



Town Crier



Abingdon-on-Thames Town Council News and Events

Summer 2026

81st Edition



Photo by kind permission of Martin Wackener

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ABINGDON COUNTY HALL MUSEUM



Cherished Clay

by **Kayleigh O'Donnell**

8 Aug - 27 September 2026

in the Attic Art Space

Wild Life

Abingdon in a changing climate

Abingdon Museum invites local artists, photographers, content makers and creatives to submit artworks, photos, video or mixed media for an exhibition about the natural environment around Abingdon in a changing climate.

Submission deadline 7 September 2026

to abingdon.museum@abingdon.gov.uk

Exhibition dates 3 October to 23 December

This is an exhibition project in partnership with One Planet Abingdon, Abingdon Carbon Cutters, Abingdon Naturalists Society and Green Gym & Abingdon Camera Club.

Exhibition
4th July to
27th September

Meet the Anglo-Saxons!

on Sat 19th September
at the Museum.

Free Event

The little Basement Museum
is open on Thursdays between 11am and 2pm
please scan the QR code to book your free tickets



Cinema to stay in Town Centre

Town Council makes agreement

The Council is happy to announce that it has sold the Abbey Hall to the Abbey Hall Cinema Ltd after completing the necessary formalities. This will allow the cinema operators both to continue to run the cinema and to provide significant improvements to the building which the Council was unable to afford.

In addition, the historic Guildhall will now have access to a new kitchen which will enable residents to enjoy a far wider range of events in the Guildhall's beautiful and historic rooms.

Both of these developments are in accordance with the council's policy to revitalise our town centre both in the day and the evening.

“We have worked very hard to ensure a thriving cinema in the centre of Abingdon. The transfer of Abbey Hall to Abbey Hall Cinema Ltd will now give the cinema operator confidence to carry out their ambitious investment plans,” said Cllr. Oliver Forder, Chair of the Abbey Hall Working Party.

“We have been assiduous in working through the legalities to safeguard the Guildhall and the publicly owned areas around the building, whilst allowing the cinema to go from strength to strength.”

The legal documents for the sale were formally signed at an Extraordinary Council Meeting held on Tuesday 12th May.



Mayor's Report

A year of community, reflection & impact



As my term as Mayor of Abingdon-on-Thames has now ended, I find myself reflecting on what has been a truly meaningful and memorable year. It was a privilege to represent our town and to witness, first-hand, the strength, kindness, and spirit that make Abingdon such a special place.

Over the past year, I have had the honour of attending a wide range of events that reflect the diversity and heart of our community. Recently I have attended the unveiling of the Monk statue, celebrated our rich heritage, and had the powerful experience of visiting the London Air Ambulance helipad, a moment that truly highlighted the life-saving work carried out every day. I have also been privileged to attend more personal and reflective occasions, including a Celebration of Life service, which reminded me of the importance of compassion and community support during difficult times. Events such as the High Sheriff Declaration and the vibrant Clubs and Societies Day showcased the energy, commitment, and passion of the many groups that contribute so much to life in our town.

One of the most significant moments of my year was hosting my Civic Service. It was a truly special occasion, bringing together people from across our community, and providing an opportunity to reflect on service, gratitude, and the shared values that unite us.

Throughout my mayoral year, I have been especially proud to support and raise awareness for both my Mayoral charity, Octopus the Oxford Colon Cancer Trust, and to support the Mayor of the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea in raising funds for the London Air Ambulance. Seeing the generosity and support from our community has been both humbling and inspiring.

After handing over the Chain of office on 18 May, I would like to extend my heartfelt thanks to everyone who has supported me throughout this year, colleagues, Council staff, community groups, volunteers, and residents. Your dedication is what makes Abingdon thrive.

It has been an honour and I send my best wishes to my successor, Cllr Andrew Skinner. Cllr Rawda Jehanli

Mayor's Report

Welcome to our new Mayor



I am writing this a few days before the Mayor Making, so I obviously can't say much about being Mayor, but I would like to say a little about the background to my choice of the Abingdon Music Centre as my Mayor's Charity.

Many youngsters tell me they never sing together in school, let alone have the opportunity to play

in a school orchestra. Opportunities tragically lost, in my opinion.

Many of my own school memories relate to music: at Primary school we had booklets published by the BBC in conjunction with their Radio for Schools programmes on the wireless(sic). These included traditional and folk songs from around Britain.

Almost my first memory of secondary school was singing the School Song – it was in Latin, and I never learned the words. I did, however, learn the words to most of the songs in *The Student Prince*, because it was the school Christmas Musical.

I could say a lot about the school orchestra (we were once conducted by Carmen Dragon), but I will simply say that working together to produce music is an experience that brings an enormous feeling of wellbeing. The relationship between music and health, both mental and physical, which is obvious to many, is becoming increasingly substantiated by research.

For the youngest children Abingdon Music Centre offers fun pre-school sessions. For older children there is a guitar club and work with Music Flood partners to give primary school pupils the chance to play in an orchestra. Adults can join their community orchestra, a recorder group or one of their three choirs, including ACCord their community choir. Maybe a Ukelele band too? They often perform at community events and help fund-raising for other charities. No less important is their outreach work in care homes providing stimulation and fun for residents.

Their office is based at Larkmead school but they hire venues across Abingdon for classes. They try to keep class fees as low as possible and to reduce them for those who are on benefits. We are hoping that the additional funding as the Mayor's Charity will enable them to further broaden their offering.

Look online for The Abingdon Music Centre or pick up a leaflet from the Town Council office. Cllr Andrew Skinner. www.abingdonmusic.org.uk

New Benches

Outdoor Services News



The Town Council has recently installed two new public benches to provide additional seating and improve accessibility around the town. This follows requests from residents who like to have some where to sit when they are walking around, particularly those who can't manage a long walk without a break.

One bench has been installed at the corner of Bath Street and Letcombe Avenue, replacing the previous bench that had unfortunately been removed following vandalism. A second bench has been placed on Bridge Street, outside Roysse Court and next to the Crown & Thistle, offering a convenient resting place for residents and visitors using this busy route.

Both benches are made from durable recycled plastic, chosen for its strength, low maintenance requirements and long lifespan. Using recycled materials also supports a more sustainable approach to improving public spaces.

We hope these new benches provide welcoming places for people to pause, rest and enjoy their surroundings, while helping make the town more comfortable and accessible for everyone.

Window restoration works

What's happening?



The council is carrying out specialist restoration works to repair and improve the Guildhall's original wooden windows, preserving their historic character while improving performance, durability and energy efficiency.

The works will include repairing timber frames, replacing damaged glazing putty, repainting external woodwork, installing draught-proofing and carrying out repairs to seals and surrounding areas. Secondary glazing will also be installed in selected locations to improve insulation.

These improvements will help reduce heat loss, prevent draughts and improve the building's

environmental performance while extending the lifespan of the existing windows.

Repairing the original windows rather than replacing them also reduces waste and the carbon impact of new materials, making this a more sustainable approach.

Long-term benefits include improved comfort, better window operation, enhanced energy efficiency and the preservation of the building's historic features. Following completion, the windows will be covered by workmanship and paint warranties, with maintenance guidance provided to support their long-term condition.

Fishing

The Thames in Abingdon

16 June marks the start of the new fishing season and the end of the 'close' season which is in place to protect spawning fish.

Abingdon owns the rights to the fisheries from bank to bank including the bed and therefore fishing from anywhere within the waters requires a permit. This is not necessarily the case in other towns but Abingdon's fishing rights are unique and historic. Many fishermen in the town have permits to enable them to fish from boats.

Abingdon-on-Thames Town Council issues permits to fish the river Thames in Abingdon during the fishing season from 16 June to 14 March each year. Last year it issued over 300 permits to local permanent residents to fish and a further 50 junior permits, free of charge. If you live within the boundary marked on the Town Council fishing map there is no charge for a permit but proof of address must be shown.

If you live further afield and are not eligible for a free permit, you can still fish the Abingdon waters by purchasing a day or season permit from their offices.

Day permit	£12.50	Season permit	£30.50
Concession*	£6.75	Concession*	£18.20

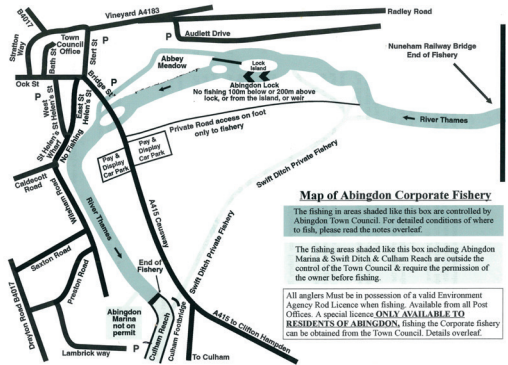
*Concessions – over 60 & children 5-16 years old

Permits should be kept with anglers when fishing as from time-to-time Council Staff, the Fisheries Officer or the Volunteer Water Bailiff who patrol the waters may ask to see it.

All anglers over the age of 13 need a rod licence from the Environment Agency. Rod licences are free for children aged 13-16. Children under this age must only fish if accompanied by an adult in possession of a rod licence and permit.

If you would like a permit please visit our Information Centre at Roysse Court offices, OX14 3HU, open weekdays 10.00 – 16.00 or email enquiries@abingdon.gov.uk Day permits are also available at AV Boats on Nag's Head island at weekends.

For full details, maps of residency, maps of the fisheries and match fees, please visit the Abingdon-on-Thames Town Council website: www.abingdon.gov.uk



Grant Recipient

The Life Space Project – Moments of Joy



Across Abingdon, recent creative pop-ups and community projects have been bringing people together to reimagine shared spaces through art, nature and creativity.

At the heart of this is **Moments of Joy**, a new public art project shaped through community pop-ups, where people of all ages are invited to take part, share ideas and help influence a final artwork for a shared public space. The project has been gratefully supported by Abingdon Town Council, alongside further funding from Soha, South Oxfordshire Housing Association, helping to make these opportunities free and accessible to the local community.

The work forms part of Life Projects, supported through The Life Space Project CIC, bringing together creative opportunities across Abingdon with a focus on sustainability, confidence-building, developing skills and creating accessible spaces for people to express themselves.

A recent Creative Seasons project at Carousel Family Centre saw families co-create ideas for a new mural, alongside making light catchers using reimaged materials. Alongside this, Bloom pop-ups continue to invite people to connect with nature through simple creative activities including planting, making and creating together outdoors.

The next stage for **Moments of Joy** is to shape a new public artwork, co-created with the community and placed in a shared space that feels open, visible and connected to the people who use it every day.

If you'd like to join our creative community, keep an eye out for upcoming pop-ups and workshops. We're also always keen to hear about spaces that could be reimaged through future projects. www.life-projects.co.uk

Open to Individuals, Communities,
Schools and Colleges

PATCH FOR THE PLANET

BIODIVERSITY COMPETITION

Make a BIG difference with just one patch!



How to Enter

Take a before photo of your
chosen space

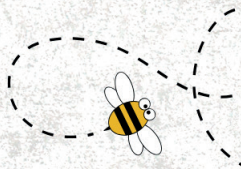
Plant, mow and grow! Get
creative in a way that
supports biodiversity

Take a transformation
picture!

Submit to
enquiries@abingdon.gov.uk by
1st July to be in with a chance
to win £1000!

Tag us in your transformation #ATCPatchForPlanet

1st 2nd & 3rd
Prizes
Awarded
in Autumn
2026



Dates for your diary

- 23 June Zumba Class, West Wing Studio, Coxeter House 11.00 **every Tuesday**
- 25 June NT Live: Les Liaisons Dangereuses, Amey Theatre 19.00
- 27 June Local Excellence Market, Market Place
- 27 June Chatty Walk, The Dog's Spot, High Street 10.00 **every Saturday**
- 27 June Grim Dark Gaming Society, Willows Shake Shop 10.30 **every Saturday**
- 27 June **FUN IN THE PARK, Abbey Gardens 10.30 followed by
MUSIC IN THE PARK, Abbey Gardens 17.00**
- 27 June Puppy Social, The Dog's Spot, High Street 11.30 **every Saturday**
- 01 July Dementia Café, Abingdon Court Care Home 14.00 **first Wednesday
every month**
- 01 July Abingdon Speakers' Club, Kings Head & Bell 19.30 **first Wednesday
every month**
- 04 July Paint Abingdon Pink, Market Place & Town Centre
- 04 July Repair Café, Unit 25 Bury Street 10.30
- 09 July Oxfordshire County Council, Fostering Awareness Stall, Market Place 11.00
- 11 July Mr Hemmings' Abingdon Traditional Morris Dancers, Day of Dance,
Market Place
- 17 July Farmers' Market, Market Place
- 17 July Swan Upping – The Uppers reach Abingdon Bridge approximately 17.00
- 18 July Free Bike Checks, Under Museum Arches 10.00
- 18 July Abingdon Distillery 7th Birthday Party, Coxeter House 12.00
- 01 Aug Repair Café, Unit 25 Bury Street 10.30
- 15 Aug Free Bike Checks, Under Museum Arches 10.00
- 21 Aug Farmers' Market, Market Place
- 22 Aug Lighthouse Church Singing Event, Market Place 10.00
- 29 Aug Local Excellence Market, Market Place
- 05 Sep Abingdon Healthfest, Market Place

**SAVE THE DATES HERITAGE OPEN DAYS 19 & 20 SEPTEMBER –
From Agriculture to Atoms.**

The history of everyday working life in Abingdon-on-Thames



FUN IN THE PARK

FREE

K-POP SUPERSTARS

PROJECT BAND

SATURDAY 27TH JUNE
FROM 10:30AM-5PM

KPOP SUPERSTARS
DIY FACEPAINTING
DJ MIX MAKE YOUR OWN MUSIC
INFLATABLES
AND SO MUCH MORE!



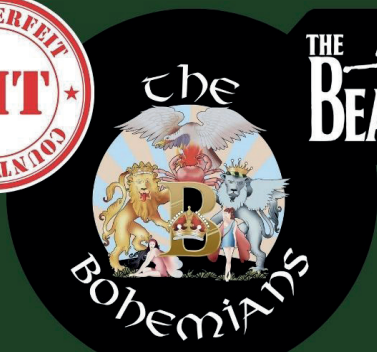
ABBEY GARDENS
ABINGDON

TICKET ACCESS ONLY

MUSIC IN THE PARK

FROM 5PM

SCAN HERE



THE DUNG BEATLES

MILESTONES
OF MOTOWN, DISCO, FUNK & SOUL