



Abingdon-on-Thames Town Council

Community Committee

Report to the Annual Parish Meeting 2026

Partnership Grants

The Town Council continues to support and work with a number of very effective partnership organisations that serve the town.

In each case we provide a significant annual grant following a detailed report and bid from them, discuss our joint objectives with them and receive reports on their work during the year.

Organisations we work with in this way include:

The Abingdon Bridge – mental health and other support for young people

Abingdon Carousel – the family centre in South Abingdon

South & Vale CAB – advice to residents on benefits, consumer rights etc.

One Planet Abingdon – local action on climate change

Be Free Young Carers – supporting young carers

Abingdon Damascus Youth Project – youth outreach

Community Grants

The Committee also has a budget from which it makes smaller, one-off grants. These support a wide range of events and projects organised by voluntary and charitable organisations in the town or covering the area.

Grants were given to the following organisations this year:

Friends of Abingdon Civic Society, Oxfordshire Foster Care Association, One Planet Abingdon, Abingdon Rugby Club, Oxford Wood Recycling, Abingdon Youth Football Club, Home Start Southern Oxfordshire, Mental Health Natters, UCARE (Urology Cancer Research and Education), Abingdon Church Twinning Committee, Church of Our Lady and St Edmund, Abingdon (Warm Spaces grant), Abingdon Drama Club, Abingdon Schools Librarians Group, Assisted Reading for Children (ARCh), ATOM Festival, Life Space Project, Oxford Play Association, Thames Ridge Scouts and The Archway Foundation.

Abingdon County Hall Museum

The town museum, based in County Hall, continues to be hugely popular with town residents and visitors alike.

This year we re-established the Museum Sub-Committee so that a group of councillors could engage more regularly with the museum staff and Friends.

There has been the usual wide range of exhibitions this year. The current ones are South Indian Years, the Art and Poetry of Oswald Couldrey and The Artworks of Janet Boulton and Pat Russell. Soon to come is the Abingdon MG at 70 Exhibition.

The Museum also hosts regular talks, workshops, crafting sessions, archeology events, school groups and more.

The Museum at Night evening was a great success as always.

Our thanks go to the Museum team and the Abingdon Museum Friends who do so much to support the Museum.

Fun and Music in the Park

Our annual Fun and Music in the Park event with headliners New Joiv was as popular as Always.

Following feedback after the 2024 event we reverted to the the previous model of a free morning for families followed by a paid music event. This worked well and we will be running this year's event on a similar model, but also aiming to allow evening ticket holders to stay on site with some local bands playing in the beer tent between the morning and evening events.

We have decided that The Show Must Go On and that We Will Rock You this year with a brilliant Queen tribute band, The Bohemians, as our headliners on Saturday 27th June.

Michaelmas Fair

The Fair was very popular once again, continuing with the extended opening hours on the Sunday evening.

The Town Council now has a stronger arrangement in place which means that a larger proportion of the cost is being funded by the fair operators.

Clubs and Societies Day

We've traditionally held the Clubs and Societies Day, an opportunity for local groups to tell everyone what they do and recruit members, every two years.

We have decided to try out moving to an annual event and have already had a huge amount of interest in this year's event scheduled for Saturday 11th April.

The event will take place in the Guildhall, St. Nicholas Church and the Market Place and looks set to be a busy and enjoyable day, showing of the very best of Abingdon.

Other

We saw a further increase in the number of events taking place on the Market Place and continue to support new events as groups come forward. The recent Plant Based Market was very popular (and tasty!).

Use of the Guildhall historic rooms has been steady and we will be discussing how we can expand this in the future. We are looking at improved caretaker support.

We continue to support safety in the town by contributing towards the cost of the Abingdon PCSO.

We agreed to make an expression of interest to be the country's Town of Culture as part of the development of a Heritage and Culture Strategy for the town.

We continue to produce and distribute the popular 'Town Crier' magazine.

We are commissioning a new refreshed Town Council website and have increased the use of social media to promote our activities.

We have stepped up our engagement with local businesses and are aiming to continue to develop our relationship with them.

We have agreed that the Unicorn Theatre group can use the Old Magistrates Court and Robing Room in the Guildhall while the Abbey Buildings are being refurbished.

My thanks to our staff and the other committee members for their ongoing hard work.

Councillor Neil Fawcett,
Chair of the Community Committee.