting such a valuable initiative. It's always encouraging to see completely free events like this giving families the chance to enjoy a variety of activities that might not normally be accessible. From music performances to go-karting, there was plenty to enjoy!

Take a look at the [Oxfordshire Play Association - OPA](#) Facebook page for more information on future events



Some leftover painted wood slices and a slap bracelet made by stall visitors



Witney Town Council's stall, nature crafts outside in the fresh air!



2025 OPA Play Day



# New Commemorative Facilities at Witney's Cemeteries

We've been busy making some improvements at Witney's cemeteries—and we're pleased to announce that a number of projects are now finished. **A new Children's Memorial Garden** has been completed at Windrush Cemetery. It is designed to be a simple and dedicated space for quiet reflection and remembrance of younger family members who have passed.



Children's Memorial Garden at Windrush Cemetery

This tree- shaded, peaceful area complements the existing Letters to Heaven post box and offers families another meaningful way to remember their loved ones. As part of the garden, **a Pebble Pond** gives families the option to purchase **a personalised engraved pebble**, displaying a name and date, as a lasting tribute. Other areas within the cemetery are designated for the scattering of ashes and burials.



The new oak monolith at Windrush Cemetery

Elsewhere in the cemetery, **a new oak monolith** which holds engraved memorial plaques, replaces a deteriorating tree that previously served this purpose. The monolith is sited within a small grove of trees and alongside the path that loops around the burial areas. Its wooden construction allows for easy removal and replacement of plaques that may require repair or refurbishment and distinguishes it from the more traditional stone grave memorials.



*Please send queries relating to Witney Town  
Council's Cemeteries to [info@witney-tc.gov.uk](mailto:info@witney-tc.gov.uk)  
or give us a call on 01993 704379*

In Tower Hill cemetery a **newly planted ashes scattering bed** is nearing completion. Thoughtfully designed, the bed has been planted in sections to allow the greenery to flourish naturally while providing dedicated spaces for the respectful scattering of ashes.

Located in Section 2 near the back wall, adjacent to the footpath leading to the Smiths Estate, the bed offers a peaceful and serene environment for remembrance and is a perfect addition to the quiet, contemplative atmosphere of the cemetery.



New ashes scattering bed in Tower Hill Cemetery

# You Said, We Did - Signage towards the Witney Lake and Country Park

Whether you're walking or cycling, our Witney Lake Visitors' Survey and Annual Residents' Survey revealed that many people only discover the Nature Reserve through word of mouth – and many don't even know it exists! It would be such a shame to miss out on such a beautiful place to walk

To help, our Works and Green Spaces Teams have recently installed new directional signage to guide you on your next visit.

You'll find an information board near the Church End of The Leys, along with three fingerposts showing the route and distance (in metres) to the lake.

You can also view the map online here: [www.witney-tc.gov.uk/parks-open-spaces/witney-lake-and-country-park-biodiversity-page/maps-and-leaflets](http://www.witney-tc.gov.uk/parks-open-spaces/witney-lake-and-country-park-biodiversity-page/maps-and-leaflets)



The map on the information board



A fingerpost being installed



Information Board after installation



# Developments to Witney's Open Spaces

We're pleased to share that a new **replacement boardwalk** has been installed by Oxfordshire County Council on the riverside path between Crown Lane and Farm Mill Lane, improving access and safety for everyone using the area.

This came about after a concern was raised at the Witney Annual Council Meeting in March, and our officers followed up with the County's Countryside Access Team to take action.

We always listen to concerns and act on them where we can in order to make a real difference in our community.



## Bench Renovation at the Leys

We've finished refreshing the benches at The Leys, giving them a new lease of life. Each one has been jet-washed, the wooden slats sanded and re-stained, and the metal ends repainted. They're now looking much cleaner, smarter, and ready to be enjoyed by everyone using the area. The operations team will be rejuvenating benches in other locations around the town over the coming weeks!



# Kick-off Time in Witney!

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The football season is officially here, and we're proud to support our grassroots clubs who make local sport something special.

A pre-season meeting with Clubs has taken place and our Operations Team has been hard at work behind the scenes- relaying turf, installing new goalposts, and freshly lining pitches across town to ensure everything is match-day ready.

Wishing the very best of luck to:

- FC Mills
- Spartan Rangers FC
- Tower Hill FC
- Witney Royals FC
- Witney Vikings Youth FC

Here's to a brilliant season filled with teamwork, community spirit, and great football We're looking forward to supporting each other on and off the pitch with continued collaboration and communication.



Pitch Renovations such as improved grass growth, marking refurbishment, and new goalposts



# Play Park Maintenance

The summer holidays gave us a good opportunity to talk about how we cared for our play areas and equipment and offered some information about the biggest play structures we had at the time.

The Black Forest Timber Towers located at the Leys and Burwell, which were great challenging climbs, had both been identified by ROSPA, who regularly inspected all our play equipment, as requiring some significant maintenance.

They have been on site at both play areas for more than a decade and are in need of a few replacement parts in addition to our routine care and maintenance.

Huck, the company that supplied and installed the original towers for us advise that there is a long lead time of an average of 6+ weeks on these parts, but we have placed the order and hope for that to be fulfilled as quickly as possible.



The Black Forest Timber Towers at the Leys

In the mean time they are not useable, so they will remain closed. We have lots of other fantastic challenges and opportunities for active play, with our Wheeled Sports and other equipment at our 11 play parks across the town. Many of these have accessible equipment.



# Cleaning and Clearing



Our team has cleaned the cycle prohibition signs at St Mary's Churchyard to make it clearer that cycling is not permitted in this area. Cyclists should either dismount and walk their bikes through the churchyard or use an alternative route.

While this isn't directly within the Town Council's remit, we've received feedback from residents about accidents and near misses, so we've stepped in to help improve safety and awareness and forwarded concerns to Oxfordshire County Council and the neighbourhood policing team.



Before and After of Signage at St Mary's Churchyard



Before and After of Signage at Witney Lake and Country Park

Our team also cleaned graffiti on Witney Lake and Country Park Signage, as well as removing some hazardous trees that had fallen in various places. While the area isn't part of our usual maintenance responsibility, the team was nearby and understood the importance of ensuring immediate access, especially with cyclists and wheelchair users in the area.



Before and After of Tree removal at Witney Lake and Country Park



Before and After of Tree removal at the path towards the ATP

We're proud to keep Witney looking its best, even in the areas that are outside of our remit. If you spot something that needs attention, please let us know through our inbox at [info@witney-tc.gov.uk](mailto:info@witney-tc.gov.uk) or phone into our reception at **01993 704379**.



# Bridge Street Silt Removal

Bridge Street Silt Removal Works were recently underway near the south-west corner of the **Bridge Street bridge**, where residents might have noticed some activity over the past few days.

This maintenance project involved the **removal of a significant build-up of silt** that had accumulated at the base of the bridge over time. Although Witney Town Council was not the riparian owner responsible for this section of the river, we undertook this work in partnership with the Witney Flood Group to help alleviate a long-standing issue affecting nearby residents.

The build-up of silt could disrupt the natural flow of the river and contribute to blockages or **potential flooding**. By removing it, we helped maintain both the health of the river and the safety of the surrounding area. A crane was used to carefully lift the silt, gradually restoring the riverbed to its natural level. It was important to note that this was a **partial removal**, not a complete clearance of all silt.

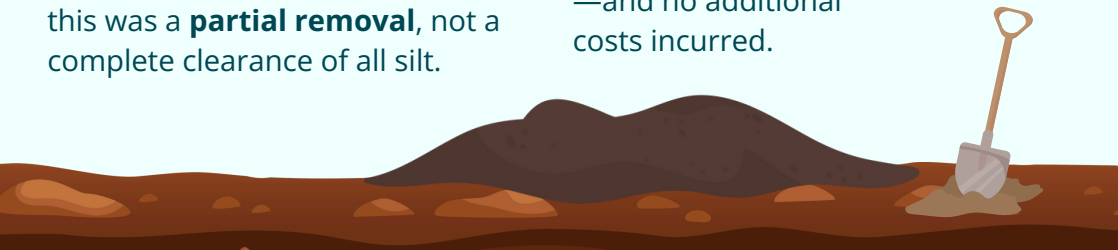


The river before de-silting



WTC Works Team removing the silt

Thanks to the meticulous planning by our Operations Team, all machinery was positioned away from the road, meaning there were no road closures or traffic diversions—and no additional costs incurred.



# HOW SAFE IS YOUR ELECTRIC BLANKET?

## FREE ELECTRIC BLANKET CHECKS IN OXFORDSHIRE

Make sure your blanket is safe to use this winter.

**JOIN US** and bring a friend  
for free refreshments  
and information about keeping safe and well.

### SEPTEMBER 2025

Monday	22nd	Rosehill, Oxford
Tuesday	23rd	Henley on Thames
Wednesday	24th	Bicester
Thursday	25th	Chipping Norton
Friday	26th	Abingdon

### OCTOBER 2025

Monday	6th	Risinghurst, Oxford
Tuesday	7th	Didcot
Wednesday	8th	Banbury
Thursday	9th	Witney
Friday	10th	Wantage

**FREE**

Limited collections from your house for those who are unable to get to us.  
Please tell them when you make your booking that you need a collection.

**BOOKING INFORMATION.** To book your safety check appointment  
Call: **01865 519800 Option 4** or Email: [duty.officer@oxfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:duty.officer@oxfordshire.gov.uk).  
Online Booking: <https://service.oxfordshire.gov.uk/blankettesting>  
(Pre-booked appointments only on a strictly first come first served basis)







WITNEY  
TOWN COUNCIL



# WITNEY ECO FAIR



**THURSDAY 9<sup>TH</sup>  
OCTOBER**

The Corn Exchange, Witney

9:30am - 3:00pm



## FREE EVENT!



Want to help the planet- and save money too?

Come along to Witney's Eco Fair and discover practical everyday ways to save money & live more sustainably



Explore a wide range of stalls from local businesses, charities, & community groups- all sharing eco-friendly ideas & solutions

Get inspired with tips on:

- Recycling & waste reduction
- Home energy saving tips
- Active travel & greener transport
- Caring for our countryside
- Supporting local wildlife
- Community environmental campaigns

# Children's Christmas Card Design Competition

Every year, Witney Town Council ask primary school-aged children in Witney to design the most festive drawing for the Mayor's Official Christmas Card.

There will be one winner and a few runners-up, all chosen by the Mayor, Cllr Andy Bailey.



Scan the QR for the template and more information

The template is a white rectangular card with a decorative border of colorful confetti. At the top left is the Witney Town Council logo, which features a stylized building and the text 'WITNEY TOWN COUNCIL'. To the right of the logo, the text 'Witney Town Council Christmas Card Competition 2025' is printed. Below this is a large, empty square box for drawing. Underneath the box are four lines for text: 'Name', 'Age', 'Primary School/ Witney Community Group e.g Brownies/ Beavers etc', each followed by a dashed line. At the bottom, there is a section for 'Design Guidelines' and a small note about submission details.

Witney Town Council  
Christmas Card 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](mailto: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

Deadline: 31<sup>st</sup> October 2025

## 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