

Stronger Communities Committee Meeting of Witney Town Council



Monday, 15th June, 2026 at 6.00 pm

To members of the Stronger Communities Committee - T Ashby, G Meadows, A Bailey, D Enright, A Mubin, S Simpson, J Doughty and R Smith (and all other Town Councillors for information).

You are hereby summonsed to the above meeting to be held in the **Gallery Room, The Corn Exchange, Witney** for the transaction of the business stated in the agenda below.

Admission to Meetings

All Council meetings are open to the public and press unless otherwise stated.

Numbers of the public will be limited, with priority given to those who have registered to speak on an item on the agenda. Any member of the public wishing to attend the meeting should contact the Committee Clerk derek.mackenzie@witney-tc.gov.uk in advance.

Recording of Meetings

In accordance with the Openness of Local Government Bodies Regulations 2014, public meetings may be filmed, audio-recorded, or photographed. Anyone intending to record the proceedings is asked, as a courtesy, to inform the Committee Clerk before the meeting begins.

This meeting will be broadcast live via Microsoft Teams and recorded; by attending or participating, you consent to the recording and public sharing of audio and video, which may be made available for later viewing. For details on how personal data is handled, please see the [Privacy Notice](#)

To view the meeting please follow this link [Stronger Communities Meeting 15.06.2026](#)

Agenda

1. Apologies for absence

To consider apologies and reasons for absence.

Committee members who are unable to attend the meeting should notify the Committee Clerk derek.mackenzie@witney-tc.gov.uk **prior to the meeting**, stating the reason for absence.

Standing Order 8(e)(v) permits the appointment of substitute Councillors to a Committee whose role is to replace ordinary Councillors at a meeting of a Committee if ordinary Councillors of the Committee have confirmed to the Proper Officer **before** the meeting that they are unable to attend.

2. Declarations of Interest

Members are reminded to declare any disclosable pecuniary interests in any items under consideration at this meeting in accordance with the Town Council's Code of Conduct.

3. Election of Vice-Chair

To elect a Vice-Chair of the Committee for the 2026/27 Municipal Year.

4. **Minutes** (Pages 4 - 9)
 - a) To receive and consider the minutes of the Stronger Communities Committee held on 23 March 2026.
 - b) Matters arising from the minutes not covered elsewhere on the agenda. (Questions on the progress of any item).

5. **Public Participation**

The meeting will adjourn for this item.

Members of the public may speak for a maximum of **five minutes** each during the period of public participation, in line with Standing Order 25. Matters raised shall relate to the following items on the agenda.

6. **Committee Terms of Reference** (Pages 10 - 12)

To receive and consider the report of the Deputy Town Clerk.

7. **Finance Report** (Pages 13 - 20)

To receive and consider the report of the R.F.O concerning the financial position of items under the remit of this Committee.

8. **Annual Residents Survey Results** (Pages 21 - 29)

To receive and consider the report of the Deputy Town Clerk concerning the results of the 2026 annual residents satisfaction survey for this Committee.

Communications

9. **Communications Report** (Pages 30 - 42)

The Committee received and considered the report of the Communications & Community Engagement Officer (C&CEO).

Community Engagement

10. **Community Engagement Report** (Pages 43 - 48)

To receive and consider the report of the Communications & Community Engagement Officer.

a) **Witney Forum Minutes** (Pages 49 - 51)

To receive the minutes of the meeting of the Witney Forum held on 24 March 2026.

b) **Special Effect Charity** (Pages 52 - 53)

To receive a letter of thanks from SpecialEffect.

11. **Youth Council** (Pages 54 - 57)

To receive the report of the Communications & Engagement Administrative Assistant.

12. **Youth Council Minutes** (Pages 58 - 60)

To receive the minutes of the Youth Council meeting held on 14 May 2026.

13. **Youth Services & Grant Applications** (Pages 61 - 170)

To receive and consider the report of the Deputy Town Clerk.

Street Furniture & Infrastructure

14. **Litter picking cabinets** (Pages 171 - 175)

To receive and consider the report of the Facilities Administrative Assistant.



Town Clerk

Agenda Item 4

STRONGER COMMUNITIES COMMITTEE MEETING OF THE WITNEY TOWN COUNCIL

Held on Monday, 23 March 2026

At 6.00 pm in the Gallery Room, The Corn Exchange, Witney

Present:

Councillor T Ashby (Chair)

Councillors:	R Smith	D Enright
	G Meadows	J Treloar
	D Edwards-Hughes	O Collins (In place of A Bailey)
Officers:	Adam Clapton	Deputy Town Clerk
	Derek Mackenzie	Senior Administrative Officer & Committee Clerk
Others:	James Edney	Youth Development Officer (WODC)

SC142 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors A Mubin and A Bailey, Councillor O Collins attended as a substitute for the latter.

SC143 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest from Members or officers.

SC144 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting of the Stronger Communities committee held on 26 January 2026 were received.

Resolved:

That, the minutes of the Stronger Communities committee held on 26 January 2026 be approved as a correct record of the meeting and be signed by the chair.

SC145 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

The Committee adjourned for this item.

The Committee received representations from James Edney, Youth Development Officer for West Oxfordshire District Council concerning Agenda Item 10

James provided the Committee with an update on actions being taken following the 2022 Youth Needs Assessment, which highlighted ongoing gaps in local youth provision and the need for stronger, more sustainable support for young people. He also provided updates on several other

youth issues affecting the town and potential future projects and available funding opportunities.

The Committee reconvened.

Following his contribution James Edney left the meeting at 6:32pm

SC146 **FINANCE REPORT**

The Committee received and considered the report of the Responsible Financial Officer (RFO) detailing income and expenditure for budgets which were the responsibility of the committee.

Resolved:

1. That, the report be noted and,
2. That, the management accounts of the Stronger Communities Committee for the period 31 December 2025 be approved.

SC147 **COMMUNICATIONS REPORT**

The Committee received the report of the Communications & Community Engagement Officer.

Members noted the apparent disappointing delivery rate of the spring newsletter and heard that Officers would follow this up further with the distributor. The Committee looked forward to receiving the results of the annual survey in due course, acknowledging it was still early in the return period.

The Committee welcomed the proposal to include local charity information within the digital newsletter. They also expressed their satisfaction with the successful use of Vevox polling application at the Annual Town Meeting and agreed it should be utilised for future engagement and consultation exercises.

Recommended:

1. That, the report be noted and,
2. That, the press coverage since the last meeting be noted and,
3. That, officers investigate the delivery issues with the spring newsletter further with delegated authority to the Deputy Town Clerk to follow up with the distributor as necessary; and
4. That, the Committee consider additional uses of Vevox for future engagement and consultation activities.

SC148 **COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT REPORT**

The Committee received and considered the report of the Communications & Community Engagement Officer (C&CEO).

The Committee welcomed the plans for the St George's Day event and considered the Council's participation in the Great British Spring Clean. Members agreed unanimously that while the latter initiative should be supported, this should be done virtually by advertising the availability of the Council's litter-picking kits, and that no budget would therefore be allocated for future years.

The Committee was enthusiastic about the request from Thames Valley Orienteering and welcomed the proposal positively. Members also heard the idea to repurpose leftover spring flowers for planting within Windrush Cemetery.

The Committee noted the free domestic-abuse awareness training offered by *Reducing the Risk* and agreed that an invitation should be extended to all Councillors. It was further agreed that the annual Christmas competitions should proceed, with officers again seeking sponsorship for the festive period.

The Committee received an update from a Member regarding the forthcoming visit from Le Touquet and Unterhaching and, subject to approval by Full Council, it was agreed that an informal drinks reception be arranged in the Corn Exchange Café, with a proposed date of 1 May.

Recommended:

1. That, the report be noted and;
2. That, the plans for the St George's Day event be noted and welcomed; and
3. That, the Council support the Great British Spring Clean virtually by promoting the availability of litter-picking kits and,
4. That, the request from Thames Valley Orienteering be supported and welcomed; and
5. That, the proposal to use leftover spring flowers for planting at Windrush Cemetery be approved; and
6. That, an invitation to the free domestic-abuse awareness be extended to all Councillors; and
7. That, the Christmas competitions proceed for 2026, and officers seek sponsorship for the festive period; and
8. That, subject to approval by Full Council, an informal drinks reception for the twinning towns be arranged at the Corn Exchange Café for May.

SC149 **WITNEY FORUM MINUTES**

The Committee received the notes of the Witney Forum meeting held on 29 January 2026.

Resolved:

That, the minutes of the Witney Forum meeting held on 29 January 2026 be noted.

SC150 **YOUTH COUNCIL MINUTES**

The Committee received the report of the Communications & Engagement Administration Assistant along with the minutes of the Youth Council meeting held on 11 March 2026

Members received an update from a Youth Council Mentor on the recent activity of the Witney Youth Council and were pleased to note that the group was gathering momentum.

Members were advised that the planned *Taste of Witney* event was struggling to attract interest from local restaurants despite the efforts of Youth Council members. In light of this, the Committee discussed potential alternative engagement activities, including the possibility of hosting an event similar to the successful *Pizza and Politics* session previously delivered by Oxfordshire County Council, should the *Taste of Witney* event not come to fruition.

Recommended:

1. That, the verbal update be noted and
2. That, the minutes of the Youth Council meeting held on 11 March 2026 be noted and,
3. That, officers and Youth Council members explore an alternative event, such as a *Pizza and Politics*-style session, should the *Taste of Witney* event not proceed due to limited restaurant engagement.

SC151 **WITNEY: PAST PRESENT & FUTURE WORKING PARTY**

The Committee received the report of the minutes of the working party meeting held on 18 February 2026.

Members welcomed confirmation of the events to be held on St Georges Day and the weekend to follow and thanked officers for their work and the posters advertising the event. Additionally, they acknowledged the arrangements for the follow up meeting for residents to provide feedback which was scheduled to be held on 23 May 2026 in the Corn Exchange.

Resolved:

That, the minutes of the Witney Past, Present & Future Working Party meeting held on 18 February 2026 be noted.

SC152 **YOUTH SERVICES**

During the public participation item earlier in the meeting the committee had verbal update from James Edney, Youth Development Officer at WODC regarding his work which built on the findings of the Youth Needs Assessment carried out in 2022.

James had outlined the key issues identified in the assessment, particularly the gaps in youth provision and the challenges faced by organisations delivering services for young people. James explained how his work involves supporting and connecting local groups through the West Oxfordshire Youth Partnership. He advised that much of his focus was on helping organisations strengthen their capacity, improve collaboration, and work towards more stable and secure long-term provision for young people.

Members noted with concern that James' role was funded on a one-year fixed-term contract, which created uncertainty around the ability to deliver sustainable, long-term projects. This concern was amplified by the potential implications of any future move toward unitary authority control.

The Committee also discussed current youth club provision in Witney. It was acknowledged that some provision existed at St Mary's Church, Welcome Church, and through the detached youth outreach delivered by The Station; however, Members agreed that additional provision may be needed to address gaps highlighted in the Youth Needs Assessment.

James had also updated the Committee on a developing campaign addressing violence against women and girls (VAWG). He outlined proposals to work with a theatre company to deliver awareness-raising sessions focused on issues such as unwanted attention. Members were pleased to hear that the initiative had received support from Oxfordshire County Council, West

Oxfordshire District Council and Thames Valley Police, with £25,000 of a targeted £50,000 in funding secured to date.

In addition to the verbal update provided by James, the Committee received and considered the report of the Deputy Town Clerk concerning the forthcoming launch of the Youth Services Grant.

Members reviewed the proposed timescale for the application and assessment process and agreed unanimously that the evaluation of applications should follow the same approach as the previous year, with delegated authority to a group consisting of the Leader, Deputy Leader, the Chair of this Committee, and the Deputy Town Clerk.

Recommended:

1. That, the report be noted and,
2. That, the evaluation of Youth Services grants proceeds under the delegation listed above.

SC153 **WITNEY TOWN CENTRE FORUM**

The Committee received an update from the Deputy Town Clerk advising that invitations to relevant stakeholders had been issued in order to reestablish the Town Centre Forum.

Members were informed that a provisional date of 7 April had been set for the first meeting.

Resolved:

That, the update on the issuing of invitations and the proposed date of the first Town Centre Forum meeting be noted.

SC154 **WODC CONSULTATION - PROPOSED CONTROLS RELATING TO DOG FOULING**

The Committee received a verbal update from Officers confirming that the forthcoming consultation had been postponed by West Oxfordshire District Council due to the upcoming election period.

Resolved:

That, the update on the postponement of the consultation by West Oxfordshire District Council be noted.

SC155 **WITNEY TOWN CENTRE IMPROVEMENTS**

The Committee received a verbal update from the Deputy Town Clerk on the progress of West Oxfordshire District Council regarding town centre improvement matters.

Members were advised that proposals from WODC for a bench outside the Shake Shop and additional bin stores were progressing, with the town councils Head of Estates & Operations continuing to liaise directly with WODC on these matters.

In relation to the unspent Section 106 (S106) funding designation for the Town Centre, Officers confirmed that the S106 Officer had advised that the Town Council's proposal for a parklet fell outside the geographical area covered by the available funding. Members noted that WODC had

requested further information and agreed that this could be considered further at a future meeting of the Witney Town Centre Forum, recognising that any such proposal would need to be fully costed, researched and, if progressed, potentially delivered by the Town Council.

Members also discussed wider wayfinding opportunities within the town and considered whether these could incorporate an arts trail as part of a cohesive approach to town centre navigation. It was suggested that a themed concept, such as a “sheep trail”, may be an engaging option. It was agreed that these ideas also be deferred to the Witney Town Centre Forum for further exploration.

Recommended:

1. That, the verbal update be noted; and
2. That, further discussion on potential town centre improvement opportunities, including the parklet proposal, be referred to the Witney Town Centre Forum, noting that any future proposals would require full costing, research and potential delivery by the Town Council; and
3. That, the consideration of enhanced wayfinding options, including the potential for an arts trail or a themed “sheep trail”, be deferred to the Witney Town Centre Forum for further discussion.

SC156 **THIRD PARTY EVENTS**

The Committee received and considered the report of the Venue & Events Officer which provided details of the past and upcoming events held on the Council’s land.

Resolved

That, the report be noted and updates be welcomed.

The meeting closed at: 7.33 pm

Chair

STRONGER COMMUNITIES COMMITTEE



Agenda Item: Terms of Reference

Meeting Date: Monday, 15th June 2026

Contact Officer: Deputy Town Clerk

The purpose of this report is for Members to review and recommend terms of reference for the Committee for the forthcoming municipal year.

Background

At the Annual Council Meeting held on 6th May 2026, it was resolved that terms of reference for each Committee would be reviewed at each meeting in the current meeting cycle.

Current Situation

The current terms of reference for this Committee are:

- a) To acknowledge and promote the value and contributions of voluntary groups, local organisations, and community interest companies that deliver social value to our community—supporting and facilitating services, whether through partnerships or ad hoc arrangements, in accordance with relevant policies and legislation;
- b) To oversee community engagement with all residents of Witney, relevant stake holders and businesses, including, but not limited to conducting an annual resident satisfaction survey to gauge feedback;
- c) To recognise the importance of inclusivity by ensuring all voices in the community are heard and represented, advocating for underrepresented groups in line with equality legislation;
- d) To engage proactively with young people, supporting and promoting youth services where possible, and to oversee the operations of the Witney Youth Council;
- e) To oversee and maintain the infrastructure owned by the Town Council, including street furniture in the town centre (e.g. seating, litter bins, and salt bins), bus shelters, CCTV, noticeboards, and Christmas light displays;
- f) To organise and deliver civic events, such as Remembrance, in line with the approved programme and within the budget set by the Council;
- g) To work in collaboration with other partnerships on town wide events such as the Christmas Lights switch-on and others that may arise from time to time;
- h) To co-ordinate national commemorations, special community events, and initiatives in accordance with the Council's agreed programme and budget;
- i) To oversee the Council's communications and publications, including the website, newsletter, and social media platforms;
- j) To administer the Children & Young People Grant funds, considering applications and/or funding on an annual basis and making recommendations to the Policy, Governance & Finance Committee;
- k) To oversee the local Schools in Bloom competition and the Council's entry into the regional In Bloom Competition;

- l) Within all its decision making ensure that the green environment and biodiversity is protected and enhanced in line with the Council's Climate Emergency aspirations;
- m) The Membership of the Committee shall consist of 6 Members plus the Town Mayor and The Leader of the Council ex officio with voting rights;
- n) The quorum of the Committee shall be 4 Members.

The Committee is asked if it would like to make any amendments to the terms for the forthcoming municipal year.

Corporate Strategy

The Council's Strategic Plan 2025–29 sets out the Council's long-term priorities and direction, supporting its mission to 'make Witney a great place to live, work and visit.' This report contributes to the delivery of the following strategic pillar of the plan:

1. A Forward Looking Town Council

Impact Assessments

The Town Council has a duty to consider the effects of its decisions, functions and activities on equality, biodiversity, and crime & disorder. Consideration should also be given to effects on the environment, given the Council's Climate Emergency declaration in 2019.

- a) Equality – see text in report (c) and (d)
- b) Biodiversity – no direct implications.
- c) Crime & Disorder - no direct implications.
- d) Environment & Climate Emergency - see text in the report.

Risk

In decision making Councillors should give consideration to any risks to the Council and any action it can take to limit or negate its liability.

Without clear terms of reference, Council committees risk role confusion, weak accountability, legal challenges, inefficient decision-making, and poor alignment with Council objectives. Clear and regularly reviewed terms of reference are essential for accountable, transparent, and effective committee operations.

Social Value

Social value is the positive change the Council creates in the local community within which it operates.

The Stronger Communities Committee delivers social value by supporting local organisations, promoting community cohesion, and addressing the needs of residents. Through grant funding, partnership working, and community initiatives, it helps reduce isolation, improve wellbeing, encourage civic participation, and strengthen the resilience and inclusivity of the local community.

Financial implications

- The work of the Committee is funded from pre-defined budgets.

Recommendations

Members are invited to note the report and;

1. Review the terms of reference; and
2. Consider any changes to the terms of reference; and
3. Recommend such changes be made to Full Council on 13th July 2026.

STRONGER COMMUNITIES COMMITTEE



Agenda Item: Finance Report
Meeting Date: Monday 15 June 2026
Contact Officer: Responsible Financial Officer

Should Members have any queries about this report advance notice would be appreciated, in writing, by 9am on the day of the meeting to allow for a full response at the meeting.

The purpose of this report is to present to the Committee the draft management accounts for the services delivered by this Committee during the financial year 2025-26.

Background

Detailed income and expenditure statements for budgets which are the responsibility of this committee are attached. The period to which this report relates is 1 April 2025 to 31 March 2026.

Current Situation

The draft management accounts being presented are those for 2025-26. The cost centres for which this committee has responsibility are:

Cost centre	Service
402	Community Infrastructure
408	Community Activities

Steady progress is being made on closing down the 2025-26 accounts ahead of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return being drafted for approval at the Council meeting on 22 June. However, before this date there are likely to be further adjustments made which will affect the final management accounts for the cost centres which are the responsibility of this committee. Therefore, Members may notice some differences to some of the figures when they are presented to the Policy, Governance and Finance Committee later in the cycle.

There is further work planned in relation to adjustments to earmarked reserve movements. Adjustments have been undertaken so the financial accounts are in accordance with AGAR requirements.

A full commentary on the budget lines was undertaken as part of the budget process. Members may wish to note the following:

1. There will be some codes where the year-to-date figure in 2025-26 now exceeds the projected figure for the year. This is to be expected as the projections were the best

estimates made in September/ October and clearly matters move on. Equally there will be other codes where not all the projected budgets will be required. Virements (transfers) between budgets are made where they can be justified but overall there are no budget lines which cause concern.

2. As reported previously was a change to Committee responsibilities earlier in the financial year which affects the Stronger Communities Committee and its management accounts.

Within the terms of reference for the Climate and Biodiversity Committee there are a number of responsibilities budgetary provision for which were previously under the remit of this Committee. These are, referenced directly from the Committee terms of reference for 2025-26:

(b) To manage the Council's Environmental Spaces, including Amenity Areas...

c) To oversee the management of the Council's tree stock across the town;

h) To oversee the maintenance of the Council's infrastructure concerning planting displays (including hanging baskets).

As a consequence, the following budget lines have been transferred to the Climate and Biodiversity Committee:

402 – Community Infrastructure, nominal ledger codes – 4017, 4036, 4037, 4039, 4040, 4066, 4067, 4888, 4890, 4892, 4893 and 4899.

This resulted in a virement in relation to the 2025/26 original budget amounted to £238,491.

3. There are differences to note on the treatment of EMRs which are made between the budget cycle and the production of the final management accounts. This is due to limitations in relation to the reports produced by the Council's accounting software.

During the budget cycle, in order to represent proposed EMR movements within the "Projected" figures column for the year transfers from the EMRs are shown against line 4495; transfers to EMRs are represented by retaining the original budget, thus impacting the General Fund, and then at 31 March 2026 underspends may be transferred to the reserve, where appropriate. This is done in this way because the software does not include a column for earmarked reserve movements within the "Projected" estimates for the current year.

However, at year end this treatment has to be reversed and movements are represented as follows:

- (i) Where in-year expenditure is funded from the EMR – line 6000/ cost centre. This is one figure for the whole cost centre rather than showing as accruing to specific codes.
- (ii) Where in-year income (e.g. unspent grants) is transferred to the EMR – line 6001/ cost centre. Again, this is one figure for the whole cost centre rather than showing as accruing to specific codes.
- (iii) Where budget is not spent during the year but is transferred to an EMR for future expenditure then the transfer is from the General Fund to the EMR. It will not show against the cost centre or the committee, as it does not relate to actual expenditure during the year.

I am looking at ways ahead of the budget cycle to address this issue and to make the transfers easier to track within the reports. The solution is likely to export reports from the accounting software into Excel where it can be amended to suit the requirements of the Council.

It is not easy to explain the above issues in this written report so if the above is difficult to follow then the main point at this stage is to be aware of the differences in terms of the treatment of the EMRs during the budget and the changes at year-end.

4. During 2025-26 the Committee's services were delivered within agreed budgets. The original budget, following earmarked reserve movements, was revised down from £308,288 (column headed 2025-26 Total) to £264,503 (column headed 2025-26 Projected) during the budget cycle. The draft actual net expenditure (column headed 2025-26 Actual YTD), following earmarked reserve movements, was £278,932.

Corporate Strategy

The Council's Strategic Plan 2025–29 sets out the Council's long-term priorities and direction, supporting its mission to 'make Witney a great place to live, work and visit.' This report contributes to the delivery of the following strategic pillar of the plan:

1. A Forward Looking Town Council

However, as all services require financing and their efficient delivery relies on robust controls, strong financial management and constant monitoring, of which this report is an integral part, this report may be said to contribute to all of the strategic pillars.

Impact Assessments

The Town Council has a duty to consider the effects of its decisions, functions and activities on equality, biodiversity, and crime & disorder. Consideration should also be given to effects on the environment, given the Council's Climate Emergency declaration in 2019.

- a) Equality – no implications directly resulting from this report.
- b) Biodiversity - no implications directly resulting from this report.
- c) Crime & Disorder - no implications directly resulting from this report.
- d) Environment & Climate Emergency - no implications directly resulting from this report.

Risk

In decision making Councillors should consider any risks to the Council and any action it can take to limit or negate its liability.

The provision of regular financial reports is part of the Council's risk management system.

Social Value

Social value is the positive change the Council creates in the local community within which it operates. Social value is not quantified in the financial reports but clearly the creation of social value is dependent on setting adequate budgets to meet the Council's objectives.

Financial implications

This report forms part of the Council's due diligence and a process in line with its Financial Regulations. The financial implications are detailed above and also in the attached income and expenditure statements.

This report forms part of the Council's mechanisms for budgetary control, as it enables income and expenditure incurred to be reviewed and to be compared with the Council's budgets.

Recommendations

Members are invited to note the report and further

1. To approve the report and the draft management accounts of the Committee's services for the period 1 April 2025 to 31 March 2026.

Annual Budget - By Committee (Actual YTD Month 12)

Note: Stronger Communities Committee, 15th June 2026: Draft management accounts for 2025-26

		<u>2024-25 Final</u>		<u>2025-26 Draft</u>				<u>Estimate 2026-27</u>		
		Budget	Actual	Total	Actual YTD	Projected	Committed	Agreed	EMR	Carried Forward
<u>Stronger Communities</u>										
402	<u>COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE</u>									
1052	EXPENSES RECOVERED	1,336	500	1,350	0	500	0	1,000	0	0
1099	MISCELLANEOUS INCOME	0	1,000	0	1,500	1,000	0	1,000	0	0
1170	GRANTS RECEIVED	0	5,000	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
1171	DONATIONS RECEIVED	1,334	2,665	10,350	4,800	4,800	0	7,500	0	0
	Total Income	2,670	9,165	11,700	6,300	6,300	0	9,500	0	0
4014	ELECTRICITY	3,411	3,323	3,400	2,663	2,300	0	2,100	0	0
4017	CONTRACT CLEAN/WASTE	3,000	169	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
4025	INSURANCE	112	112	115	112	112	0	150	0	0
4028	I.T.	0	117	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
4035	BUS SHELTER MAINTENANCE	3,000	484	3,000	303	1,500	0	3,000	0	0
4036	PROPERTY MAINTENANCE	2,630	1,490	2,600	137	1,400	0	2,600	0	0
4037	GROUNDS MAINTENANCE	3,000	646	1,500	401	900	0	1,557	0	0
4039	HORTICULTURE	19,500	16,277	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
4040	ARBORICULTURE	20,000	11,735	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
4066	TREE REPLACEMENT	8,000	6,159	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
4067	Tree Survey	8,000	6,845	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
4105	XMAS LIGHTS, TREE & INFRASTRUC	55,000	55,337	48,500	50,510	48,500	0	50,300	0	0
4113	XMAS SOCIAL CONTRN - SEE 1099	0	750	0	1,500	1,000	0	1,000	0	0
4166	DEFIBRILLATOR EXPENDITURE	4,000	1,685	4,000	377	1,800	0	4,000	0	0
4200	STREET FURNITURE	5,000	7,047	5,000	6,953	6,000	0	5,000	0	0
4210	CHURCH CLOCK	1,500	0	1,500	154	625	0	1,500	0	0
4215	IN BLOOM - INC SCHOOLS CHALLEN	7,250	2,346	3,500	3,974	4,750	0	3,500	0	0

Continued on next page

Annual Budget - By Committee (Actual YTD Month 12)

Note: Stronger Communities Committee, 15th June 2026: Draft management accounts for 2025-26

		<u>2024-25 Final</u>		<u>2025-26 Draft</u>				<u>Estimate 2026-27</u>		
		Budget	Actual	Total	Actual YTD	Projected	Committed	Agreed	EMR	Carried Forward
4495	TFR FROM EARMARKED R	0	0	0	0	-18,307	0	0	0	0
4888	O/S STAFF RECHARGE	161,845	91,284	15,000	8,087	9,741	0	16,715	0	0
4890	O/S O'HEAD RECHARGE	43,819	8,565	977	641	401	0	988	0	0
4892	C/S STAFF RCHG	18,431	17,824	10,681	12,567	10,418	0	10,160	0	0
4893	C/S O'HEAD RCHG	5,214	6,201	2,820	3,710	2,609	0	2,909	0	0
4899	DEPOT REALLOCATION	15,763	19,619	2,133	1,447	1,470	0	2,478	0	0
4990	CONTRN TO CCTV SCH.	10,000	10,000	11,267	10,000	11,267	0	11,591	0	0
	Overhead Expenditure	398,475	268,013	115,993	103,536	86,486	0	119,548	0	0
	402 Net Income over Expenditure	-395,805	-258,847	-104,293	-97,236	-80,186	0	-110,048	0	0
6000	plus Transfer from EMR	0	-2,047	0	1,953	0	0	0	0	0
6001	less Transfer to EMR	0	5,000	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Movement to/(from) Gen Reserve	(395,805)	(265,894)	(104,293)	(95,283)	(80,186)		(110,048)		
408	COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES									
1099	MISCELLANEOUS INCOME	0	26	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
1170	GRANTS RECEIVED	0	1,500	1,500	150	0	0	1,557	0	0
1171	DONATIONS RECEIVED	0	0	0	2	2	0	0	0	0
	Total Income	0	1,526	1,500	152	2	0	1,557	0	0
4001	SALARIES	4,888	5,022	15,118	6,393	6,324	0	7,197	0	0
4002	ER'S NIC	498	482	1,949	821	811	0	929	0	0
4003	ER'S SUPERANN	1,061	1,004	3,281	1,385	1,372	0	1,432	0	0
4103	GRANT YOUTH COUNCIL	1,350	81	1,350	0	1,350	0	500	0	0
4104	GRANT CARNIVAL/XMAS ROTARY CLB	4,500	4,900	4,900	5,075	5,075	0	5,100	0	0
4106	GRANT - PLAY DAY	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	0	1,000	0	0

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Annual Budget - By Committee (Actual YTD Month 12)

Note: Stronger Communities Committee, 15th June 2026: Draft management accounts for 2025-26

		<u>2024-25 Final</u>		<u>2025-26 Draft</u>				<u>Estimate 2026-27</u>		
		Budget	Actual	Total	Actual YTD	Projected	Committed	Agreed	EMR	Carried Forward
4109	BLUE PLAQUES	0	525	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
4111	WATER SAFETY/EDUCATION	2,000	0	2,000	0	2,000	0	2,000	0	0
4112	GRANT - WITNEY TOWN BAND	660	660	660	660	660	0	660	0	0
4141	EVENTS	10,000	4,961	6,977	6,344	12,407	0	7,500	0	0
4147	50th Anniversary Grants	0	1,100	0	50	50	0	0	0	0
4148	VE/ VJ 80th Anniversary comm'n	1,500	862	2,023	2,271	2,269	0	0	0	0
4149	WTC 50th ANNIVERSARY	5,000	3,332	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
4154	EXPERIENCE OXFORDSHIRE M'SHIP	1,200	0	1,200	0	0	0	0	0	0
4160	TOWN TWINNING	500	0	500	0	500	0	500	0	0
4161	TOWN TWINNING ROOM HIRE	500	0	500	58	500	0	500	0	0
4167	BUS SERVICE	21,000	23,500	23,500	26,000	26,000	0	26,000	0	0
4169	CHILDREN & YOUTH PROVISION	40,000	30,200	0	18,600	29,800	0	20,000	0	0
4170	ADVENT FAYRE	2,000	2,064	1,000	1,650	1,000	0	1,000	0	0
4172	GRANT - DETACHED YOUTH WORK	0	0	18,000	18,000	18,000	0	28,500	0	0
4173	GRANT - HOME START	0	0	11,000	11,000	11,000	0	12,000	0	0
4495	TFR FROM EARMARKED R	0	0	0	0	-40,000	0	0	0	0
4892	C/S STAFF RCHG	73,721	71,310	85,443	80,021	83,333	0	81,268	0	0
4893	C/S O'HEAD RCHG	20,857	24,799	25,094	23,073	20,868	0	23,267	0	0
	Overhead Expenditure	192,235	175,801	205,495	202,401	184,319	0	219,353	0	0
	408 Net Income over Expenditure	-192,235	-174,275	-203,995	-202,249	-184,317	0	-217,796	0	0
6000	plus Transfer from EMR	0	0	0	18,600	0	0	0	0	0
	Movement to/(from) Gen Reserve	(192,235)	(174,275)	(203,995)	(183,649)	(184,317)		(217,796)		

Continued on next page

Annual Budget - By Committee (Actual YTD Month 12)

Note: Stronger Communities Committee, 15th June 2026: Draft management accounts for 2025-26

	<u>2024-25 Final</u>		<u>2025-26 Draft</u>				<u>Estimate 2026-27</u>		
	Budget	Actual	Total	Actual YTD	Projected	Committed	Agreed	EMR	Carried Forward
Stronger Communities - Income	2,670	10,691	13,200	6,452	6,302	0	11,057	0	0
Expenditure	590,710	443,813	321,488	305,937	270,805	0	338,901	0	0
Net Income over Expenditure	<u>-588,040</u>	<u>-433,122</u>	<u>-308,288</u>	<u>-299,485</u>	<u>-264,503</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>-327,844</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>
plus Transfer from EMR	0	(2,047)	0	20,553	0	0	0	0	0
less Transfer to EMR	0	5,000	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Movement to/(from) Gen Reserve	<u>(588,040)</u>	<u>(440,169)</u>	<u>(308,288)</u>	<u>(278,932)</u>	<u>(264,503)</u>		<u>(327,844)</u>		
Total Budget Income	2,670	10,691	13,200	6,452	6,302	0	11,057	0	0
Expenditure	590,710	443,813	321,488	305,937	270,805	0	338,901	0	0
Net Income over Expenditure	<u>-588,040</u>	<u>-433,122</u>	<u>-308,288</u>	<u>-299,485</u>	<u>-264,503</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>-327,844</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>
plus Transfer from EMR	0	(2,047)	0	20,553	0	0	0	0	0
less Transfer to EMR	0	5,000	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Movement to/(from) Gen Reserve	<u>(588,040)</u>	<u>(440,169)</u>	<u>(308,288)</u>	<u>(278,932)</u>	<u>(264,503)</u>		<u>(327,844)</u>		

STRONGER COMMUNITIES COMMITTEE



Agenda Item: Annual Resident’s Survey 2026

Meeting Date: Monday, 15th June 2026

Contact Officer: Deputy Town Clerk
(Administrative Support Assistant – Communities & Engagement)

The purpose of this report is to present Members with the results of the annual residents’ satisfaction survey, conducted between February and May, regarding services overseen by this Committee.

Background

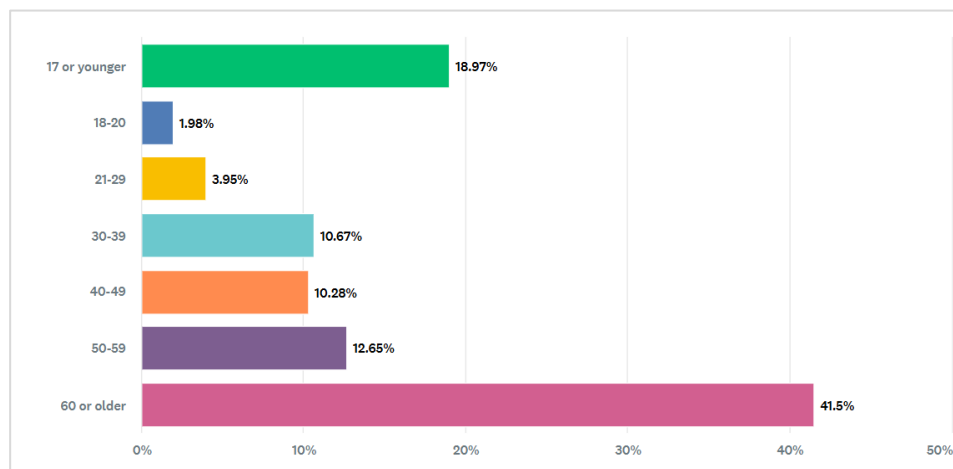
The survey was sent to every household in the post and was promoted online via social media and in the local secondary schools; 272 responses were received in total.

While the number of responses is a very small percentage of the population, the results are still an important resource in advising the Council in which areas projects, communications, and future spending should be considered.

Current Situation

Responses from younger residents were noticeably lower this year, with participation from school-aged respondents (18 and under) decreasing from around 186 responses in 2024 and 122 responses in 2025 to 48 responses in 2026.

Respondent Age Demographics



Survey Scores Overall

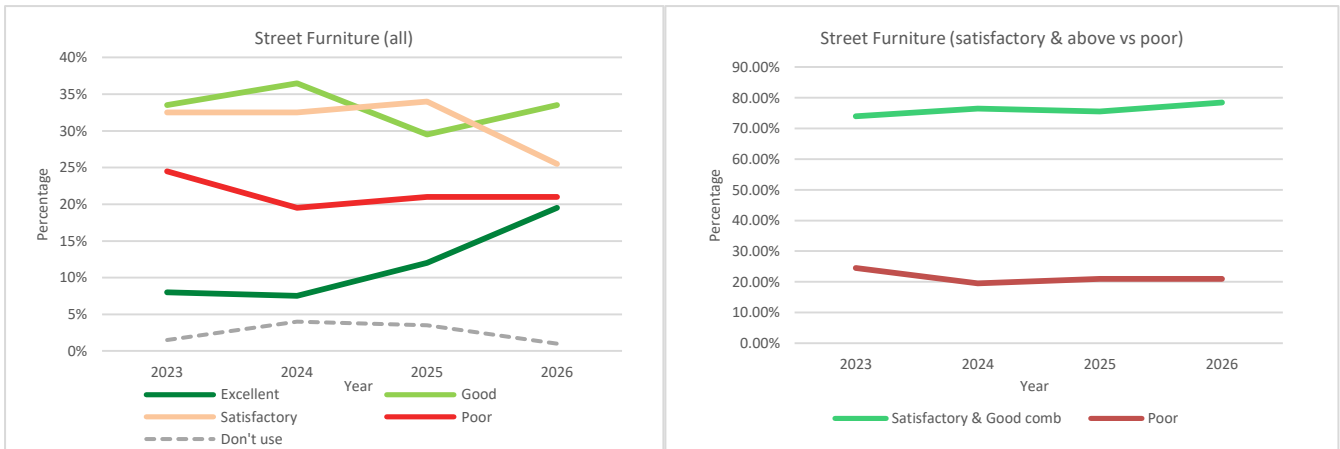
The following table shows how the services scored overall in the survey (with percentages rounded).

As a comparison, the figures/percentages from the previous three years' surveys are included.

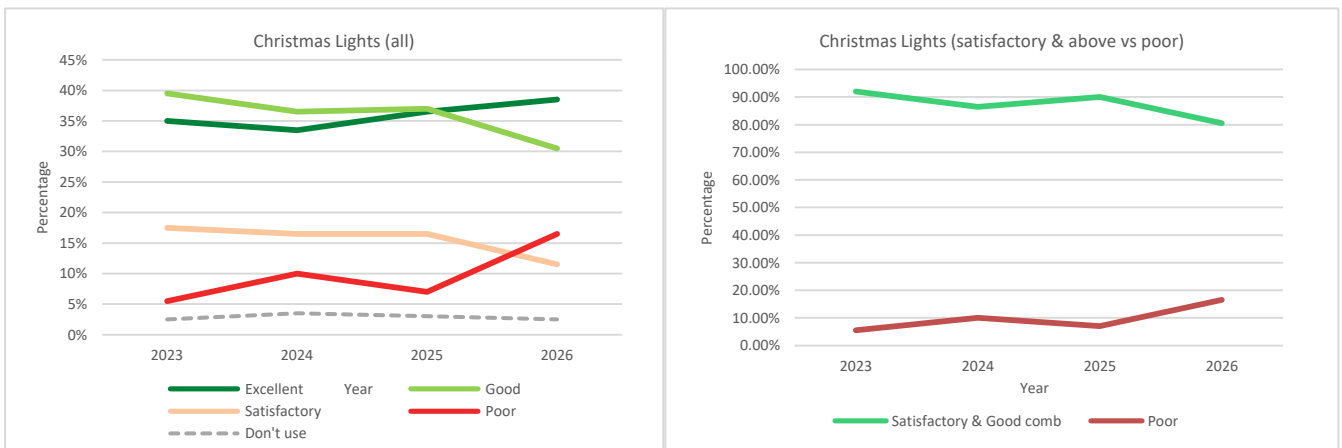
Service	Year	Excellent	Good	Satisfactory	% comb	Poor	Don't use	Resp
Street Furniture (bins/benches/bus shelters)	2026	19.5% (52)	33.5% (90)	25.5% (68)	78.50%	21% (56)	1% (3)	269
	2025	12% (42)	29.5% (100)	34% (116)	75.50%	21% (71)	3.5% (12)	341
	2024	7.5% (32)	36.5% (158)	32.5% (141)	76.50%	19.5% (84)	4% (17)	432
	2023	8% (17)	33.5% (73)	32.5% (71)	74.00%	24.5% (54)	1.5% (4)	219
Christmas Lights Display	2026	38.5% (104)	30.5% (83)	11.5% (31)	80.50%	16.5% (45)	2.5% (7)	270
	2025	36.5% (125)	37% (126)	16.5% (56)	90.00%	7% (24)	3% (10)	341
	2024	33.5% (146)	36.5% (160)	16.5% (72)	86.50%	10% (43)	3.5% (16)	437
	2023	35% (76)	39.5% (86)	17.5% (38)	92.00%	5.5% (12)	2.5% (6)	218
Civic Events (e.g. Remembrance & Mayor's Carols)	2026	23.5%(64)	30% (81)	11% (30)	64.50%	3% (8)	32% (87)	270
	2025	21% (71)	32% (110)	16.5% (56)	69.50%	5.5% (18)	25% (86)	341
	2024	16.5% (72)	34% (149)	19% (83)	69.50%	4.5% (19)	26% (112)	435
	2023	24% (52)	33% (72)	18.5% (40)	75.50%	6% (13)	18.5% (40)	217
Community Events (e.g. Play Days, coffee mornings)	2026	8% (21)	18.5% (49)	8.5% (23)	35.00%	4% (11)	61% (164)	268
	2025	5.5% (19)	18% (62)	14% (47)	37.50%	7.5% (26)	55% (186)	340
	2024	8.5% (36)	22.5% (98)	13.5% (60)	44.50%	8% (34)	47.5% (208)	436
	2023	7% (14)	21.5% (44)	16% (33)	44.50%	7.5% (15)	48% (99)	205
Communication	2026	6.5% (18)	23% (62)	39.5% (105)	69.00%	18% (48)	12.5% (34)	267
	2025	8% (28)	28% (94)	25.5% (87)	61.50%	22.5% (76)	16% (54)	339
	2024	8% (35)	35% (149)	27% (116)	70.00%	16% (68)	14% (60)	428
	2023	12.5% (23)	31% (56)	28.5% (52)	72.00%	18.5% (34)	9.5% (17)	182

The following graphs track performance over the previous four years for these services and show the levels are broadly the same in the previous three years.

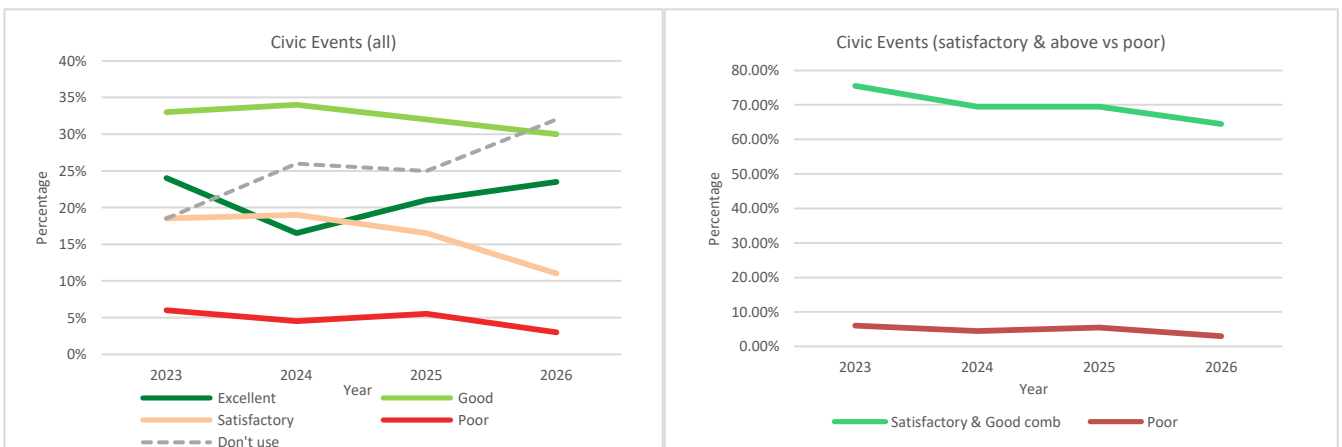
Street Furniture infographics



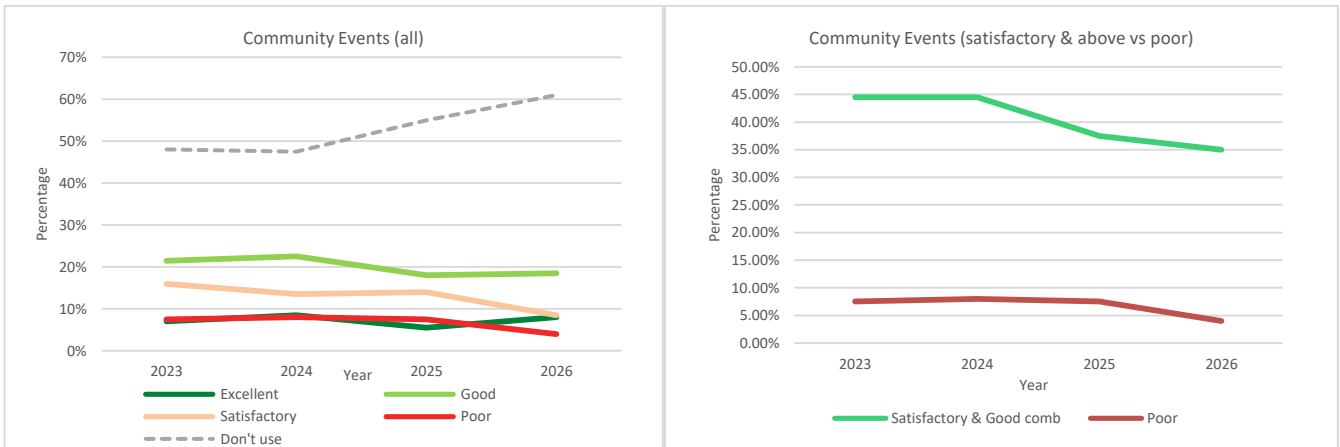
Christmas Lights infographics



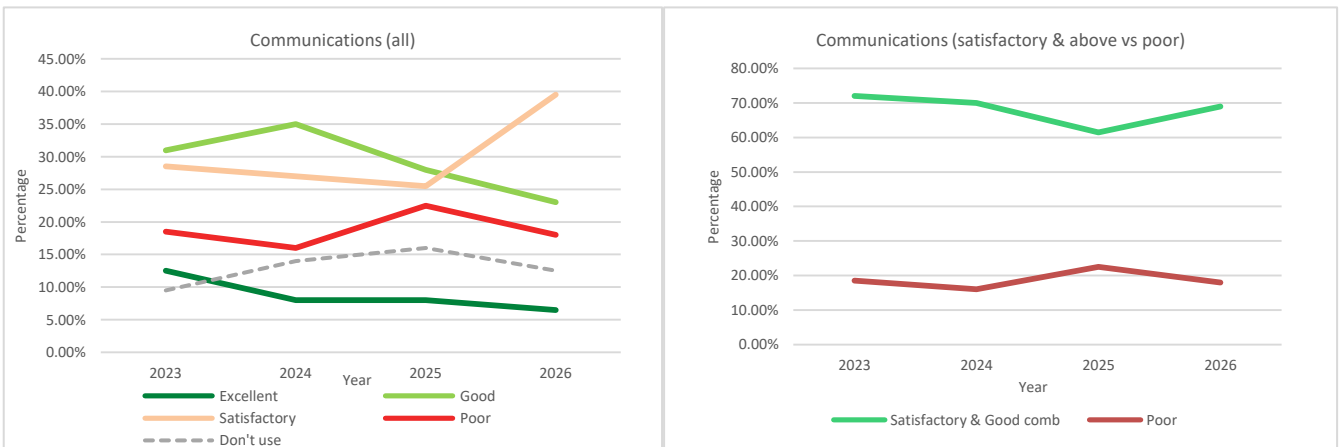
Civic Events infographics



Community Events infographics



Communications infographics



In addition to the results above, the survey also welcomes specific comments, all of which relating to this Committee can be seen below:

Street Furniture & Christmas Lights

- The bus shelters do not shelter us from the rain and many stops do not have a shelter - especially out of town stops.”
 - “Too much graffiti is left in situ. Litter never gets collected from side streets. Many of the bins and street furniture covered in old adverts and are dilapidated.”
 - “Benches need repairing. Xmas lights are vibrant and bring the town to life.”
 - “Christmas lights not as good as previous years.”

- “I am a young resident of Witney and am writing on behalf of myself and my friends about something that matters to us and the future of Witney. Right now, there are very few affordable places where young people can safely meet, spend time and feel welcome. Most cafes and shops in town are aimed at adults or are too expensive for us to use. Without safe welcoming hangouts, we often end up with nowhere to go after school or on the weekends. We’re not asking for handouts. We’re asking for Witney to be a town where young people can belong.”
- “Loved the Christmas lights this year.”
- “Christmas lights are the only thing worth paying for IMHO”
- “I’m a student at Woodgreen, I have lived in Witney since I was born. I’ve found that it is so much nicer going on walks here than I thought, because of the gorgeous places to walk like Witney lake, and the flowers that just liven up everything in a wonderful way. I’m really grateful that everyone in town is so kind and approachable and I like to go to the park all the time with my friends”
- “Christmas lights looked ace last couple of years”
- “Most of my experience is Good and satisfies me however, there are occasions where furniture and other services are poor and not up to standard, this is either it being dirty or non-existent where should be. This could be improved by adding more of these public services and entertainment opportunities maybe using public fields and parks etc etc i.e oxlease park and field for events such as bouncy castle and bbq or other stuff on those lines, this could improve the community engagement throughout the town.”
- “Everything costs far too much for an area which has the highest youth mental health numbers in England. I know of non-profits that want to do World changing work in the area (UK Paradigm) and they cannot afford statutory prices set to do the work that will fix everything.”
- “Christmas light were poor last year.”

Community Events & Civic Events

- “St Georges day was great - bring on the elections.”

- “More community events would be good, it helps create a sense of community. The splash park should be switched on when the weather is good earlier in the year Some of the smaller parks could do with more equipment (have a drive round somewhere like ambroseden and see all the little parks) During Covid when market square was full of tables and chairs and the pubs and restaurants were allowed outside seating it was so lovely, during the summer it felt like being abroad and there was a buzzing little atmosphere. Witney has such a great community that can be enhanced by promoting and providing the opportunity to come together. Every year Bicester does a ‘big lunch’ it’s well advertised and everyone is encouraged to bring a picnic together, this could be done on a summer afternoon at the leys, perhaps get Witney radio to provide music and make it an annual event?”
- “A rich variety of events for all ages. Loved the VJ Day & Christmas afternoon tea.”
- “Remembrance Day is good, love it when the town comes together for events like this.”
- “Fantastic ambience at the St Georges Day celebrations - same every year please! Can the scouts come?”
- “Good to see more events being held.”
- “Could have more hymn sheets printed for Remembrance Day.”
- “Why is the council spending £13,000 on a music festival? There is little benefit to Witney residents. If it weren't subsidised, it would still go ahead, with tickets costing just a pound or two more. Why should the small number of Witney residents who attend get such a large subsidy from the majority, who don't? Why are Witney ratepayers subsidising tickets for non-residents from all over the country? Any extra business for local pubs or hotels is of no benefit to the Town Council, as businesses don't pay council tax. This unnecessary extravagance needs to stop, with the money spent on keeping the town clean & tidy instead, for the benefit of us ALL.”

Communications

- “Do newsletters to address in witney”
- “Your leaflets are hard to read for colour blind.”
- “Stop trying to make everyone go digital”
- “Lived in Witney since '89 - 37 years - 1st comms in all that time! Went into your info centre a few years ago - RE RBL - couldn't help - Data Protection Act!”

- “Why is there no information re the work being carried out at the Leys. A poster in your shopwindow would be something.”
- “It would be nice to hear more about what's happening in our town.”
- “My mother lives in Ducklington and receives an excellent newsletter every month. Witney Town Council communicates with residents very little in contrast with no newsletter I am aware of.”
- “Everything is good but we don't shout about it. Things could be better, like the lake’s signage to and from, events in Witney to get involved in”

Analysis

Street Furniture

Street furniture continues to receive broadly positive feedback, with combined “satisfactory and above” responses increasing slightly to 78.5% in 2026. The proportion of “excellent” ratings has also increased significantly compared to previous years, suggesting improvements are being recognised by residents. However, concerns remain regarding the condition and maintenance of benches, bus shelters, bins, graffiti, and litter in public spaces.

As the Town Council is responsible for the majority of public seating, general feedback has been included in this report.

Christmas Lights

The Christmas Lights display remains one of the Council’s highest-rated services, with over 80% of respondents rating the service satisfactory or above. Many comments praised the atmosphere and vibrancy the lights bring to the town, with several residents noting improvements in recent years.

Civic Events

Civic Events continue to receive strong levels of support from residents, particularly for traditional events such as Remembrance commemorations and St George’s Day celebrations. Comments frequently reference the positive sense of community created by these events and appreciation for opportunities to bring residents together.

Community Events

Community Events continue to record lower engagement levels than other services, with 61% of respondents selecting “don’t use” in 2026. Satisfaction levels have also declined slightly compared with previous years. However, comments from residents who do attend events are generally positive and highlight the value of activities that encourage community participation and improve the atmosphere within the town.

Communication

Communication scores have improved compared with 2025, particularly in “satisfactory” responses, although the service remains one of the Council’s lower-performing areas overall. Comments suggest residents would like more regular and accessible updates regarding Council activities, projects, and events, including printed newsletters, clearer project information, and non-digital communication methods.

It should also be noted that 41% of the 272 survey responses came from residents aged 60 and over, who may be more likely to favour traditional forms of communication. In addition, the survey itself as a physical newsletter distributed to households across Witney may also have influenced the response demographic and preference towards printed communication. The Committee may therefore wish to consider how best to balance digital and non-digital communications to reach a broad range of residents.

Corporate Strategy

The Council’s Strategic Plan 2025–29 sets out the Council’s long-term priorities and direction, supporting its mission to ‘make Witney a great place to live, work and visit.’ This report contributes to the delivery of the following strategic pillar of the plan:

2. An Engaged & Supported Community

Impact Assessments

The Town Council has a duty to consider the effects of its decisions, functions and activities on equality, biodiversity, and crime & disorder. Consideration should also be given to effects on the environment, given the Council’s Climate Emergency declaration in 2019.

- a) Equality - The residents’ survey helps identify service inequalities and amplify underrepresented voices, supporting fairer, more inclusive decision-making. It may also highlight items which need addressing under the Equality Act 2010.
- b) Biodiversity - The Council must ensure any issues are dealt with in line with biodiversity legislation and its own policy.
- c) Crime & Disorder - The survey provides the ability to highlight concerns about safety and anti-social behaviour. The survey can inform targeted responses, resource allocation, and partnership working with police and community safety teams. It may help identify hotspots, vulnerable groups, and areas needing intervention such as the cemeteries.
- d) Environment & Climate Emergency – The survey supports the Council’s climate emergency commitments by ensuring resident feedback can help shape relevant policies and actions.

Risk

In decision making Councillors should give consideration to any risks to the Council and any action it can take to limit or negate its liability.

There is a reputational risk if the Council does not address comments received in its satisfaction survey as it will be seen as not listening to residents.

The Council’s committees will have competing demands on the overall Council budget so any

additional project funding has to be balanced and proportionate. Additions should be in line with Councils objectives and adopted policies/strategies.

Social Value

Social value is the positive change the Council creates in the local community within which it operates.

Listening to residents' feedback on Council services delivers significant social value by showing empowerment, inclusion, trust, and community wellbeing; It affirms that their opinions matter and helps building a sense of respect and transparency. This is especially important for the Council, where inclusive decision-making ensures diverse needs are reflected in service design and delivery.

Internally, it supports continuous improvement across the Council's services and helps identify future objectives thereby demonstrating meaningful change.

Financial implications

- There are no new implications from the contents of this report at this point. The Committee may like to consider further projects based on the feedback or increasing/creating budgets for any item.

Recommendations

Members are invited to note the report and consider the following:

1. What action is required from the results of the survey for services under the remit of this Committee.

STRONGER COMMUNITIES COMMITTEE



Agenda Item: Communications Report

Meeting Date: Monday, 15th June 2026

Contact Officer: Communications and Community Engagement Officer

The purpose of this report is to update councillors on various communication matters.

Current Situation

2026 Spring Newsletter and Survey

The decision was taken that the invoice from the distribution company should be paid in full. They had cooperated fully throughout the process, providing tracking data and regular updates. Overall, performance was considered comparable to last year's Royal Mail distribution, while achieving a more targeted delivery to households within Witney's boundary and avoiding unnecessary distribution to business premises.

Survey response levels were slightly lower than in 2025. This was largely due to significantly fewer responses being received via schools, with approximately 50 returned this year compared with around 200 in 2024 and 100 in 2025. The Administrative Assistant Communications and Engagement has collated the survey returns from under 18s and these are presented in **Appendix A**

It is also likely that survey fatigue contributed to reduced participation, as two separate surveys were included within the same newsletter, which may have discouraged some recipients from completing either.

The lower response rate highlighted limited engagement from younger age groups. The C&CE Officer has explored ways to improve engagement with residents aged 18–30, who are most effectively reached through digital channels and social activities. This demographic generally responds best to concise, accessible communications and consultations that clearly demonstrate how feedback will influence decisions.

Consideration could be given to a retro and contemporary gaming event with a community engagement element. This could provide an opportunity to gather feedback on Council priorities and the types of events, performances and screenings younger residents would like to see. As many residents in this age group are also parents, family-friendly and accessible formats should be considered.

Previous engagement activities at the Carnival had successfully used coloured stickers to gather feedback on preferred options for the Splash Park redesign. This approach proved highly inclusive, enabling even very young children to participate and express their preferences. Similar simple, visual engagement methods could be considered for future

consultations to encourage participation from a wider range of age groups, and we recommend using this as the most likely to engage way of presenting this year's survey there. No questions will be changed as this would skew results.

We do also have VEVOX but with no power supply this could only be presented as a QR code.

WhatsApp channel proposal

Councillors will have received a link to our proposed WhatsApp channel. The link is below and the information we will use to launch the new social media feed, if adopted, is also presented.

<https://whatsapp.com/channel/0029VbCs9wh4Y9IjF515Jv24>

We're now on WhatsApp Channels!

Want important council updates delivered straight to your phone? Follow our new WhatsApp Channel to stay informed quickly and easily.

What is a WhatsApp Channel?

A WhatsApp Channel is a one-way broadcast feed. This means:

- Your information remains private – no one can see your phone number or personal details.
- You can follow and view our updates.
- Only we can post messages.
- You cannot reply or message us through the Channel.

It is designed to provide simple, reliable updates – no chats, no group messages, and no spam.

What we'll share:

- Urgent service updates and emergency notices
- Important local announcements
- Meeting dates and agendas
- Community events and consultations
- Local roadworks and service updates

All delivered straight to your phone in real time. To follow us, simply click the link below and select Follow.

Town Guide (Biannual)

Until around 2011, Witney Town Council commissioned an externally produced Town Guide through Local Authority Publishing (despite the name, this was not a government-backed organisation, but a commercial publisher). The arrangement was subsequently discontinued by the Town Council.

Over the past year, we have been working on developing a similar resource for the Council's website. This was originally proposed as a paper project. Progress has been slower than anticipated, as considerable time is needed to ensure the format is appropriate, user-friendly, and of a manageable size for online storage and display.

Officers have just received a new proposal for an official Town Guide from an established publisher that provides a number of these nationally. This proposal outlines how town guides can be produced and distributed to promote local communities, with zero cost (advertising is intended to pay for the production) and flexible involvement. Please see below and in full detail in **Appendix B**.

- The publisher is responsible for generating the advertising revenue. Guides are free to the town council; advertising covers production costs.
- 50 years' experience in publishing local guides and newspapers.
- Two bi-annual A5 town guides with essential contacts, attractions, maps, and history.
- Online digital copies and social media sharing to enhance accessibility.
- Councils can choose their level of content input. Maybe we could include the precept information, Who does What, or a What's On in here.

Corporate Strategy

The Council's Strategic Plan 2025–29 sets out the Council's long-term priorities and direction, supporting its mission to 'make Witney a great place to live, work and visit.' This report contributes to the delivery of the following strategic pillar of the plan:

2. An Engaged & Supported Community

Impact Assessments

The Town Council has a duty to consider the effects of its decisions, functions and activities on equality, biodiversity, and crime & disorder. Consideration should also be given to effects on the environment, given the Council's Climate Emergency declaration in 2019.

- a) Equality – The newsletter and survey should be distributed as widely as possible to ensure an inclusive approach. The WhatsApp channel and Town Guide may also help extend reach across different audience groups. Providing the Communications Preference Survey in both paper and online formats will help reduce digital exclusion, particularly for older residents and those without regular internet access. Targeted engagement will also be undertaken with less frequently heard groups, particularly residents aged 18–30, including at the Carnival and through other appropriate opportunities as they arise.
- b) Biodiversity – no direct impact.
- c) Crime & Disorder – Improved communication and community engagement may contribute to greater awareness of community activities and indirectly support community cohesion, helping to reduce anti-social behaviour
- d) Environment & Climate Emergency – While print production has some environmental impact, efforts will be made to minimise waste, use sustainable materials where possible, and promote digital communication channels in line with the Council's Climate Emergency declaration.

Risk

In decision making Councillors should give consideration to any risks to the Council and any action it can take to limit or negate its liability.

There is a risk that, if the survey is not widely accessed or completed across all age groups, the Council may not capture the views of a significant proportion of the local population.

With regard to the Town Guide, Witney has not had an official guide for several years but other publishers are operating in the community offering a similar output.

Social Value

Social value is the positive change the Council creates in the local community within which it operates.

Using multiple communication channels such as a survey, WhatsApp channel, and town guide increases inclusivity and ensures engagement reaches a wider and more representative cross-section of the community. This helps reduce digital exclusion, particularly among residents who are either less digitally connected or prefer non-digital formats, while also improving participation from harder-to-reach groups. As a result, the Council is better able to capture a more accurate and balanced view of local opinion.

Financial implications

- The addition of a survey at the carnival and the WhatsApp channel are able to be funded from existing budgets and resource capabilities.
- The guide as presented indicates there is no cost to the Town Council (but this would need to be explored further).

Recommendations

Members are invited to note the report and consider;

1. The best option for presenting a survey at the Carnival;
2. Whether the Council wishes to continue with a WhatsApp channel as part of its Communications resources;
3. The option of investigating further or signing up for a biannual town guide.

Young People Responses in our Annual Residents' Satisfaction Survey

For Officers to inform the Youth Council on the following responses in the Annual Residents' Survey.



“I am a young resident of Witney and am writing on behalf of myself and my friends about something that matters to us and the future of Witney. Right now, there are very few affordable places where young people can safely meet, spend time and feel welcome. Most cafes and shops in town are aimed at adults or are too expensive for us to use. Without safe welcoming hangouts, we often end up with nowhere to go after school or on the weekends. We’re not asking for handouts. We’re asking for Witney to be a town where young people can belong.”

“The parks are good, but I think more benches in them and picnic tables would satisfy lots of people and having lots of swings in playgrounds increases the likelihood of young people over 12 to go to the park”

“I’m a student at Woodgreen, I have lived in Witney since I was born. I’ve found that it is so much nicer going on walks here than I thought, because of the gorgeous places to walk like Witney lake, and the flowers that just liven up everything in a wonderful way. I’m really grateful that everyone in town is so kind and approachable and I like to go to the park all the time with my friends”

“Improvement of sporting areas across Witney, allowing a variety of people to stay active needed.”

“Most of my experience is Good and satisfies me however, there are occasions where furniture and other services are poor and not up to standard, this is either it being dirty or non-existing where should be. This could be improved by adding more of these public services and entertainment opportunities maybe using public fields and parks etc etc i.e oxlease park and field for events such as bouncy castle and bbq or other stuff on those lines, this could improve the community engagement throughout the town.”

“Lots of litter around but still beautiful sites to be in.”

“As a teenager, I wish there were more places to just sit, in a field for example and just relax with some friends”

“Everything costs far too much for an area which has the highest youth mental health numbers in England. I know of non-profits that want to do World changing work in the area (UK Paradigm) and they cannot afford statutory prices set to do the work that will fix everything.”



COMMUNITY NEWS

Town Guide Proposal Pack

02

WHO WE ARE



Countrywide Publications

COUNTRYWIDE PUBLICATIONS

Community News is a division of Countrywide Publications, a well-established publishing house based on the Suffolk coast, just outside Southwold.

Having started as one free monthly newspaper more than 50 years ago, our portfolio now includes three monthly newspapers, two pub guides, multiple town guides, as well as a number of other bespoke publishing solutions.

Based onsite with our parent company, Micropress Printers, we are able to handle everything in-house from advertising sales, design, print and distribution.

Looking after a project from conception to completion ensures a smooth process from start to finish.

MICROPRESS PRINTERS LTD

Established in 1979, Micropress Printers is one of the UK's largest independently owned printing companies, specialising in litho printing, digital printing and fulfilment services; all done in-house at a state-of-the-art, nine-acre site near Southwold in Suffolk.

Micropress were winners of the Print Week 'Company of the Year' award 2022, recognising not only its commitment to customer service but also to staff training and investment in the future. They are also proud to be officially certified as a carbon balanced business.

micropress
your partner in print



WHY CHOOSE US?

1 PROVEN TRACK RECORD

Having been established over 50 years, we are proud to have worked with town councils and communities for more than half a century.

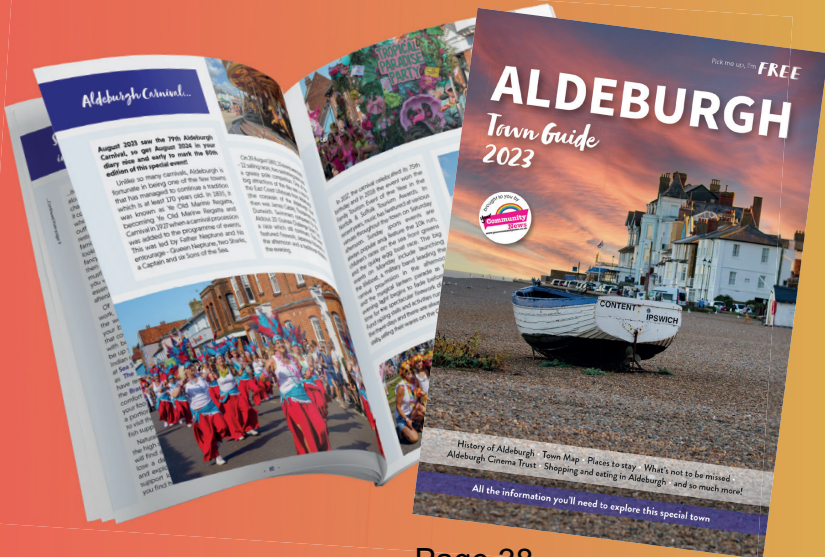
2 THE COMPLETE PACKAGE

In partnership with our parent company, Micropress Printers, we are able to provide all services under one roof.

3 EXPERIENCED TEAM

Our team may be small, but it is mighty! There are five of us who have more than 80 years' combined experience in publishing.

A LOOK AT WHAT WE DO



06

WHAT WILL IT COST?

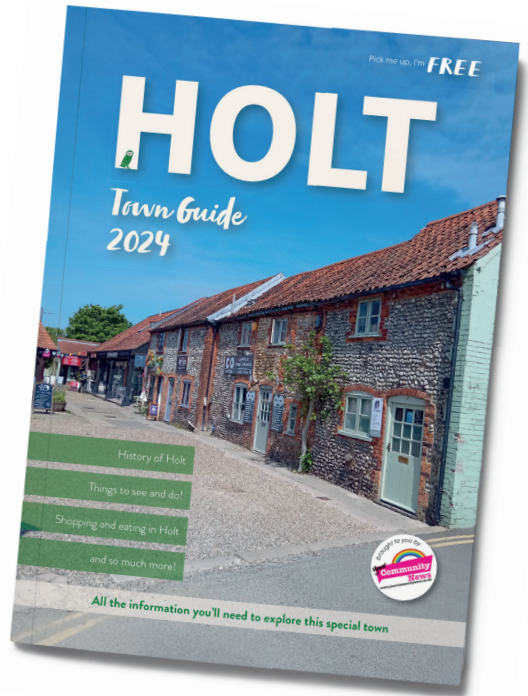
Nothing!

There is no cost to the town council. We contact local businesses with a view to advertising in the guide.

This advertising covers the cost of production and print and gives the businesses within the guide a great way of reaching the community.

Advertising is also important content within the guide as it gives readers further information and contacts.

*This is based on our established format of a 36-page A5 publication and a run of 4000 copies.



HOW INVOLVED WILL YOU BE?

We always like to work with the town council on a guide as you are the experts when it comes to what your town needs.

Many councils have a town manager who looks after marketing and promoting the town.

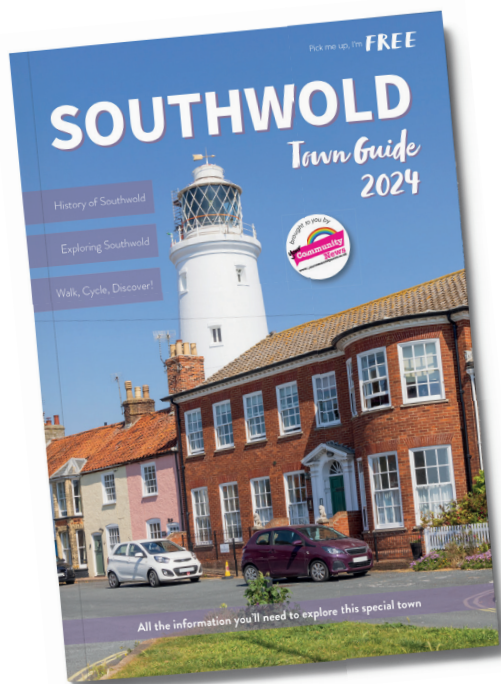
However, we are happy for each council to choose their level of involvement. Some like to send all editorial content while others prefer to send an introduction and leave the rest to us.

We want the guide to work for you, your town and the people who live and visit there.



View an issue of Holt Town Guide





DIGITAL PRESENCE?

Everything we publish has a strong online presence. We can send links and digital copies for town councils to make the guide accessible from their website or social media platforms.

PRINT STILL RELEVANT?

Yes, very much so. In a world where we are bombarded by digital advertising, being able to pick up something tangible is still very popular.

This is even more apparent when talking about something like a bi-annual town guide as people will keep their copy handy to access the contacts, information and map.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

As an independent publishing house working with our parent company, we are able to be flexible and adapt any of our titles or projects.

Should you be interested in a larger title, more pages or a greater number of copies we can look at different options.

These would incur a cost.

WHAT TO DO NEXT?

If you are interested in learning more about how we can work together to produce a town guide for you then please don't hesitate to contact David Burns, Publications Manager at Community News for an informal discussion.

david.burns@micropress.co.uk
01502 725837 | 07887 414022



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Southwold Town Guide



Countrywide Publications



STRONGER COMMUNITIES COMMITTEE



Agenda Item: Community Engagement Report

Meeting Date: Monday, 15th June 2026

Contact Officer: Communications and Community Engagement Officer

The purpose of this report is to update councillors on various community engagement matters.

Current Situation

This is the first report of the new financial year.

Heritage Open Day

The Communications and Community Engagement Officer and Administrator met with a representative of the museum on Thursday 11th June and will give a verbal update to the committee. The plans for the Witney Town Council contribution are now as follows:

The theme for 2026 is particularly relevant and presents an excellent opportunity for a local history site such as Tower Hill Cemetery and the local history associated with that.

As a Council contribution, officers would like to revisit one of the elements of its second HOD event, which focused on burial records and the changing occupations of those interred in the cemetery over the decades. This will provide a fascinating insight into the town's social and economic history. The Council could highlight selected graves with information about the occupations of those buried there, helping visitors to see how employment patterns evolved over time. The Council also has a collection of historic business directories that could be displayed to complement this theme.

The chapel would be opened to visitors throughout the event, with refreshments available, as there is always considerable interest in giving people the opportunity to see inside the building. It is proposed that the Council hosts the event over one and a half days: Friday afternoon from 3.00pm to 8.00pm and Saturday morning from 9.00am to 1.00pm. This schedule would provide fair access for both school groups and those who work during the day.

No budget was set for a Heritage Open Day event this year, so officers are requesting use of the £200 underspend from St George's Day to cover refreshments and sundries.

Brass on the Grass

The first of three scheduled concerts took place on Sunday 7th June at Woodgreen, and the others are planned for Sunday July 5th at Oxlease and Sunday 2nd August at The Leys.

Feedback from the first concert was positive, *“The Woodgreen concert went very well on Sunday! We probably had about 100 people out on the grass listening to us, the weather was ok and the rain held off, and the 3 Pigeons pub also did a good trade - so hopefully it was a win all round! We had some nice comments on Facebook, and the Witney Gazette has been in contact to use some photos.”*

Both the Town Council and the Band were approached to provide photographs. Unfortunately, the fact that the concerts are funded by WTC was omitted from the very brief article.

Witney Carnival

Alongside the Schools in Bloom wheelbarrow judging and the survey the officers will be bringing crafts and games to the stall. Some Councillors will be joining the walking parade as Iconic musicians.

Witney Past Present and Future Recommendations

The notes from the internal review meeting of the St George’s Day celebrations were circulated at the previous meeting. Several recommendations were made regarding event timings and activities; however, no significant changes to the overall format were proposed, as the event was generally considered to have been successful.

The Chair has been approached by an individual interested in sponsoring part of this event, or potentially another Town Council event. Further details are awaited before any consideration can be given to this proposal.

Councillors have also been asked that the Council considers adding a ‘Big Lunch’ event to the annual events calendar. The Big Lunch is intended to run somewhere between the dates of 5th – 8th June. The Council’s events calendar is currently at full capacity, and there is limited scope to introduce any additional large-scale events, or scope to plan for them, particularly during the first quarter of the year. During this period, resources are already committed to the production of the Spring Newsletter, the Citizen of the Year awards and Civic Reception, and the Annual Town Meeting, in addition to any other activities taking place at the Corn Exchange.

Should Members wish to expand the St George’s Day programme or introduce changes to its format, any additional costs would need to be identified and considered as part of the budget-setting process later this year.

Options could include rebranding the existing St George’s Day event as a Big Lunch event, although the event takes place at the end of April, significantly earlier than the nationally recognised Big Lunch dates of 5–8 June. Alternatively, consideration could be given to incorporating Big Lunch elements into the RAF Freedom Parade planned for September 2027.

Unless it is incorporated into an existing event with a comparable format, the introduction of a Big Lunch event would, of necessity, require the replacement of an existing event within the annual programme rather than being added as an additional event.

Another solution might be to offer a budget to a community group that does have the capacity and expertise to manage such an event, such as the group that run the weekly community meal at the Methodist Church, and work in partnership with them to create a successful Big Lunch.

The recommendations from the Witney: Past, Present & Future Working Party on 26th May 2026 were:

1. That, the feedback, and outcomes from the St George's Day event debrief be noted and,
2. That, St George's Day Events be held in a similar vein in future years and budgeted for accordingly and,
3. That, the proposed arrangements for Armed Forces Day activities on The Leys for 2026 be supported and,
4. That, the planned discussions regarding Heritage Open Day be noted and that further plans be brought to the next meeting and,
5. That, the Council supports continued partnership working with local organisations, community groups, and volunteers to enhance future events and engagement opportunities, including,
 - a. Support for Bishop's Palace Community Heritage Events by the Museum,
 - b. Sponsorship opportunities where appropriate and,
6. That, this Working Party requests that the underspend for this year's St George's Day event budget be allocated on other events during the year under the auspices of this Committee

Armed Forces Day

The event is being organised by the Army and Air Cadets, and progress has been slower than anticipated. As a result, the Council has not yet been able to publicise the event or issue invitations, as key information remains limited.

The Communications and Community Engagement Officer has followed up with the organisers on several occasions and understands that they are experiencing difficulties in securing catering providers. As the Town Council does not regularly host events that accommodate external catering vendors, we do not have a suitable list of contacts to provide. It has been suggested that the organisers use social media to seek expressions of interest from potential vendors, ensuring that any applicants are appropriately vetted and can provide evidence of public liability insurance, food hygiene certification, and any other required documentation.

The Council remains ready to support the event and assist with promotion as soon as further details become available. The Council is keen to see the event succeed; however, the timescales are now becoming increasingly tight.

Car Free Day (online promotion)

Officers will look at new ways to present information and share links with other sites that have ideas of ways to enjoy active travel.

Love Parks Week

Love Parks Week 2026 will take place from 24 July to 2 August. Organised by Keep Britain Tidy, this annual campaign celebrates the value of green spaces, recognises the contribution of volunteers, and encourages communities to enjoy the outdoors.

Officers propose to support the campaign by promoting relevant activities, events, and news relating to the town's parks and green spaces. As the final day of Love Parks Week coincides with the Town Band's last summer concert, this presents an ideal opportunity to encourage residents to bring a picnic to the park and enjoy the music in a relaxed community setting.

The Town Council will also hold one of its Volunteer Thank You Picnics on the same day, incorporating the concert as part of the event and adding a musical element to the Council's usual volunteer appreciation event.

Official Bespoke Town Council Bunting

It seems that part of what people like about the Market Square events (D Day, VE Day, St George's Day) is the dressing of the square with bunting which adds to the festive, visual appeal and draws attention to the event taking place.

The Market Place belongs to OCC and has the regular markets overseen by WODC, so it would be unlikely that the Council would get permission to have bunting in place all year round, but it could run a string from each side of the Corn Exchange Balcony to the two closest trees as it did as part of the decorating for St George's Day.

Officers propose that the bunting, like the town flag reflects the heritage of the town but also note that the green crest on white bunting will not stand out much. Therefore, officers have attempted a design of colourful bunting using the Witney Town Council crest or logo and would like councillors to consider whether purchasing some of this as a neutral but colourful bunting for numerous events in the market Square, at the Carnival etc.





Corporate Strategy

The Council's Strategic Plan 2025–29 sets out the Council's long-term priorities and direction, supporting its mission to 'make Witney a great place to live, work and visit.' This report contributes to the delivery of the following strategic pillar of the plan:

2. An Engaged & Supported Community

Impact Assessments

The Town Council has a duty to consider the effects of its decisions, functions and activities on equality, biodiversity, and crime & disorder. Consideration should also be given to effects on the environment, given the Council's Climate Emergency declaration in 2019.

- a) Equality - All proposed projects and events aim to be inclusive and accessible to all residents, supporting equal participation across the community.
- b) Biodiversity - No direct impact on biodiversity is anticipated from these activities. Outdoor events will continue to use existing green spaces responsibly.
- c) Crime & Disorder - Community events and engagement activities promote civic pride and positive social interaction, contributing to a reduction in anti-social behaviour.
- d) Environment & Climate Emergency – Events and communications will consider environmental impact, minimising waste and promoting sustainable practices in line with the Council's Climate Emergency declaration.

Risk

Councillors should note potential risks relating to event management, staffing capacity, and weather conditions for outdoor activities. Appropriate risk assessments will be undertaken for each project to minimise liability.

Risks are considered low and manageable through established procedures and officer oversight.

Social Value

Council-led events and partnerships create opportunities for community connection, volunteering, and cultural enrichment. Initiatives such as training with local organisations to become ambassadors, champions and key contacts strengthen community identity and wellbeing.

These projects deliver strong social value by supporting local groups, encouraging participation, enhancing civic engagement and providing safe spaces within Town Council buildings.

Financial implications

All activities will be delivered within existing budgets Event costs and officer time will be managed to ensure best value for the community.

Recommendations

Members are invited to note the report and;

1. Agree the format and times for the Heritage Open Day and approve the use of the £200 underspend from St George's Day as a budget to help cover this
2. Consider replacing or rebadging St George's Day next year in order to run a Big Lunch or consider funding and partnering with a suitable community group to run one.
3. Agree to run a Volunteer Picnic at The Leys on 2nd August.
4. Agree to the format of the town council's promotion Car Free Day.
5. Consider the purchase of bespoke bunting with WTC or town branding.

Witney Forum

Date: 24/03/2026

Venue: WODC, Woodgreen Office

Organisations/Attendees

1. Neil Parker; Citizens Advice (CAOX)
2. Barry Beadle; Volunteer Link Up (VLU)
3. Jennifer Dixon-Clegg; Age UK Oxfordshire (AUKO)
4. Maria Grindley; WWOFB
5. Harry Thompson; DWP
6. Lorna Jones; Cottsway
7. Sue; Besom Charity
8. Victoria Ellis; Cogges
9. Maria; Cogges Church (St. Mary's)
10. Charlotte Bickell; West Oxfordshire District Council (WODC)
11. Kerry Harris; West Oxfordshire District Council (WODC)
12. Stacy Ouma; West Oxfordshire District Council (WODC)

Apologies

1. Alistair Hobbs; Christians Against Poverty (CAP)

Coming Up

1. Health and Wellbeing Alliance 23rd of April
2. Carterton Volunteer Fair 26th of July
3. CAP; Life Skills course
4. 26th of March; National Social Prescribing Day (EWPCN)

Forum Meeting Minutes

1. Volunteer Opportunities & Recruitment

- **Citizens Advice** highlighted a need for additional volunteers, particularly for reception roles and administrative support. They are also exploring opportunities to expand outreach initiatives within the community.
- **Age UK** echoed similar needs, specifically seeking volunteers to support older individuals experiencing loneliness and isolation.
- **Cogges Farm** expressed interest in increasing volunteer involvement in their community-based activities.
- **Harry** noted that he is connected to several individuals who may benefit from volunteering opportunities and will liaise with organisations currently recruiting volunteers.

- **Maria** reported an oversupply of volunteers within her organisation and offered to refer suitable individuals to other groups in need. A broader discussion followed regarding volunteer training processes and the importance of benefits packages in volunteer retention, including initiatives such as *Tickets for Good* and *Cotswold Collective* memberships.
- **Victoria** introduced the **GoVo volunteering platform**, encouraging organisations to register opportunities there to streamline volunteer recruitment and engagement.
- **Neil** requested the organisation of another Volunteer Fair in Witney to further support recruitment efforts across the sector.

2. Community Support & Programmes

- **Cottsway Housing** shared several initiatives:
 - Distribution of free magazines aimed at encouraging reading among children.
 - Funding secured through Travis Perkins to support parents of young people who self-harm; currently, only 1 of 8 available spaces has been filled, and referrals are encouraged (note: this is available exclusively to Cottsway customers).
 - Promotion of the Oxfordshire Discovery College Parent Toolkit.
 - The Young Leaders Youth Camp Programme (residential), which currently has two remaining spaces for Cottsway customers.
- **Sue** highlighted available financial, furniture, and potential flooring support for individuals in need. She referenced a current case involving a client supported through the Local Area Coordinator in Chipping Norton (Katrina Fegan), who is experiencing significant challenges.

3. Community Safety

- **Charlotte (Community Safety Projects Officer)** raised concerns regarding anti-social behaviour (ASB), particularly in a local underpass/avenue area. Further clarification and potential action points were discussed.

4. Community Initiatives & Events

- **Maria (Cogges Church)** outlined plans to deliver crafting and sewing sessions in Witney. Key points include:
 - The need for a central, accessible venue.
 - Sessions aimed at low-income families and individuals facing language barriers.

- A focus on parents and teenagers to encourage both skill development and social interaction.
- **Barry** provided updates on several initiatives:
 - Volunteer Link Up (VLU), Good Neighbour Scheme, and befriending services.
 - Notification that the Witney hotel currently used for asylum accommodation is due to close in June, raising concerns about the continuity of services delivered from that location.
 - A new countywide partnership project with OCVA and Community First Oxfordshire titled *Small and Mighty*, funded by the National Lottery Fund for four years and scheduled to begin in May.

5. Resources & Challenges

- **Maria** raised concerns about accommodation challenges for service users, noting that despite exploring housing options in Witney, suitable spaces remain limited.
- A decrease in food donations was also reported, dropping from 90% to 60% of required levels. Additional contributions are needed to meet demand and bridge the 40% shortfall.

Actions & Next Steps

- Organisations to:
 - Promote and refer individuals to Cottsway-funded programmes to fill remaining spaces.
 - Share volunteer opportunities via the GoVo platform.
 - Collaborate on increasing awareness of available community services and initiatives.
- Further exploration required regarding:
 - Venue options for Cogges Church sessions.
 - Continuity plans for outreach services affected by the hotel closure.
 - Addressing anti-social behaviour concerns raised.



joanne@specialeffect.org.uk

April 2026

Widney Town Council ;
The Stronger Communities Team



Thank you so much for enabling

SpecialEffect to share the work of
our charity through time and space in
the Community Mindset, it is invaluable
in helping us spread the word locally.

We have received some really positive
feedback. Thank you very much for your
support.

With love from Jo ; All the Team @ SpecialEffect ;

STRONGER COMMUNITIES COMMITTEE



Agenda Item: Youth Council Update

Meeting Date: Monday, 15 June 2026

Contact Officer: Admin Assistant – Communications & Engagement

The purpose of this report is to update the Committee on the Witney Youth Council.

Background

The Witney Youth Council was established in September 2024 with a group of 12 members. Since its formation, the council has actively participated in town events, including the Christmas Lights Switch-on and the Witney Carnival.

The primary purpose of the Witney Youth Council is to provide children and young people with a collective voice that is heard by decision makers. By giving young people a voice, the Witney Youth Council plays an important role in shaping a more inclusive and responsive local government, encouraging active participation, and developing key skills among Witney's young people.

Current Situation

Youth Council Meeting Attendance and Recruitment

The Youth Council continues to benefit from a core group of four Youth Councillors who regularly attend meetings and contribute to discussions and projects. To ensure all places remain active and engaged, those who have not attended or responded for three consecutive meetings are being contacted to confirm whether they wish to continue their involvement.

Recruitment will be a key focus over the coming months, with efforts underway to welcome new young people to the Youth Council. Current Youth Councillors have agreed to help promote the opportunity within their schools and encourage their peers to apply, alongside support from the Town Council through social media promotion.

Interest in joining remains positive, with an interview for a prospective new Youth Councillor scheduled to take place in June.

A Taste of Witney – Witney Youth Council Event

Witney Youth Councillors at the start of this year decided to host an event for young people in response to a lack of activities in Witney, with the aim of celebrating different cultures through food.

With only two restaurants expressing interest and many youth councillors busy with upcoming exams, the event could not go forward. Youth Councillors are instead focusing on joining the town council at the Witney Carnival with a smaller activity to engage with other young people.

The Youth Council, along with officers also attended The Station's BREAK event at The Leys during May half-term to promote the group and seek further engagement.

Witney Youth Council's "Politics and Pizza"

Members of the Youth Council have expressed a strong interest in creating more opportunities to discuss politics and current issues with other young people in the community. Following the success of Oxfordshire County Council's recent Pizza and Politics event at the Corn Exchange, there is clear evidence that young residents are looking to have a dedicated space to share their views, ask questions, and engage in political discussion.

The Youth Council currently has access to a £500 budget, along with subsidised use of the Corn Exchange Hall, which could support the planning and delivery of a similar event. Development of the project could be explored over the coming Youth Council meetings, allowing members to shape the structure and content of the event.

National Youth Council UK

Following the Witney Youth Council voting in favour of joining the National Youth Council, a membership has now been purchased, and upcoming opportunities will begin to be communicated in Youth Council meetings.

Witney and District Museum Youth Council Tour

A representative from the Witney and District Museum, who leads a range of walking tours around Witney, kindly offered to host a tour for the Youth Council. Unfortunately, the date initially proposed was unsuitable for most attendees.

With a busy summer schedule ahead, the representative has agreed to postpone the tour and revisit plans at a later date. She will look to offer alternative dates in the future that may be more convenient for a greater number of young people from the Youth Council to take part.

Daily Slides and End of Term Newsletters

Updates from Witney Youth Council and Witney Town Council concerning young residents are continuing to be shared with local secondary schools for inclusion in their newsletters and daily slides.

Dates of Future Meetings

The dates of the upcoming Youth Council meetings are as follows:

- Tuesday 23 June 2026 – 4PM to 5PM (Informal Meeting)

- Thursday 9 July 2026 – 4PM to 5PM

Corporate Strategy

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2. An Engaged & Supported Community

Impact Assessments

The Town Council has a duty to consider the effects of its decisions, functions and activities on equality, biodiversity, and crime & disorder. Consideration should also be given to effects on the environment, given the Council's Climate Emergency declaration in 2019.

- a) Equality – Witney Youth Council inherently tackles inequality by giving a voice and a platform to young people, often apart of diverse communities. Many issues youth councillors want to tackle involve discrimination.
- b) Biodiversity – The Youth Council has begun to show interest in climate initiatives, although specific plans to help Witney's green spaces have not yet been discussed.
- c) Crime & Disorder – Helping young people feel listened to through avenues such as a Youth Council can help reduce anti-social behaviour and crime by Young People through promoting mental health awareness, peer-led activities/initiatives, and improving the reputation of young people in Witney.
- d) Environment & Climate Emergency –When Witney Youth Council buy items for their projects, officers have prioritised sustainability and the use of eco-friendly materials.

Risk

In decision making Councillors should give consideration to any risks to the Council and any action it can take to limit or negate its liability.

Social Value

Social value is the positive change the Council creates in the local community within which it operates.

- Organisations and local groups able to gather valuable insights on the perspectives and needs of young people in Witney through a small, representative sample.
- Young residents of Witney feel heard and that their voice can make an impact.

Financial implications

- Officers' working time
- Additional internal hall hire and costs relating to Corn Exchange bookings for the Youth Council meetings.

Recommendations

Members are invited to note the report and consider the following:

1. Consider the Youth Council update.



WITNEY
TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of the Witney Youth Council held at 4.00 pm in the Gallery Room, The Corn Exchange, Witney on Thursday 14th May 2026.

Youth Councillors Present:

Three Youth Councillors

Witney Town Council Mentors Present:

Cllr J Aitman
Cllr G Meadows

Witney Town Council Officers Present:

A Hathaway – Admin Assistant for Communications and Engagement
A Clapton – Deputy Town Clerk

The Councillors in attendance were Youth Council mentors and were there to guide and answer questions. Officers advised Members this was their opportunity to provide a voice for young people in Witney and the Town Council would try and bring about their ideas and suggestions.

1. **Apologies**

Apologies from one youth councillor were received.

2. **Declarations of Interest**

Youth Councillors were advised that if they knew anyone or had any involvement in any of the items being discussed at the meeting, they should say it at this point.

There were no declarations of interest.

3. **Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting held on 11th March 2026 were adopted and signed as correct.

4. **Guest Participation**

Participants at the meeting spoke with the Youth Council.

- Jason Huffadine, Project Director of The Station

Jason spoke with the youth council about The Station's upcoming events, such as their van graffiti activity in May, their KICK sessions coming up over the summer, and the development of their Hot Chocolate van. Invitations to help decorate the van during their next BREAK on 27-29 May from 2-4PM were offered to youth councillors. He also kindly offered advice on how to engage with other young people, such as offering free drinks in exchange for answering questions and handing out leaflets at the Witney Carnival.

5. Witney Youth Council’s own Pizza and Politics

Youth Councillors discussed that a good place to trial this would be at the upcoming Witney Carnival – Saturday 11th July 2026. A whiteboard could be shown with various young person responses to the Annual Resident’s Satisfaction Survey for the youth council to ask other young people about, alongside games or activities to win free drinks or sweets.

6. Young People Responses in our Annual Residents’ Satisfaction Survey

Officers informed the Youth Council on the following responses in the Annual Residents' Survey.

“I am a young resident of Witney and am writing on behalf of myself and my friends about something that matters to us and the future of Witney. Right now, there are very few affordable places where young people can safely meet, spend time and feel welcome. Most cafes and shops in town are aimed at adults or are too expensive for us to use. Without safe welcoming hangouts, we often end up with nowhere to go after school or on the weekends. We’re not asking for handouts. We’re asking for Witney to be a town where young people can belong.”

“The parks are good, but I think more benches in them and picnic tables would satisfy lots of people and having lots of swings in playgrounds increases the likelihood of young people over 12 to go to the park”

“I’m a student at Woodgreen, I have lived in Witney since I was born. I’ve found that it is so much nicer going on walks here than I thought, because of the gorgeous places to walk like Witney lake, and the flowers that just liven up everything in a wonderful way. I’m really grateful that everyone in town is so kind and approachable and I like to go to the park all the time with my friends”

“Improvement of sporting areas across Witney, allowing a variety of people to stay active needed.”

“Most of my experience is Good and satisfies me however, there are occasions where furniture and other services are poor and not up to standard, this is either it being dirty or non-existing where should be. This could be improved by adding more of these public services and entertainment opportunities maybe using public fields and parks etc etc i.e oxlease park and field for events such as bouncy castle and bbq or other stuff on those lines, this could improve the community engagement throughout the town.”

“Lots of litter around but still beautiful sites to be in.”

“As a teenager, I wish there were more places to just sit, in a field for example and just relax with some friends”

“Everything costs far too much for an area which has the highest youth mental health numbers in England. I know of non-profits that want to do World changing work in the area (UK Paradigm) and they cannot afford statutory prices set to do the work that will fix everything.”

7. National Youth Council

Youth Councillors were informed that their membership for the National Youth Council was underway.

8. Witney History Walk for Youth Council

Youth Councillors were unable to make the date of the 27th June. The Youth Council Admin would enquire about other dates or otherwise confirm cancellation.

9. Upcoming WTC Events for 2026

Youth Councillors were informed of upcoming Witney Town Council events for involvement.

2026	
May	6th - Annual Council Meeting

	19th - Bus Users' Meeting 22nd - West Witney Sports & Social Club Opening Day 22nd Splash Park Opening
June	5th - Summer Newsletter Inclusion Deadline 7th - Witney Town Band Live at Woodgreen 13th - Start of Drowning Prevention Week 20th - World Refugee Day Flag Raising 23rd - Youth Council Meeting 27th - Armed Forces Day
July	5th - Witney Town Band Live at Oxlease Park 11th - Witney Carnival 27th - Start of Love Parks Week
August	2nd August - Witney Town Band Live at the Leys
September	Date TBC - Witney Feast 18th - Autumn Newsletter Inclusion Deadline 22nd Car Free Day
October	10th - World Mental Health Day
November	9th - Remembrance Day 27th - Christmas Light Switch-On 29th - Advent Fayre
December	TBC - Mayor's Carol Service 2nd - Winter Newsletter Inclusion Deadline

10. **St Mary's Church Youth Café Update**

Youth Councillors were informed that the new Youth Café trialled over April at St Mary's Church would continue until 30th May. From then onwards, the café would pause over summer as they looked for other funding.

11. **Witney Youth Council New Member Recruitment**

Witney Youth Council were encouraged to spread the word that they were accepting new members. Social media posts would be sent out along with notices to schools. Other successful ways of promoting such as at the Witney Carnival and staff connections taking posters into schools.

Resolved: That, the Youth Council Admin print posters for Youth Council members to pick up and put around schools.

12. **Items for Future Agenda**

A youth councillor suggested further discussion of the details of what activity the youth councillors could do at the Witney Carnival.

13. **Dates of Future Meetings**

The dates of the upcoming Youth Council meetings were received.

- Tuesday 23 June 2026 – 4PM to 5PM (Informal Meeting)
- Thursday 9 July 2026 – 4PM to 5PM

The Meeting closed at 4.55pm.

STRONGER COMMUNITIES COMMITTEE



Agenda Item: Youth Services & Grant Applications

Meeting Date: Monday, 15th June 2026

Contact Officer: Deputy Town Clerk

The purpose of this report is to update the Committee on current youth service initiatives, provide details of the applications received through the Town Council's grant scheme, and invite comments from the Committee before recommendations are finalised.

Background

Bright Futures (The Station) Service Level Agreement

Members will recall the Council agreed to negotiate a new SLA with Bright Futures Oxon towards a detached youth service for Witney. The drafted SLA was agreed by the Council by the Policy, Governance & Finance Committee on 30 March 2026 (minute no. F172 refers).

Youth Services Grant Applications 2026

The Council's Youth Services Grant scheme for 2026 opened for applications between 8 May 2026 – 7 June 2026. Grants will be allocated from a budget of £20,000 set for this scheme. For reference, the purpose of the fund is as follows:

'The Youth Fund is open to applications from community and voluntary sector organisations, including existing organisations and those in the process of setting up to establish easily signposted and accessible youth opportunities, supporting open access to preventative services, particularly for those who may be hard to reach and to extend activities to support the young people of Witney.'

Activities may include, for example, providing guidance and support about their lives and issues relating to school, family life and peers through way of drop-in sessions.

Applications may, for example, facilitate the provision of a safe space for young people who would otherwise have nowhere to go, including a safe space to talk, and the ability to enjoy some self-directed or group/organised discretionary activities. In this instance funds could be requested towards facility hire costs and towards a permanent youth structure in the town.'

The criteria for the scheme are attached as **Appendix A**.

Current Situation

Sixteen applications for the fund were received, totalling £58,537.36. These are outlined below with the requested amounts.

Organisation Name	Registered Charity? Y/N	Funding Purpose	Amount of Grant Applied For
Assisted Reading for Children (ARCh)	Yes	We are asking WTC Youth Services Grant to support the school's contribution towards the ARCh service for 10 Witney schools (10 x £555). We provide vetted, trained, resourced and supported reading helper volunteers to primary schools across the Witney area.	£5,550
Aspire	Yes	Our tuition service offers small group sessions in a trusted and familiar setting. In light of increasing demand, we are seeking to expand our English and Maths tuition offer in 2026. We would like to deliver a higher number of tuition sessions this year (an additional 85 hours of English and Maths tuition), so that we can meet the increasing demand.	£2,500
Be Free Young Carers	Yes	We are applying for funding specifically for our 13+ Youth Groups and our new 8 - 12 Youth Groups. Funding will cover the cost of the hired spaces for the venues along with the cost of food at each of these sessions which will allow 20 - 30 young carers to have food during the youth club. In addition funding covers the staff costs to deliver these sessions.	£3,500
Benefice of Witney - Youth Café	Yes	Witney's Youth Café is a weekly open access provision for young people aged 12–18 in Witney, offering a safe, welcoming, and inclusive third space after school. This grant will provide the stability needed to grow the project, strengthen partnerships, and secure long term funding for a dedicated Youth Chaplain role. (52 weeks of staffing, volunteer support, snacks & drinks, equipment, and contingency)	£10,877.36
Clear Sky Children's Charity	Yes	We are seeking funding to run 2 Heart to Heart groups in the Witney community. Heart to Heart is a group programme for children, teens and their parents/carers to attend together across the age ranges of 5 – 9 years and 10 – 15 years. Each group will support up to 8 young person/adult pairs. Heart to Heart offers structured activities, evidence-based parenting support, and opportunities for peer connection.	£4,460
Courtside	No	A targeted approach to visit up to 14 schools in year 1 (predominantly Key Stage 2 primary age children) as a first step in community engagement, delivering free pickleball and physical activity to 3,000-4,000 children per annum within the parish of Witney. Also, to deliver a series of free activity festivals throughout the year as a follow-on offer; pupils invited to attend masterclasses with ex-pros, fun inflatables and free/inclusive tennis, padel and pickleball provision.	£2,000

Ducklington Sports Club	Yes	The grant of £2,000 is requested to fund the purchase of new match footballs and first aid kits for all 14 teams ahead of the 2026/27 season.	£2,000
Hope After Harm	Yes	The grant is required to support Hope After Harm's Young People's Programme in Witney. The programme provides trauma-informed mentoring for young people who are facing significant challenges, including trauma, exclusion or risk of exclusion, conflict, poor wellbeing, low confidence, family difficulties, bullying, discrimination, risk-taking behaviour or contact with the criminal justice system.	£1,000
1st North Leigh Guides	Yes	To fund a sailing session for the girls at the Oxford Sailing Club at Farmoor reservoir.	£500
Bright Futures Oxfordshire (The Station)	Yes	The grant would cover six months' employment at eight hours per week, for a Project Coordinator, to begin to make a youth cafe in Witney a reality. The role would include gathering and facilitating youth voice, investigating options for premises, producing a feasibility and sustainability study, networking with stakeholders and investigating funding options.	£3,500
Witney Buttercross Scout Group	Yes	This grant is requested to fund essential infrastructural and environmental improvements at our newly approved 6.5-acre campsite and outdoor activity hub, 'The Old Oak' in North Leigh.	£7,000
West Oxfordshire Levellers RL	No	Building on our successful inaugural Girls Skills Day on International Women's Day 2026 (supported by Witney Town Council), West Oxfordshire Levellers RL aim to hold a second Girls Rugby League Activity Day for school years 2 to 11 with separate groups for younger and older ages.	£1,000
Witney Mills Cricket Club	No	The grant would be used to purchase a new mobile batting cage. We use the mobile batting cage to allow for multiple junior age groups (and our senior players) to train whilst ensuring the safety of others on the ground – it is an essential tool that we used multiple times per week.	£1,700
Witney Basketball Club	No	To purchase a second set of basketball kit for juniors and adults that will act as an away kit to the one we already have. Three sets of kit will be required and we invite Witney Town Council to be involved in the design process if they'd like to be where a local landmark or reference could be included.	£3,500
Yellow Submarine	Yes	We will be organising nearly £2000-worth of activities, for groups of 12-16 young people over summer. These costs are only for the activities and do not include staffing, volunteer or overheads costs, which are funded from elsewhere.	£2,000

Yes Futures	Yes	Yes Futures requests a £7,500 grant to deliver the Witney Inside Track & Action Project in 2026/2027. The sessions are: Graphic Typography (visual design geometry/calligraphy), Courtroom Clash (legal logic and formal debate), AI App Generation (prompt engineering and screen-based software design), and The Startup Blueprint (business plan development). - four premium skills workshops for the wider community of young people, a profound and intensive 1:1 intervention for 18 hard-to-reach teenagers	£7,500
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In addition, the Council also received an application from Home Start Oxford for the sum of £12,000. A budget for 2026 is earmarked for Home Start to provide early intervention services in Witney (see financial implications).

Full applications are attached as appendices to this report and provide comprehensive details of each request.

On 23 March 2026 (Minute No. SC152), this Committee resolved to delegate the assessment of applications and the formulation of funding recommendations to the Deputy Town Clerk, the Chair of this Committee, the Leader, and the Deputy Leader, as was the case in 2025. The recommendations of this evaluation panel will then be submitted to the Policy, Governance & Finance Committee, which is responsible for making the final decisions on awards.

Notwithstanding this delegation, this Committee may wish to provide comments or guidance on any of the applications at this stage, particularly where members consider that additional information or clarification is required.

Impact Assessments

The Town Council has a duty to consider the effects of its decisions, functions and activities on equality, biodiversity, and crime & disorder. Consideration should also be given to effects on the environment, given the Council’s Climate Emergency declaration in 2019.

- a) Equality – Dispersal can help ensure that young people from diverse backgrounds, including those from marginalized, low-income, or underserved communities, have equal access to safe spaces, recreational activities, educational support, and social opportunities.
- b) Biodiversity – Awardees should encourage nature-based activities and environmentally sustainable development.
- c) Crime & Disorder - Well-designed youth services offer safe, structured environments that engage young people in positive activities, reducing the likelihood of anti-social behaviour, vandalism, or crime. These services can also address underlying causes of offending—such as social exclusion, lack of opportunities, or poor mental health.
- d) Environment & Climate Emergency – Applications such as for outdoor education, active travel can have a positive impact by promoting low-carbon behaviours and engaging young people in environmental matters.

Risk

In decision making Councillors should give consideration to any risks to the Council and any action it can take to limit or negate its liability.

Given the number of applications and the total amount requested through the scheme, Members should ensure they are confident in three key areas: the demonstrated need for the service, the applicant's capacity to deliver it effectively, and the clear community benefit to young people in Witney. These considerations, along with others, are outlined in the grant criteria for reference.

Social Value

Social value is the positive change the Council creates in the local community within which it operates.

Providing grants to enhance or introduce new services for young people generates significant social value by fostering stronger, healthier, and more inclusive communities. These services help young people build confidence, skills, and resilience, improving their future prospects in education, and employment. They create safe spaces for social interaction, reduce isolation, and promote mental and physical well-being.

Investing in youth also supports early intervention and prevention, potentially reducing future demand on public services. Moreover, such grants can promote equality by reaching underserved or at-risk groups, ensuring all young people have opportunities to thrive in Witney.

Financial implications

- The Bright Futures SLA has terms agreed with the Council via budget-setting for funding up to £28,500 in the current fiscal year.
- A budget of £20k has been agreed and budgeted for within this fiscal year for the purpose of this grant scheme.
- A budget of £12,000 is held under budget code 4173/408 for Home Start Oxford.
- There is no additional budget over and above the amount already set.

Recommendations

Members are invited to note the report:

1. And also note the signing of the agreed Service Level Agreement with Bright Futures Oxon towards a detached youth service in Witney, The Station.
2. Consider whether further information or clarification on any matter is required from Youth Services Grant applicants.
3. Consider whether any comments and/or direction should be provided to the agreed evaluation panel, ahead of their final recommendation of awards to the Policy, Governance & Finance Committee, including Home Start Oxford.



Youth Services Grant 2026-27

The Town Council supports the desires of young people for enhancing and increasing places to go and things to do, supports young people's access to activities they are interested in, maintains play provision and encourages the voice of youth in the decisions that affect them through the work of the Witney Youth Council.

To realise these objectives further, Witney Town Council has established a Youth Services Grant with a total of £20,000 available in the year 2026-27.

Purpose of the Fund

The Youth Fund is open to applications from community and voluntary sector organisations, including existing organisations and those in the process of setting up to establish easily signposted and accessible youth opportunities, supporting open access to preventative services, particularly for those who may be hard to reach and to extend activities to support the young people of Witney.

Activities may include, for example, providing guidance and support about their lives and issues relating to school, family life and peers through way of drop-in sessions.

Applications may, for example, facilitate the provision of a safe space for young people who would otherwise have nowhere to go, including a safe space to talk, and the ability to enjoy some self-directed or group/organised discretionary activities. In this instance funds could be requested towards facility hire costs and towards a permanent youth structure in the town.

Once the available resource is used the Youth Funding Grant will be closed.

Types of Assistance

- Financial assistance towards specific projects/activities or purchases of equipment
- Financial assistance towards ongoing revenue costs if the organisation can demonstrate their lack of funds and the adverse effect on the Town and its residents if the organisation is unable to continue/start or are hampered by lack of funds
- Financial assistance to groups providing specialist services
- Financial assistance towards discretionary services such as subsidised meals
- Financial assistance towards the costs to hire a facility
- Financial assistance pledged towards a permanent youth structure

- Subsidised use of the Council Buildings, such as regular use of the Corn Exchange for or Burwell Hall for activities within the terms of the fund.

The Council will look favourably on those who create opportunities to be accessible to all young people, therefore applications demonstrating how they will extend their reach to young people who have not previously engaged with these opportunities are encouraged.

Bids will need to demonstrate that they are offering new youth opportunities or extending existing ones for young people between the ages of 0 - 18 and how these opportunities will support them to live a full and varied life.

Grant Criteria

We will assess applications according to:

- Whether the proposal is providing new opportunities or extending the existing ones for young people to additional sessions, areas or groups of young people.
- How the proposed provision will meet the needs identified
- How it will support young people to live a full and varied life
- How it will add value to the local community
- How it will work with other groups and stakeholders
- How the funding will be used. We believe supporting young people should become an indispensable part of their community and young people who have benefitted from support should continue to do so after the funding period. Applications therefore are encouraged to present their plans as to how they are going to make the provision sustainable and attract hard to reach children
- to identify the local need of young people and can use local evidence from within their community. This might include using existing data and/or anecdotal evidence. The applicants will need to demonstrate how the bid will meet the identified needs.

Applicants must ensure they always have procedures in place to safeguard young people.

Who Can Apply?

Applications will only be accepted from the following:

- Local Charitable and/or non-profit-taking organisations (existing or start-up groups) *
- Community Groups
- Religious Groups (providing the funding is for non-religious activities for young people)
- Volunteer Groups

*Organisations applying to Witney Town Council should be local to Witney or, if just outside the boundary, its work should be of significant benefit to the town and its residents.

Groups and organisations should be affiliated to Oxfordshire Youth or similar recognised umbrella organisation.

Applications are unlikely to be awarded to the following:

- Commercial Organisations
- Individuals
- Charities operating overseas
- Funds established to help persons outside the UK
- Churches & Ecclesiastical charities (towards the upkeep of a building)
- National appeals are, with limited exceptions, also outside the legal scope of the Council's grant-aid scheme

Grants cannot be made to cover money already spent and the giving of a grant one year does not set a precedent for another.

Preference will be given to organisations who have not already received funding from any other body. The Council will look favourably on organisations who can demonstrate they have been unsuccessful in obtaining funding from their national bodies or West Oxfordshire District Council.

The Application Process

To ensure that fair and proper consideration can be given to all requests, the Council requires the following to be submitted before the application deadline:

- A completed application form
- The most recent full set of accounts available or a financial projection or budget for the period following the accounts*
- Any additional information the organisation considers will support their application for grant funding.

*If the organisation is a new entity with no accounts available, please provide a Business Plan, stating aims and objectives, along with a financial projection for at least the current financial year.

Please complete and submit the application form electronically or by email, along with your most recently available, year-end accounts by 12 noon on 7th June 2026.

Please address postal applications to: Deputy Town Clerk, Witney Town Council, Town Hall, Market Square, Witney, OX28 6AG.

Please send email applications to: communities@witney-tc.gov.uk

How will applications be assessed?

The Town Council will check all applications for the Youth Services Grant against the criteria set out above. All applications meeting the criteria will be considered by the Town Council's Policy, Governance & Finance Committee.

Applications for larger grants may be offered the opportunity to present their proposal to this committee.

The panel will make recommendations for award, and the final decision will be made by the Full Council on 13th July 2026.

Awarding the grant

Applicants will be advised as soon as possible after the dates below whether their application has been successful or not. Unsuccessful applicants will be notified without delay

Successful applicants will be asked to sign a grant agreement with the Council. Once the agreement is signed, the funds will be transferred to the organisation's designated bank account.

Key Dates

8 th	May	2026	The Youth Services Grant opens for applications
7 th	June	2026	The Youth Services Grant closes for applications
15 th	June	2026	Evaluation of Awards (Stronger Communities Committee)
22 nd	June	2026	Agreement on awards (Policy, Government & Finance Committee)
13 th	July	2026	Full meeting of Witney Town Council (final decisions)
20 th	July	2026	Applicants notified of final decisions

Monitoring

Successful applicants are expected to comply fully with any monitoring requests from the Council and must agree to this when signing the grant agreement. This may include a review of their project during the period of funding, checking how the money was spent, reports on the activity funded, feedback from young people and any other record of the activity funded (e.g. promotional flyers and posters).

- Grants should be spent within the year, for the purpose for which they were given

- The Council reserves the right to request a copy of invoices and/or other documentation as evidence that the expenditure has been incurred
- Organisations receiving grant-aid in excess of £500, as a condition, are required to provide the Council with a written report within 12 months of the award date to demonstrate how the funds were expended
- If an organisation dissolves the Council expects the organisation to reimburse the grant-aid awarded
- Any unspent grant funding will be recovered by the town council.
- Recipients of a grant from the town council should acknowledge the fact on all relevant literature.

Successful applicants will be required to complete a monitoring report for the town council towards the end of the funding agreement.

Contacting Us

We encourage applicants to contact us with any questions they might have as early as possible. If you have any queries about the Youth Fund or the application process, please contact us on: info@witney-tc.gov.uk



WITNEY TOWN COUNCIL

Youth Services Grant

APPLICATION FORM

(PLEASE COMPLETE ELECTRONICALLY)

Organisation			
Name of Organisation	Assisted Reading for Children (ARCh)		
Registered Address (including Post Code)	Suite E, Gobles Court 7 Market Square Bicester, OX26 6AA		
Website	www.archoxfordshire.org.uk	Telephone	01869320380
Facebook/Instagram		Email	info@archoxfordshire.org.uk
Contact Name	Elaine Adams		
Position in Organisation	Joint CEO/Founder (i.e. Chairman, Treasurer, Secretary)		
Registered Charity	YES/	Registration Number	1146276

What are the activities and/or aims of the organisation?

We are seeking funding for our work in the Witney area over the forthcoming year.

As 2026 is the National Year of Reading, it feels a particularly important time to strengthen children's literacy skills and foster a lifelong love of reading. Schools continue to tell us how many children have been struggling with reading ability, communication skills and confidence. While there have been many challenges for young people in recent years, the need for consistent, individual reading support remains significant.

ARCh is dedicated to rising enjoyment of literacy for children in Oxfordshire via a network of dedicated, trained and resourced volunteers.

Since 2008 ARCh has offered a unique service to schools in the county, supporting around 1000 children each year via approx. 260 volunteers providing up to twice weekly 'happy reading' sessions which involved sharing books, games and lively conversation. The charity provides a complete service to

schools and our volunteers are provided with resources (personalised to individual children) and ongoing support and access to training workshops. We work with 12- primary schools, with 11 staff members and 7 trustees.

This long term commitment sees volunteers continue to work with the same children for the entire year, building special mentoring relationships. Our annual schools survey consistently indicates dramatic improvements, not only in children's reading ability and interest, but also confidence and self-esteem. Our latest results indicated a 98% improvement in confidence in reading and 96% in attitude to reading.

We provide vetted, trained, resourced and supported reading helper volunteers to primary schools across the Witney area. Children are selected for support by their schools; each volunteer usually sharing twice weekly 'happy half hours' enjoying books, games and conversation with their children on a one to one basis. The charity provides resources, personalised to individual children's interests to enable our reading helpers to hook (initially) reluctant readers.

We have reading helpers in most Witney Primary Schools and we continue to recruit and train new reading helpers so that we can reach more children who need support.

Membership

How many members do you have?	300 trained Reading Helpers 12 members of staff
Approximately how many of your members live in Witney?	22
Is membership restricted in any way?	No
What is your annual subscription, if any?	None
Are you affiliated to Oxfordshire Youth or another similar umbrella organisation? If so, which one?	No
Local venue/meeting place (if applicable)	We use Burwell Hall, Witney for our regular book exchange meetings

Grant-Funding	
<p>Purpose for which the grant is required:</p> <p>We are asking WTC Youth Services Grant to support the school's contribution towards the ARCh service for 10 Witney schools. 10 x £555 - £5550</p> <p>The average cost to ARCh to recruit, train, resource and support a reading helper in their first year is £900. With a school contributing £555, we seek to raise the remaining £345 per volunteer through grants and donations.</p> <p>Currently we have 22 reading helpers working with 66 children in Witney town itself. The funding required to cover the shortfall for these volunteers is £12,210 (22 x £555), we are asking for funding for 10 of these volunteers.</p> <p>A grant of £5550 would enable us to continue supporting our reading helpers to work with a further 30 children over the coming year – the National Year of Reading.</p>	
Amount of grant applied for	£ 5550.00
Has your organisation previously applied to the Town Council for a grant?	/NO
If YES, please give details	
Have you applied for a grant to any other body or organisation?	YES/
If YES, please give details	Jim Cousins Trust Hailey Relief Fund Blake Educational Trust Witney Educational Foundation Bartholomew Educational Trust Walter Stickland, Ducklington Stanton Harcourt Educational Trust
Financial	

Please enclose a copy of your latest audited accounts, a financial projection for the period following the balance sheet or a Business Plan if a new organisation.

Fundraising

What fundraising events or activities will your organisation be holding this year?

We do not run fundraisers, but do apply for any relevant grant and fund that would progress our work in the County.

General

Please provide or attach any additional information which may assist the Council in reaching its decision.

The charity is highly regarded and has won multiple awards, most notably the Queen's Award for Voluntary Service.

School staff describe our impact as "transformative" – not only do children's literacy levels soar but their communication skills improve and they display increased levels of confidence and self esteem.


Beneficiaries are children aged between 5 and 11 via support from their special ARCh reading friend who comes into school to see them twice a week, takes an interest in them and values them as individuals. Children often tell us that the ARCh "happy half hour" is their favourite time of the week! Sessions are child led, with the adult there to guide of course, but children feel ownership of their time and choose the books and activities. Hence, no two ARCh sessions are the same and children are excited to attend. There are always lots of opportunities for success and praise – this is something that may well be missing from the children's lives.

We provide vetted, trained, resourced and supported reading helper volunteers to primary schools across the Witney area.

Your support would make a direct, tangible difference—helping children build confidence, improve literacy, and access the wider curriculum with greater independence. It would also allow us to offer subsidised or fully funded places to schools facing financial pressures.

We very much hope you will consider supporting this essential work during the National Year of Reading, and we look forward to hearing from you.

I certify that the above information is true to the best of my knowledge and belief, and that I am authorised to make this application for Grant-aid.

Signed: 	Date: 7 th June 2026
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If posting, please return your completed application form to the address overleaf, for the attention of the TOWN CLERK

For office use only:			
Acknowledged		Previously Applied	
Grant Aid Awarded/Amount	Y / N	Chq No.	



WITNEY TOWN COUNCIL

Youth Services Grant

APPLICATION FORM

(PLEASE COMPLETE ELECTRONICALLY)

Organisation			
Name of Organisation	Aspire Oxfordshire		
Registered Address (including Post Code)	Aspire Oxford, St. Thomas School, Osney Lane, Oxford OX1 1NJ		
Website	https://www.aspireoxfordshire.org/	Telephone	01865 204450
Facebook/Instagram	@aspireonline	Email	[REDACTED]
Contact Name	Pam Granger		
Position in Organisation	Youth Hub Manager (i.e. Chairman, Treasurer, Secretary)		
Registered Charity	YES/NO	Registration Number	1117726
<p>What are the activities and/or aims of the organisation?</p> <p>Each year, Aspire supports over 1,700 people to break cycles of unemployment and homelessness.</p> <p>We support a wide range of people in Oxfordshire, including refugees, young people, prison leavers, and more. Whatever barriers a person is facing, we're there to guide them on the complex journey towards long-term independence and wellbeing.</p> <p>We provide three main forms of support:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1- Dignified, secure housing that keeps people off the streets. 2-Employment, training, and education (ETE) support to help people advance towards their goals. 3-Wraparound wellbeing support, to help people build a foundation of confidence and wellbeing. <p>These initiatives work in tandem to help people at every step of their journey towards a better life. Aspire doesn't just help people to build confidence, gain experience, and overcome barriers. We also help them to</p>			

move from short-term desperation to long-term wellbeing – whatever that means to the person we're working with.

Membership	
How many members do you have?	Over 1,700 service users a year.
Approximately how many of your members live in Witney?	Around 100 young people benefit from our youth service in Witney each year.
Is membership restricted in any way?	Aspire accepts referrals and self-referrals, and we seek to help anyone who needs our services. In the case of our Youth Hub, attendees are aged 16-25.
What is your annual subscription, if any?	N/A
Are you affiliated to Oxfordshire Youth or another similar umbrella organisation? If so, which one?	We have partnerships with a wide range of charities and organisations, including Oxfordshire Youth. However, we are ultimately an independent charity.
Local venue/meeting place (if applicable)	Aspire Youth Hub, 14 Church Green Witney OX28 4AW
Grant-Funding	

Purpose for which the grant is required:

Aspire's Witney Hub reaches 50-100 young people (aged 16-24) a year, helping them to build the foundations of a better life.

The young people we work with face real difficulties in accessing opportunities and moving forward. Many of them have faced circumstances no young person should have to face: whether that's homelessness, long term unemployment, family breakdown, or other issues. Without empathetic, effective support, these young people are left in cycles of poverty and isolation, excluded from the opportunities they need.

Our Youth service uplifts these young people and helps them build a brighter future. We offer dedicated housing for young people, so they have a safe and supportive environment to call home. We also offer ETE support, which helps young people to learn new skills, identify their goals, and take positive steps forward. To further promote confidence and wellbeing, we offer a range of additional activities such as gardening sessions, a pregnancy peer support group, art classes, and more.

As part of our youth service, we offer roll-on/roll-off English & Maths tuition, at a GCSE and functional skills level. Through small group and 1-2-1 sessions with a dedicated tutor, clients build their English and Maths skills at a comfortable pace. They receive wraparound Aspire support during the process, helping them to improve wellbeing and resilience. They then complete examinations to receive qualifications.

Many of the young people we support have had negative experiences with mainstream education, leaving them without the essential qualifications that many courses and jobs demand. These experiences leave their confidence at a low, making them feel anxious about the prospect of further study.

Our tuition service offers small group sessions in a trusted and familiar setting. The roll on/roll off model creates flexibility for those who need it, reducing anxiety and pressure. With supplementary support through our wellbeing and employment services, the tuition service reaches those who might otherwise disengage. Tuition is delivered by our tutor, Lucy Phipps, a highly respected educator who won the 2025 High Sheriff's Award in Oxford, alongside one of Aspire's Youth workers.

Once young people have these qualifications, we further support them to secure work, start further education, or enrol on apprenticeships. Tuition opens doors for young people who would otherwise remain trapped, empowering them to recover lost confidence and access the opportunities they deserve. With roughly 50% of Youth Hub attendees accessing Aspire tuition, tuition is an essential part of our Youth Service.

Last year, we saw an 85% exam pass rate, demonstrating the power of this patient, personal approach. We also saw a 60% increase in young people accessing English and Maths tuition. This reveals just how widespread the need for tuition is, especially among the vulnerable cohort we work with.

The young people at our Hub have indicated that they find group tuition stressful, often due to negative experiences in the education system. We feel that our 1-2-1, roll-on/roll-off model is a key part of our tuition programme's successes, so we would like to maintain this model moving forwards. This means that we cannot accommodate additional demand by expanding group sizes.

In light of increasing demand, we are seeking to expand our English and Maths tuition offer in 2026. We would like to deliver a higher number of tuition sessions this year, so that we can meet the increasing demand. To do so, we need to secure additional funding for extra sessions.

£2,500 could fund our tutor's fees for nearly 85 hours of English and Maths tuition.

Amount of grant applied for		£2,500
Has your organisation previously applied to the Town Council for a grant?		YES/NO
If YES, please give details	We have received grants from the Town Council in the past. Most recently, the Town Council covered the £70 room rental fee at the Corn Exchange, allowing us to exhibit art created by our youth hub attendees.	
Have you applied for a grant to any other body or organisation?		YES/NO
If YES, please give details	We are seeking funds for our tuition scheme from a variety of sources. Recent applications include an application for £10,000 from the SPAR Community Cashback Fund, and we are drafting several applications. Our Youth Hub has secured funds for its core activities, so we are currently prioritising the English and Maths tuition service.	
Financial		
Please enclose a copy of your latest audited accounts, a financial projection for the period following the balance sheet or a Business Plan if a new organisation.		

Fundraising

What fundraising events or activities will your organisation be holding this year?

Aspire has a robust fundraising strategy that encompasses all forms of fundraising. Approximately half of our funds come from statutory sources, and the remaining amount comes from Trusts and Foundations, individual giving, events, and corporate support.

We plan to host an 'open day' at the Witney Hub, inviting stakeholders and funders to visit the Hub and see its work firsthand. We would be delighted for the Witney Town Council to attend.

In addition, we run quarterly booths in the Westgate as part of our partnership with Landsec. In December, we operate a gift-wrapping booth that raises funds for Aspire.

In Witney and its environs, we have been supported by local community groups who run events to fundraise for us. Last year, the Standlake Christmas Market and Santa Fun Run both raised funds for Aspire's Youth Hub.

We regularly have runners in the Oxford Half and, thanks to our Run for Charity subscription, in events across the UK.

Our corporate supporters often run office events to raise funds for Aspire.

General

Please provide or attach any additional information which may assist the Council in reaching its decision.

Below are the profiles of three young people receiving Aspire tuition. We wrote these profiles shortly after they passed their English exams.

'A', 19

A had to leave school in year 8, due to severe anxiety. A received homeschooling, but says they didn't have any tutors or support. In their own words, they 'didn't really do any proper learning'.

Following a mental health check with their GP, A was referred to Aspire's youth services.

Despite struggling with their anxiety, A has an 100% attendance rate at Aspire. A travels independently to sessions by bus.

A believes that English & Maths qualifications will open doors to a wide range of opportunities. Having passed their English exam, they're now looking ahead to their Maths exam in March.

'B', 23

Living in Young People's Supported Accommodation, B has faced multiple barriers to progression. B has turbulent personal relationships and had extremely negative experiences in school. As a result, B needs support in tuition sessions to avoid being triggered. B is 6 months pregnant and is not in a relationship with the baby's father.

B said that Aspire tuition is 'so much easier to understand' than her prior education. B has passed their English exam and took their Maths exam in February.

B is working towards a vocation as a Teaching Assistant or Teacher. Maths and English qualifications could help B progress towards her goals.

'K', 18

K left formal education in year 10. Since then, K attended a college course for two years; however, they had no certified English & Maths qualifications on record. K often falls out with their parents due to complicated circumstances, impacting K's self-esteem.

Currently in Young People's Supported Accommodation, K has maintained an 87% attendance rate at Aspire. K always arrives early for sessions.

K said: "I don't know exactly what I want to do but I just want to be able to do it for myself - I don't want to be stuck anymore."

The below video offers a brief introduction to our Youth Hub:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ts8aFEWgv-k>

I certify that the above information is true to the best of my knowledge and belief, and that I am authorised to make this application for Grant-aid.

Signed:



Date: 13/05/2026

If posting, please return your completed application form to the address overleaf, for the attention of the TOWN CLERK

For office use only:			
Acknowledged		Previously Applied	

Grant Aid Awarded/Amount	Y / N	Chq No.	
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WITNEY TOWN COUNCIL

Youth Services Grant

APPLICATION FORM

(PLEASE COMPLETE ELECTRONICALLY)

Organisation			
Name of Organisation	Be Free Young Carers		
Registered Address (including Post Code)	Be Free Young Carers Harwell Innovation Centre, 173 Curie Avenue, Didcot OX11 0QG		
Website	https://befreeyc.org.uk/	Telephone	01235 838554
Facebook/Instagram	https://instagram.com/befreeyc/ https://www.facebook.com/befreeyc	Email	yc@befreeyc.org.uk
Contact Name	Hannah Waugh		
Position in Organisation	Head of Fundraising (i.e. Chairman, Treasurer, Secretary)		
Registered Charity	YES/NO	Registration Number	1042708
<p>What are the activities and/or aims of the organisation?</p> <p>BFYC are dedicated to providing services and activities for young carers that concentrate on preventive and reactive measures to the young carers circumstances. Our mission is to enable Oxfordshire's young carers to achieve their full potential by delivering a far-reaching developmental and emotional support network of people and resources in their daily lives, their schools and communities.</p> <p>Our services include:</p> <p>School holiday activity programme –We run respite activities throughout the school holidays, providing young carers with the mental health respite from their caring role and letting them be a child for a few hours.</p>			

Befriending service - young carers are paired up with our trained volunteers who will meet with our young carers weekly and give them a break from their role. The Befriender is also a trusted adult that the young carer can confide in.

1-2-1 emotional support and counselling service – complex cases are referred to our youth workers who will visit the young carer in their school environment and deliver 1-2-1 emotional support. We also have a trained counsellor to provide our counselling service. Each weekly session is for 60 minutes and is usually over a period of 6 weeks.

Mindfulness movement – aimed at our primary school aged young carers, it enables mental wellness through yoga-led 45-minute sessions in schools, fostering relaxation, breathing techniques, and overall emotional wellbeing.

13+ Youth Groups – aimed at our older young carers, these youth clubs meet monthly at various locations, they are user led and are a vital way that we engage with our teenagers.

Employability – 121 mentoring over 6 weeks to gain work experience, interview skill workshops, training opportunities. We work closely with our corporate partners to offer our young carers the very best opportunities that they wouldn't be able to access otherwise.

Young carer advocacy– we help and support schools to set up young care clubs, we attend assemblies, offer young carer tool kits and videos to help teachers and children identify, understand, and support young carers. Rising year 7's meet ups with other young carers joining the schools.

Cost of Living – In response to digital poverty, we offer rising year 7s a laptop to start secondary school with. We also offer period products and food on every interaction that we have with young carers.

Membership	
How many members do you have?	800 - 1000
Approximately how many of your members live in Witney?	45-50 (We have 81 Young Carers registered in West Oxfordshire)
Is membership restricted in any way?	Our members do have to be young carers and we have a registration process that has to be completed.
What is your annual subscription, if any?	N/A
Are you affiliated to Oxfordshire Youth or another similar umbrella organisation? If so, which one?	We are partners with The Carers Trust but do not receive any regular funding from them.
Local venue/meeting place (if applicable)	Our West Oxfordshire hot desk is at the Guide Posts High Street office.

Grant-Funding

Purpose for which the grant is required:

We are applying for funding specifically for our 13+ Youth Groups and our new 8 - 12 Youth Groups. This is a crucial service we offer for our young carers to offer them a safe space. This group meets once a month throughout the year. We give the young carers the ownership of what they want to do on the next meet up, empowering them to make their own decisions of what they want to do with their free time. In addition to providing young carers with a break from their caring responsibilities, our youth groups also have a significant impact on their emotional wellbeing. They have enabled young carers to build new social connections, which is crucial for tackling the isolation they may face. By creating a safe and supportive environment, we have been able to facilitate the formation of new friendships and foster a sense of community among our young carers. As a result, we have seen their self-confidence blossom. This not only helps them within the youth group, but also within the school environment. They are more likely to form connections with their classmates and have the self-confidence to assert themselves in lessons.

Following the success from our 13+ youth clubs we have established that there is a need to provide this same service to our 8 – 12 young carers so they have the regular interaction and opportunity to make friends.

Funding will cover the cost of the hired spaces for the venues along with the cost of food at each of these sessions which will allow 20 - 30 young carers to have food during the youth club. In addition funding covers the staff costs to deliver these sessions.

The main outcomes of our youth clubs are:

- To provide young carers with the opportunity to socialise with their peers.
- To improve the wellbeing of the young carers through creating a support network of peers who face similar challenges.
- The project will give young carers the opportunity to spend time with a youth worker who they can turn to for support for their wellbeing if they need it.

Amount of grant applied for

£3500

Has your organisation previously applied to the Town Council for a grant?

YES/NO

If YES, please give details

We currently have local applications grant aid funding in place.

Have you applied for a grant to any other body or organisation?

YES/NO

If YES, please give details

We are actively seeking funding for our youth clubs both in West Oxfordshire and in our other areas.

Financial

Please enclose a copy of your latest audited accounts, a financial projection for the period following the balance sheet or a Business Plan if a new organisation.

Fundraising

What fundraising events or activities will your organisation be holding this year?

The charity has a range of fundraising events taking place across the year. We are working in partnership with corporates and community groups in order to deliver these fundraising activities.

Golf Days in partnership with Frilford Heath Golf Club,

Quiz at Frilford Heath Golf Club,

Smaller fundraising events with our community and corporate partners.


In addition we have just completed a partnership with Dorchester Festival which we are currently in the process of wrapping up.

In addition to our fundraising activities we are actively fundraising through trusts and grants, regular givers and individual donors.

General

Please provide or attach any additional information which may assist the Council in reaching its decision.

I certify that the above information is true to the best of my knowledge and belief, and that I am authorised to make this application for Grant-aid.

Signed: 		Date: 01/06/2026
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If posting, please return your completed application form to the address overleaf, for the attention of the TOWN CLERK

For office use only:			
Acknowledged		Previously Applied	
Grant Aid Awarded/Amount	Y / N	Chq No.	



WITNEY TOWN COUNCIL

Youth Services Grant

APPLICATION FORM

(PLEASE COMPLETE ELECTRONICALLY)

Organisation			
Name of Organisation	St Mary's Church		
Registered Address (including Post Code)	Church Green, Witney OX28 4AW		
Website	http://www.witneyparish.org.uk	Telephone	01993 779 492
Facebook/Instagram	Witney Benefice	Email	office@witneyparish.org.uk
Contact Name	Miss Dianne Augustine		
Position in Organisation	Youth Chaplain <small>(i.e. Chairman, Treasurer, Secretary)</small>		
Registered Charity	YES	Registration Number	1129784
<p>What are the activities and/or aims of the organisation?</p> <p>The organisation provides religious services, pastoral support, and community-focused activities across the Parish of Witney. Alongside its worship and ministry, it plays an active role in supporting residents, offering spaces, programmes, and initiatives that strengthen community wellbeing, connection, and inclusion. Its aim is to serve the parish both spiritually and practically, contributing to the life, care, and cohesion of the wider community.</p>			

Membership	
How many members do you have?	14 trustees
Approximately how many of your members live in Witney?	All
Is membership restricted in any way?	no
What is your annual subscription, if any?	N/A
Are you affiliated to Oxfordshire Youth or another similar umbrella organisation? If so, which one? Yes	Working in partnership with Oxfordshire Youth on West Oxfordshire Youth Partnership oversight committee, Witney Youth Partnership,
Local venue/meeting place (if applicable)	Winchester Room at St Mary's Church, Witney OX28 4AW
Grant-Funding	

Purpose for which the grant is required:

Witney's Youth Café is a weekly open-access provision for young people aged 12–18 in Witney, offering a safe, welcoming, and inclusive third space after school. The café provides free activities, creative opportunities, wellbeing support, and trusted adults who build positive relationships with young people. Many attendees face social isolation, anxiety, or limited access to safe places to go; the café offers consistency, belonging, and early-help support that prevents issues from escalating.

Over the next 12 months, the Youth Café will deliver **48 weekly sessions**, each designed to promote connection, confidence, and wellbeing. Throughout the year, the Youth Café will deliver a series of targeted events for **SEND young people**, developed in partnership with *My Life My Choice* and *Yellow Submarine*. We will also host dedicated sessions for **LGBTQ+ young people**. These events provide a safe, welcoming environment where young people can drop in, relax, talk, take part in activities, or seek support from trained adults. The project is intentionally **low-barrier and youth-led**, ensuring that all young people — including those who may struggle in school or at home — can access a safe space without stigma and feel fully included in their community.

The Youth Café is delivered by trained staff and volunteers, supported by strong partnerships with local schools, community organisations, and families. The project aligns directly with Witney Town Council's Youth Services Grant priorities by increasing safe places to go, offering preventative support, and providing positive activities that help young people thrive.

Witney has a clear and growing need for safe, accessible, and youth-friendly third space where young people can go after school. Local schools, families, and community partners consistently report rising levels of **anxiety, loneliness, and social isolation** among young people, particularly those living in new housing developments such as Windrush Place, where community infrastructure is still emerging. Many young people tell us they have **nowhere safe to go**, especially between 3–6pm and feel uncomfortable in public spaces where they may experience conflict, judgement, or overcrowding.

Feedback from the Youth Café pilot shows that young people value having a **warm, supervised, and non-judgemental space** where they can relax, talk, and build friendships. Several attendees shared that free food is important because of the **ongoing cost-of-living pressures** affecting their families; for some, the café provides the only reliable snack or meal they receive after school. Teachers and pastoral staff have also highlighted that a significant number of pupils struggle with emotional regulation, confidence, and peer relationships, and benefit from consistent, trusted adults outside the school environment.

Local youth provision remains limited, with few open-access, drop-in options that are free, inclusive, and suitable for young people with additional needs. Existing services are often oversubscribed, targeted, or require referrals, leaving gaps for those who do not meet thresholds but still need support. The Youth Café directly addresses this gap by offering **preventative, early-help support** in a setting young people choose to attend.

Demand continues to grow: each week new young people attend, and many return regularly, demonstrating the café's role as a **trusted, needed, and valued** part of their week. Without sustained funding, this vital safe space risks being lost at a time when young people in Witney need it most.

Sustainability Plan

The Youth Café is designed with long-term sustainability in mind. Over the next 12 months, we will:

- Strengthen our volunteer base to reduce reliance on paid hours.
- Develop partnerships with schools, community groups, and local organisations.
- Seek match funding from local trusts, churches, and community grants.
- Build a multi-year funding strategy, including county-level youth funds and local business sponsorship.
- Embed the Youth Café within the wider Youth Chaplaincy structure for shared staffing and operational efficiencies.
- Collect strong impact data to secure future investment.

This grant will provide the stability needed to grow the project, strengthen partnerships, and secure long-term funding for a dedicated Youth Chaplain role.

All costs directly support 48 weekly Youth Café sessions.

1. Staffing

Youth Chaplain (Project Lead)

- **£19.74/hour × 6 hours/week × 52 weeks = £6,159.36** Covers session delivery, preparation, safeguarding oversight, volunteer support, partnership work with schools, and project coordination.

Youth Worker (Sessional Staff)

- **£14.50/hour × 3 hours/week × 48 sessions = £2,088.00** Supports delivery, youth engagement, activity facilitation, and safeguarding.

2. Volunteer Support

Volunteer Expenses

- **£10 per session × 48 sessions = £480.00**

Volunteer Training

- **Safeguarding, first aid, youth-work training = £300.00**

3. Venue & Operations

Venue, Insurance, Admin & Compliance

£0.00 (in-kind support) St Mary's Church is generously supporting the initiative by **providing the venue free of charge and covering insurance, administration, and compliance costs**. This significantly reduces overheads and ensures that the majority of funding directly benefits young people.

4. Equipment & Activities

Youth Café Equipment & Creative Resources

- **£600.00**

Digital Equipment / Maintenance

- £250.00

5. Food & Refreshments

Snacks & Drinks for Young People

- £25 per session × 48 sessions = £1,200.00

6. Contingency (5%)

- £600.00

Total Funding Requested

£10,877.36

Amount of grant applied for	£10,877.36	
Has your organisation previously applied to the Town Council for a grant?	YES	
If YES, please give details	The £3,000 grant supported the delivery of the Enrichment Programme for 15–18-year-olds, providing high-quality opportunities across the summer and autumn terms. Twelve young people took part in the Summer Programme and 15	

	<p>students engaged in the Autumn Programme. Participants benefited from a blend of creative workshops, team-building activities, and practical employability support, including CV writing, job applications, and interview preparation. The programme also offered targeted guidance for students resitting English and Maths, helping them understand their progression options with confidence. As a result, young people reported increased confidence, improved employability skills, and a stronger sense of connection to their community.</p>
<p>Have you applied for a grant to any other body or organisation?</p>	<p>YES</p>
<p>If YES, please give details</p>	<p>SNG community grassroots grant. WODC Youth Voice grant.</p>
<p>Financial</p>	
<p>Please enclose a copy of your latest audited accounts, a financial projection for the period following the balance sheet or a Business Plan if a new organisation.</p>	
<p>Fundraising</p>	

Our organisation plans to deliver **at least one dedicated fundraising event this year**, designed to raise income for the Youth Café and wider youth-work programmes. This event will also serve to strengthen community engagement, showcase young people's talents, and build local support for the sustainability of our work. Additional small-scale fundraising activities may be introduced as capacity allows.

General

Please provide or attach any additional information which may assist the Council in reaching its decision.

Youth Voice – Feedback from the Pilot

Young people have been central to shaping the Youth Café from the very beginning. Their feedback during the pilot was clear, consistent, and deeply insightful. They told us what matters to them, what helps them feel safe, and what makes the café a place they want to return to each week.

What Young People Value

- **A calm, welcoming atmosphere and positive ambience** Young people described the café as peaceful, friendly, and a place where they can decompress after school.
- **Enjoyment of creative activities and informal, youth-led decision making** They appreciate having choices, contributing ideas, and shaping activities.
- **Deep appreciation for free food, snacks, and drinks** Refreshments are consistently highlighted as essential.

- **Recognition of the impact of the cost-of-living crisis** Several young people shared that their families are struggling with rising costs and that they often arrive hungry.
- **Free food is not just appreciated — it is essential for some attendees** For some, the café provides the only reliable snack or meal they receive after school.

Why Youth Voice Matters

This feedback demonstrates that the Youth Café is not simply a social space — it is a **lifeline** for many young people. Their voices confirm that the café meets real, immediate needs and provides a safe, supportive environment that they trust and value. Their insights continue to shape the development of the project, ensuring it remains relevant, inclusive, and youth-led.

I certify that the above information is true to the best of my knowledge and belief, and that I am authorised to make this application for Grant-aid.

Signed: 

Date: 9th June 2026

If posting, please return your completed application form to the address overleaf, for the attention of the TOWN CLERK

For office use only:			
Acknowledged		Previously Applied	
Grant Aid Awarded/Amount	Y / N	Chq No.	

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WITNEY TOWN COUNCIL

Youth Services Grant

APPLICATION FORM

(PLEASE COMPLETE ELECTRONICALLY)

Organisation			
Name of Organisation	Clear Sky Children's Charity		
Registered Address (including Post Code)	The Manor House Little Wittenham Abingdon OX14 4RA		
Website	https://clear-sky.org.uk/	Telephone	01865 362789
Facebook/Instagram	https://www.facebook.com/ClearSkyCharity/ https://www.instagram.com/ClearSkyCharity	Email	info@clear-sky.org.uk
Contact Name	Jess Haynes		
Position in Organisation	Digital Services Manager (i.e. Chairman, Treasurer, Secretary)		
Registered Charity	YES	Registration Number	1140441
<p>What are the activities and/or aims of the organisation?</p> <p>Clear Sky is an Oxfordshire-based Play & Creative Arts Therapy charity that works with children aged 4 to 12, who are struggling with their mental health due to childhood trauma. Since 2010 we have supporting over 1,800 children with almost 15,000 therapy sessions. Our aim is to support families through a range of therapeutic parenting programmes and to provide professional training services to practitioners and family workers across the UK. We receive NO statutory funding to deliver these essential services. Our comprehensive, holistic support services are proven to help children experiencing emotional and psychological difficulties and include:</p>			

- Delivering Play and Creative Arts Therapy in schools across Oxfordshire and surrounding counties, supporting children to overcome mental health challenges in a safe, child-led environment.
- Working with families to promote emotional wellbeing and strengthen relationships at home through our Parent-Child Attachment Play programme, Playful Parents and Heart to Heart groups both supporting parents/carers and young people directly and through our CPD accredited Attachment Play Practitioner training courses.
- Training teaching staff to use our specialist skills and child-centred approach to better support children and families. In 2025, we expanded our reach further with the launch of our Emotionally Healthy Schools platform.
- Delivering high-quality online learning through our Institute for Play and Attachment learning hub to therapists and counsellors, which has members across the UK and internationally. We believe in the power of play to transform young lives.

Membership

How many members do you have?	We are not a membership organisation. We are seeking funding to run some new groups for young people in the Witney locality
Approximately how many of your members live in Witney?	N/A
Is membership restricted in any way?	No
What is your annual subscription, if any?	None
Are you affiliated to Oxfordshire Youth or another similar umbrella organisation? If so, which one?	Yes, Oxfordshire Youth
Local venue/meeting place (if applicable)	N/A

Grant-Funding

Purpose for which the grant is required:

We are seeking funding to run 2 Heart to Heart groups in the Witney community.

The Heart to Heart programme provides 10-week community-based support sessions that are specifically designed for children and teens and their parents or carers to strengthen family relationships and emotional wellbeing.

Heart to Heart is a group programme for children, teens and their parents/carers to attend together across the age ranges of 5 – 9 years and 10 – 15 years. Each group will support up to 8 young person/adult pairs.

Heart to Heart offers structured activities, evidence-based parenting support, and opportunities for peer connection. By engaging both young people and their caregivers together, it creates additional opportunities for learning, development, and social inclusion.

Many young people and families experience challenges related to emotional wellbeing, communication, attachment, and family relationships. Adolescence can be a particularly difficult period, often creating additional pressures for both young people and their parents or carers. Heart to Heart directly addresses these needs by providing a safe, supportive environment where Parents / carers and their children will come together through enjoyable, interactive and low-key activities which help to strengthen their relationship and improve communication in a contained and nurturing group.

Heart to Heart supports young people by helping them develop emotional awareness, communication skills, and stronger family connections. All group members will be equipped with the latest science of attachment and encouraged to develop attachment skills using a wide variety of enjoyable activities including multi-media clips provided, Lego modelling and the occasional junk sculpture.

Families will explore all aspects of middle childhood and teen development including the amazing changes happening in prepubescent and teenage brains, why teens turn nocturnal and other wonderful aspects of emotional, neurological and psychological development.

Heart to Heart Practitioners will share evidence-based tools and techniques with all group members to help them manage stress and develop resilience

Improved family relationships and emotional wellbeing help young people participate more fully in education, community activities, and social opportunities, enabling them to lead more fulfilling and varied lives.

Heart to Heart strengthens the wider community by building stronger families. Improved family relationships can reduce isolation, increase social connectedness, and enhance community wellbeing. The programme creates supportive networks between parents/carers, and young people, encouraging peer support that can continue beyond the programme itself.

We will seek a community partner such as a school, community organisation or family support service to identify and engage families who may benefit from participation. Collaboration with community partners will also strengthen awareness of the programme and create opportunities for ongoing support for families after the programme ends.

Funding will be used to deliver the 10-week programme, including staffing, venue costs, activity materials, resources, and programme evaluation. The programme consists of a coffee morning, an

introductory session, one-to-one meetings with the young person or parent at the start and end of the programme and 6 group sessions.

Costs per Heart to Heart Group facilitator fees = £765

Materials, resources and travel = £165

Venue hire = £1,300

Total = £2,230

Total grant requested for 2 x Heart to Heart groups = £4,460

Amount of grant applied for	£4,460
Has your organisation previously applied to the Town Council for a grant?	NO
If YES, please give details	N/A
Have you applied for a grant to any other body or organisation?	NO
If YES, please give details	No, not for our Heart to Heart groups project.
Financial	
Please enclose a copy of your latest audited accounts, a financial projection for the period following the balance sheet or a Business Plan if a new organisation.	
Fundraising	
What fundraising events or activities will your organisation be holding this year? Our annual fundraising target for 2026/27 across all our services is in the region of £35,000 (final figure TBC). Our fundraising target supports our core services. This proposed Heart to Heart project is not included within that target. Delivery of this project is therefore dependent on securing dedicated funding. We apply to a number of grant funding bodies and charitable trusts every year to support our services. We also connect with a variety of local community groups and organisations who support us with fundraising such as the Arts Society, WI, golf clubs, member clubs and individuals.	
General	

Please provide or attach any additional information which may assist the Council in reaching its decision.

Please visit <https://clear-sky.org.uk/> to see a short film and for more details about our work.

Our 2024/25 Impact Report can be viewed here

<https://clear-sky.org.uk/wpcontent/uploads/2025/09/FINAL-2024-25-Impact-Report-4.pdf>

If you need any more details to support our application, please get in touch.
Thank you for your consideration.

I certify that the above information is true to the best of my knowledge and belief, and that I am authorised to make this application for Grant-aid.

Signed:



Date: 4 June 2026

If posting, please return your completed application form to the address overleaf, for the attention of the TOWN CLERK

For office use only:			
Acknowledged		Previously Applied	
Grant Aid Awarded/Amount	Y / N	Chq No.	



WITNEY TOWN COUNCIL

Grant-aid to Local Organisations APPLICATION FORM

(PLEASE COMPLETE THE FORM IN BLOCK CAPITALS)

(1) Your Organisation			
Name of Organisation		Courtside Hubs CIC	
Registered Address*		Unit 20, Wheatley Business Centre, Old London Road, Oxford,	
Post Code		OX33 1XW	Tel No.
			01865 689754
Contact Name		James Auckland	
Position in Organisation		Director <small>(i.e. Chairman, Treasurer, Secretary)</small>	
Registered Charity		NO	Registration No.
<p><i>What are the activities and/or aims of the organisation:</i></p> <p>Courtside Hubs CIC is a community interest company dedicated to increasing physical activity and promoting community through the management and activation of local park facilities. Our purpose is to bring people together and help them to be active.</p>			
(2) Membership			
How many members do you have?		n/a	
Approximately how many of your members live in Witney?		n/a	
Is membership restricted in any way?		n/a	

What is your annual subscription, if any?	Zero
Are you affiliated to a national organisation? If so, which one?	No
Local venue/meeting place	Courtside at The Leys
(3) Grants	
Purpose for which the grant is required:	
Our planned Schools Outreach Project will be the largest of its kind to be implemented across Witney over a school calendar year (we would like to extend this project to 3 years if successful).	
It consists of two parts:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A targeted approach to visit up to 14 schools in year 1 (predominantly Key Stage 2 primary age children) as a first step in community engagement, delivering free pickleball and physical activity to 3,000-4,000 children per annum within the parish of Witney. • Deliver a series of free activity festivals throughout the year as a follow-on offer; pupils invited to attend masterclasses with ex-pros, fun inflatables and free/inclusive tennis, padel and pickleball provision. 	
Amount of grant applied for	£2,000
Has your organisation previously applied to the Town Council for a grant?	YES
If YES please give details	Courtside (The Recipient) was been awarded a capital grant of £250,000 for the provision of the Leys Multi-Activity Hub. This grant was awarded and administered by the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government. The Funder (WTC) has awarded a grant as a contribution to match fund the principal grant to enable delivery of the Project.
Have you applied for a grant to any other body or organisation?	NO
If YES please give details	
(4) Financial	
<i>Please enclose a copy of your latest audited accounts, a financial projection for the period following the balance sheet or a Business Plan if a new organisation.</i>	
(5) Fundraising	

What fundraising events or activities will your organisation be holding this year?

On 18th July 2026, Courtside at The Leys will be hosting an Open Day in association with the tennis charity Bright Ideas For Tennis. Former GB Davis Cup pros will be providing their time for free to deliver community coaching taster sessions and match play opportunities against them for the public, with all proceeds from the day going towards the Schools Outreach Project Fund.

(6) General

Recipients of a grant from the Town Council should acknowledge the fact on all relevant literature.

Please provide or attach any additional information which may assist the Council in reaching its decision.

Project objectives:

Needs (why):

- Traditional sports and leisure offers haven't solved the inactivity problem: 64% of adults and 27% of children in England are overweight or living with obesity...
- Our healthcare systems are under excessive pressure: 7m people are on hospital waiting lists and there are 2260 patients per GP (up 17% since 2015); WHO estimates that 60% of health issues are lifestyle related...
- We have lost community spaces: church attendance is in decline, 10 pubs close every week, youth clubs are fading, bingo halls are relics of the past...
- We face an epidemic of mental ill health: 1 in 5 (20.3%) 8-16 year olds and 1 in 4 (25%) of 17-19 year olds are suspected to have a probable mental health disorder...
- We have a growing youth skills gap: in December 2024, almost 1 million 16-24 year olds were not in education, employment or training, which threatens their chances of living productive and fulfilling lives...

Although modest, our objective is to address some of these issues through a series of new community-led responses, harnessing public, private and philanthropic sectors. We believe this is needed to help children and disadvantaged communities feel stronger, healthier and happier, both individually and collectively.

No. children involved: 3,000 – 4,000

Benefits:

Impact: improved physical health and mental well-being; increased school attainment (attendance and improved educational and life skills); coaching qualifications and local workforce opportunities; research has shown already that a schools outreach programme offering free tennis activity has resulted in:

- 97% of children feeling more confident
- 68% increase in happiness reported by teachers
- 93% increase in concentration reported by coaches
- 64% increase in independence reported by parents
- 60% increase in friendships reported by parents

Amount of grant sought – £2,000

Date required by: 1st September

Total project cost and sources of funding:

Total Schools Outreach project cost is approximately £3,000

Sources of funding:

- Courtside hope to raise approx £1,000 (33%) from planned fund raising events
- We seek the remaining £2,000 of grant funding from the Witney own Council Youth Services Grant in order to deliver positive health outcomes to up to 4,000 children across lower socio-economic groups in the parish of Witney.

Summary of project cost:

The cost of the Schools Outreach project can be simply broken down into two sections:

People cost:

- 1 x coach x 6hrs/day @£30/hr = £180 per day delivering free taster sessions to classes of 30 children throughout the day
- 14 x schools @£180

Sub-Total = £2,520

Equipment cost:

- Cones, TDL's (throw down lines), marker spots = £290
- Bucket of mini-orange tennis balls = £60
- 1 x wheeled equipment holdall = £42

Sub-total = £392

Final total = £2,912

How will the success of the project be measured?

The success of the project will be measured by:

- The number of children (6-11yrs) from low soci-economic areas (IMD 1-4) receiving free physical activity sessions
- The number of BAME children (6-11yrs) receiving free physical activity sessions
- The number of children who followed-up from the schools outreach session onto a free weekly parks session and/or attended a free activity festival day at The Leys community multi-activity hub

I certify that the above information is true to the best of my knowledge and belief, and that I am authorised to make this application for Grant-aid.

Signed:



Date: 3rd June 2026

Please return your completed application form to the address overleaf, for the attention of the TOWN CLERK

For office use only:			
Acknowledged		Previously Applied	
Grant Aid Awarded/Amount	Y / N	Chq No.	

*Please note that if your address and telephone number are personal information and not that of the company or organisation, please complete the form below which will not be published on our website and will be held in accordance with GDPR regulations. By submitting this form, you are agreeing to the Town Council storing your personal information.

Address for correspondence:	
Telephone number:	

E mail address:

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WITNEY TOWN COUNCIL

Youth Services Grant

APPLICATION FORM

(PLEASE COMPLETE ELECTRONICALLY)

Organisation			
Name of Organisation	Ducklington Sports Club		
Registered Address (including Post Code)	Ducklington Sports Club, Glebelands Playing Fields, Aston Road, Ducklington, Oxfordshire, OX29 7US		
Website	www.ducklingtonsportsclub.co.uk	Telephone	
Facebook/Instagram	www.facebook.com/ducklingtonsportsclub	Email	[REDACTED]
Contact Name	Hamish Law		
Position in Organisation	Treasurer		
Registered Charity	YES	Registration Number	1137103
What are the activities and/or aims of the organisation?			
<p>Ducklington Sports Club is a community football club based in Ducklington, providing organised, inclusive, and enjoyable football for children and young people across the local area.</p> <p>The club fields 14 teams across a wide range of age groups, with 218 registered players. Of these, 102 players (47%) have a Witney address, making Ducklington Sports Club a significant provider of youth sport for Witney's young people.</p> <p>The club is committed to inclusivity and widening participation. For the 2026/27 season, we are proud to be launching our first-ever girls' team, the Ducklington U11 Jaguars, marking an important step forward in providing equal sporting opportunities for girls in our community.</p> <p>All players are welcomed regardless of ability, background, or experience. The club aims to foster teamwork, physical fitness, and a safe environment for the kids to enjoy football.</p>			

Membership	
How many members do you have?	218 registered players across 14 teams
Approximately how many of your members live in Witney?	102 members (approximately 47%)
Is membership restricted in any way?	Membership is open to all. The only caveat is that space must be available in the respective age group squad.
What is your annual subscription, if any?	Approximately £150 per player per year (varies depending on the league in which each team competes)
Are you affiliated to Oxfordshire Youth or another similar umbrella organisation? If so, which one?	Yes — The Football Association (FA).
Local venue/meeting place (if applicable)	Ducklington Sports Club, Glebelands Playing Fields, Aston Road, Ducklington, OX29 7US
Grant-Funding	

Purpose for which the grant is required:

The grant of £2,000 is requested to fund the purchase of new match footballs and first aid kits for all 14 teams ahead of the 2026/27 season.

Adequate footballs and properly stocked first aid kits are essential for every training session and competitive match. Our current equipment is in need of replacement following the conclusion of the 2025/26 season.

This funding is particularly timely as we launch the Ducklington U11 Jaguars, our first girls' team, and need to ensure all new and existing teams are properly equipped from the outset of the season.

With 102 of our 218 players (47%) residing in Witney, this investment will directly benefit a significant number of Witney's young people.

Amount of grant applied for

£2,000

Has your organisation previously applied to the Town Council for a grant?

YES

If YES, please give details

£1700 towards footballs and first aid kits last year

Have you applied for a grant to any other body or organisation?

YES

If YES, please give details

£3,700 received from Ducklington Parish Council towards internal refurbishments at the sports club building.

Financial

Accounts enclosed.

Fundraising

What fundraising events or activities will your organisation be holding this year?

Ducklington Sports Club runs a varied and well-attended programme of fundraising events and social activities throughout the year, which also serve to strengthen community ties:

- Annual Beer and Gin Festival (May): One of the club's flagship events, open to the wider community.
- Monthly quiz nights which are held regularly throughout the year, popular with members and local residents alike.
- Ducklington Flower Show (31st August): One of the busiest events in the local calendar, in which the club plays a central part.

In addition, the club actively seeks sponsorship from local businesses to help meet running costs.

General

Please provide or attach any additional information which may assist the Council in reaching its decision.

Ducklington Sports Club is proud to serve the wider Witney community. Of our 218 registered players, 102 (47%) live within Witney itself, and the club draws further from surrounding villages including Ducklington, Aston, Standlake, and Hardwick.

The 2026/27 season represents a landmark year for the club. We are launching the Ducklington U11 Jaguars, our first-ever girls' team, which will provide structured, coached football to girls aged under 11 in the local area. This is a direct response to growing demand from families and reflects the club's commitment to inclusion and equal access to sport.

Grant funding from Witney Town Council would directly enable us to equip all 14 teams, including the new girls' team, with the footballs and first aid kits they need to participate safely and enjoyably throughout the season.

Should a grant be awarded, Ducklington Sports Club will acknowledge Witney Town Council's support on all relevant club literature, communications, and our club website.

I certify that the above information is true to the best of my knowledge and belief, and that I am authorised to make this application for Grant-aid.

Signed:



Date: 1/6/2026

If posting, please return your completed application form to the address overleaf, for the attention of the TOWN CLERK

For office use only:			
Acknowledged		Previously Applied	
Grant Aid Awarded/Amount	Y / N	Chq No.	



WITNEY TOWN COUNCIL

Youth Services Grant

APPLICATION FORM

(PLEASE COMPLETE ELECTRONICALLY)

Organisation			
Name of Organisation	Thames Valley Partnership t/a Hope After Harm		
Registered Address (including Post Code)	The Coach House, Manor Farm, Aston Sandford, Aylesbury, HP17 8JB		
Website	Hope After Harm – Empowering victim-survivors, families and young people	Telephone	01844 202 001
Facebook/Instagram	Hope After Harm Facebook Hope After Harm (@hope after harm) • Instagram photos and videos	Email	enquiries@hopeafterharm.org.uk
Contact Name	Thalia Jervis		
Position in Organisation	Chief Executive		
Registered Charity	YES	Registration Number	1031545

What are the activities and/or aims of the organisation?

Hope After Harm exists to ensure that no survivor of violence or trauma is left to face recovery alone. Every day, we walk alongside people whose lives have been shattered by harm—helping them find safety, rebuild confidence, and rediscover hope. Our work fills a critical gap: when emergency services step away, survivors often face isolation, poverty, and overwhelming barriers. We provide the practical support and compassionate advocacy they need to move forward. Based in the Thames Valley we reach some of the most vulnerable individuals in our communities. Last year, we supported over 1,400 people, offering tailored help that transforms despair into possibility.

We provide specialist, trauma-informed services that empower people to rebuild their lives and reclaim their future:

Young People’s Mentoring – Intensive volunteer based mentoring and restorative justice interventions for vulnerable young people, improving wellbeing and engagement in education sitting alongside support for schools embedding restorative justice. We supported 81 Young People last year – 48 through mentoring and 33 through restorative justice (Thames Valley).

Sexual Violence Services – Confidential casework, peer support groups, and outreach to diverse communities, supporting **victim-survivors** last year including a specialist project “Code Blue” supporting police victims of sexual violence and domestic abuse alongside outreach services enabling us to access diverse communities (Thames Valley).

Family Matters Programme – Helping **families** navigate the trauma and stigma following the deeply shocking and stigmatising arrest of a family member for online child abuse through dedicated specialist casework support bridging the gap in statutory services and relieving the emotional and administrative toll on police officers (6 Police force areas including Thames Valley).

Bright Sky Digital Programme – A global digital platform available across 12 countries in 23 different languages app accessed by 308,708 people in 2024–25, breaking down barriers to support-seeking and providing trusted advice when people need it most.

Rise for Change Training – Trauma-informed training for 450 professionals, equipping them to respond safely and effectively to domestic abuse and trauma in the workplace either as managers or customer service representatives empowering others to make a difference.

Membership	
How many members do you have?	Not applicable – we are not a membership organisation
Approximately how many of your members live in Witney?	Not applicable – we are not a membership organisation
Is membership restricted in any way?	Not applicable – we are not a membership organisation
What is your annual subscription, if any?	Not applicable – we are not a membership organisation
Are you affiliated to Oxfordshire Youth or another similar umbrella organisation? If so, which one?	We are members of the Buckinghamshire Family Hub Network
Local venue/meeting place (if applicable)	Not applicable
Grant-Funding	
Purpose of the grant	
<p>The grant is required to support Hope After Harm’s Young People’s Programme in Witney. The programme provides trauma-informed mentoring for young people who are facing significant challenges, including trauma, exclusion or risk of exclusion, conflict, poor wellbeing, low confidence, family difficulties, bullying, discrimination, risk-taking behaviour or contact with the criminal justice system.</p> <p>This is an existing, proven programme, and the grant would allow us to strengthen access for young people in Witney. Last year, Hope After Harm supported 48 young people through mentoring across the wider project. Each Young Person is mentored for up to one year. Five referrals came from Witney, all for mentoring, representing 10.4% of the total mentoring project. These referrals came from:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Witney Community Primary School: 3 referrals • Tower Hill School: 1 referral • Witney Community College: 1 referral 	

This demonstrates a clear local need for sustained, trusted support for young people in the town.

The need is reinforced by local evidence. Oxfordshire County Council's Witney Central Community Profile identifies higher levels of child poverty and free school meal eligibility than local and county averages. In Witney Central, 17% of children aged 0–15 were living in relative low-income families in 2022/23, compared with 9% across West Oxfordshire and 11% across Oxfordshire. For children aged 11–15, this rose to 21%. The same profile shows that 29.4% of pupils living in Witney Central were eligible for free school meals in January 2024, around double the West Oxfordshire average of 14% and above the Oxfordshire average of 15.7%.

The wider context also shows why early mentoring matters. Department for Education statistics show that suspensions in England remained a significant issue in spring 2024/25, with 312,562 suspensions and 3,300 permanent exclusions during that term. Young people facing disadvantage, trauma, poor wellbeing or exclusion often need more than a short-term intervention; they need consistent, trusted support that helps them rebuild confidence and stay connected to education, family and community life.

Our mentoring model matches each young person with a trained volunteer mentor who provides regular one-to-one support over time. Sessions are tailored to the young person's needs and may focus on emotional wellbeing, confidence, relationships, school engagement, coping strategies, communication, positive routines and future goals. A mentor offers something distinct: a consistent adult relationship outside school, family or statutory services. For young people who may have low trust, feel isolated or have experienced instability, that relationship can be central to making progress.

The programme supports young people to live a fuller and more varied life by helping them re-engage with opportunities around them. Mentoring can support a young person to return to activities they have withdrawn from, take part more positively in school, manage conflict, strengthen social skills, try new experiences, make safer choices and begin to see a more hopeful future. The aim is not simply to provide sessions, but to help young people develop resilience, confidence and skills that continue beyond the period of direct support.

Hope After Harm already works with a range of Oxfordshire and Thames Valley partners to identify and support young people who may otherwise fall through gaps in provision. In Witney, referrals have come directly from Witney Community Primary School, Tower Hill School and Witney Community College. More widely, we work with many other Oxfordshire schools, pupil referral and alternative education settings, Thames Valley

Police, youth justice partners, children and family services, targeted early help teams and voluntary sector partners. In Oxfordshire, our links include West Oxfordshire Youth Partnership, SAFE!, TRAIN Youth, Mind Oxfordshire, Oxfordshire County Council/Children's Services, Abingdon Family Help Team, Oxford Wood Recycling and Graticura Residential.

This partnership approach helps us reach young people who are harder to engage because of trauma, exclusion, poverty, family circumstances, offending behaviour or low trust in services. It also means our support complements, rather than duplicates, existing local provision. The programme adds value to the local community by strengthening the network of support around young people, families and schools. When young people receive the right support early, this can reduce pressure on schools, improve relationships, reduce conflict and help young people feel more connected to their community.

Outcomes are measured through structured assessment, casework review and feedback from young people, mentors and referrers. The programme has moved to an adapted Teen Assessment Tool, which helps us track distance travelled across key areas such as wellbeing, confidence, relationships, coping skills, engagement and future outlook. This allows us to evidence change over time, identify where further support is needed and demonstrate the impact of mentoring in a consistent way.

Local volunteering is also an important part of the model. Volunteer mentors are not a low-cost substitute for professional support; they are trained, supervised and supported to provide safe, reliable relationships for young people. Where mentors are drawn from or connected to local communities, they help build community capacity and create a stronger sense that supporting young people is everyone's responsibility. This is important for sustainability: investment in volunteer mentoring leaves skills, relationships and capacity in the community beyond the life of a single grant.

The grant would be used to support the essential costs of providing trained volunteer mentors for young people in Witney. Although mentors give their time freely, safe and effective mentoring requires proper infrastructure. Funding would contribute towards:

- mentor recruitment and training, including safeguarding
- clinical supervision
- mentor travel costs
- IT equipment for mentors
- professional oversight and casework support from Hope After Harm staff
- monitoring, evaluation and liaison with schools and partners

These elements ensure that each young person receives consistent, safe and high-quality support from a trained and supervised mentor.

Sustainability is central to the programme. By investing in volunteer mentors, strong referral pathways and outcome measurement, the project builds capacity rather than relying solely on short-term activity delivery. Young people who benefit from mentoring are supported to develop confidence, skills and relationships that continue beyond the funding period. Hope After Harm will also continue to work with local schools, Thames Valley Police, pupil referral and alternative education settings, community partners and wider funders to sustain access to mentoring for young people in Witney where need remains.

Amount of grant applied for	£ 1000
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Has your organisation previously applied to the Town Council for a grant?	NO
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If YES, please give details	
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Have you applied for a grant to any other body or organisation?	YES
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If YES, please give details	This activity is part funded by the National Lottery, but we need additional funds to sustain the project we have applied to multiple funders including Berkshire Community Foundation, Charles Hayward Trust, Charles Plater, Clare Foundation, Coutts, DCR Allen Ch Trust, Hays Travel Foundation, Heart of Bucks, JD Foundation , Kelly Family Trust, MK Community Foundation, Turners Court Youth Trust, Witney Community Insight Fund and the Woodstock Family Charitable Foundation.
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Financial

Please enclose a copy of your latest audited accounts, a financial projection for the period following the balance sheet or a Business Plan if a new organisation.

Provided as separate attachment

Fundraising

What fundraising events or activities will your organisation be holding this year?

This financial year our fundraising activities will include:

- MK Marathon (5 sponsored runners)
- WI Tea Party and raffle
- Christmas fundraising campaign (online)
- Update of website to include legacy donations information
- Easyfundraising sign up campaign (internal and external) [Fundraising | Charity Fundraising Online | You Spend Online, Brands Donate | Easyfundraising](#)

General

Please provide or attach any additional information which may assist the Council in reaching its decision.

Young Person A: mentoring gives a future

The young person was referred when he left a gang and was then assaulted by rivals. He faced numerous challenges at home as he was now the eldest man of the household, and expected to guide his younger brothers. At the start of the mentorship, he had extremely low morale, poor body language and stated his lack of hope for the future. Since fully engaging with New Leaf, bettering himself at school and changing peer groups, he has gone from strength to strength. A is a talented footballer, he has recently acquired a spot at a college studying a B-Tech Sport Management degree and hopes to work in some sporting field. The YP is clearly in greater spirit as he has left his previous life, has new friends and a steady girlfriend. He scores himself higher across all our outcomes and feels having to have someone to speak to during his parents splitting has made him optimistic for the future.

Young Person B: Mentoring and Restorative Justice

The referral came in following an assault on the young person at school which was captured on video. After the incident, his attendance dropped and he was scared of taking the bus alone to school, only attending when mum would drop him off.

Through arranging his mentor meetings at school and entering together, it led to an increase in attendance and more comfort in re-entering the building. Along with a restorative justice intervention he built the confidence to address conflicts with some of those harassing him.

His school grades remained poor, yet he really applied himself to his workshop apprenticeship, bettering his relationships at home and enjoying life again. He also had

no further police involvement having been previously detained for reckless driving of his motor bike in public.


Young Person C: Mentoring – a new influence

A polite young man easily influenced by his peers was referred following starting a fire in the school bathroom and anti-social behaviour within his community.

YP A stated by having a mentor and someone positively encouraging him to be great, he stopped smoking cannabis and spent less time with those that got him in trouble with police and at school. Since stopping using substances his had no further instances of psychosis and says that he rarely hears the voices in his head which would previously persist.

He still struggles to navigate relationships, with his grades and is on a reduced timetable. Despite his various challenges it is clear for school and family to see that his wellbeing has improved immensely and hopefully it will transfer into other areas of his life.

I certify that the above information is true to the best of my knowledge and belief, and that I am authorised to make this application for Grant-aid.

<p>Signed: </p>	<p>Date: 3 June 2026</p>
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If posting, please return your completed application form to the address overleaf, for the attention of the TOWN CLERK

For office use only:			
Acknowledged		Previously Applied	
Grant Aid Awarded/Amount	Y / N	Chq No.	



WITNEY TOWN COUNCIL

Youth Services Grant

APPLICATION FORM

(PLEASE COMPLETE ELECTRONICALLY)

Organisation			
Name of Organisation	1 st North Leigh Guides		
Registered Address (including Post Code)	[REDACTED]		
Website		Telephone	[REDACTED]
Facebook/Instagram	North Leigh Guides (private group)	Email	[REDACTED]
Contact Name	Wendy Goddard		
Position in Organisation	Leader (i.e. Chairman, Treasurer, Secretary)		
Registered Charity	YES	Registration Number	306016 (National number)
<p>What are the activities and/or aims of the organisation?</p> <p>We aim to provide girls with a range of activities, including outdoor and adventurous opportunities. During the summer term each year we meet at a variety of locations including North Leigh Common, Pinsley Woods, Blenheim Community Path, Woodstock outdoor pool and Farmoor reservoir. This year we are also holding a two night camp at Youlbury Scout activity centre.</p> <p>The girls learn how to light fires and cook on them, enjoy being out in nature, and how to take care of it, engage in group activities and negotiate interpersonal relationships, and challenge themselves with new skills and experiences.</p>			

Membership	
How many members do you have?	15 Guides, 2 Young Leaders, 4 Adult Leaders
Approximately how many of your members live in Witney?	12 Guides, 1 Young Leader, 1 Adult Leader
Is membership restricted in any way?	Girls, aged 10 – 14; Young Leaders, female aged 14 – 18; Adult Leaders, female aged over 18
What is your annual subscription, if any?	£1,045 paid to Girlguiding HQ this year. Girls pay £5.00 per week
Are you affiliated to Oxfordshire Youth or another similar umbrella organisation? If so, which one?	Girlguiding
Local venue/meeting place (if applicable)	North Leigh Memorial Hall Youth Centre (during the autumn and spring terms)
Grant-Funding	
<p>Purpose for which the grant is required:</p> <p>To fund a sailing session for the girls at the Oxford Sailing Club at Farmoor reservoir.</p> <p>For the past two years the Witney Lions have given us a grant of £500.00 through their Dream Scheme, which has paid for this. They are now reassessing how they allocate grants so we are unable to apply this year.</p>	
Amount of grant applied for	£500.00

Has your organisation previously applied to the Town Council for a grant?		NO
If YES, please give details		
Have you applied for a grant to any other body or organisation?		YES
If YES, please give details	Witney Lions Dream Scheme	
Financial		
<p>Please enclose a copy of your latest audited accounts, a financial projection for the period following the balance sheet or a Business Plan if a new organisation.</p> <p>Accounts attached. We are not required by Girlguiding to provide a financial projection, but the £5.00 subs per week paid by the girls only just covers the outgoings of Girlguiding subs (£1,045 this year), hall rent (£25.00 per week for the autumn and spring terms) and resources for meetings.</p>		
Fundraising		
<p>What fundraising events or activities will your organisation be holding this year?</p> <p>We man a 'human fruit machine' at the village festive fair, which made a very small profit last year, but otherwise we are funded entirely by the girls' subs.</p>		
General		
<p>Please provide or attach any additional information which may assist the Council in reaching its decision.</p>		

Voluntary groups such as ours provide young people with very cost effective opportunities for adventurous activities, but working within a very limited budget is challenging and extra funding can make all the difference to what we can offer.

I certify that the above information is true to the best of my knowledge and belief, and that I am authorised to make this application for Grant-aid.

Signed: [REDACTED]

Date:04.06.2026

If posting, please return your completed application form to the address overleaf, for the attention of the TOWN CLERK

For office use only:			
Acknowledged		Previously Applied	
Grant Aid Awarded/Amount	Y / N	Chq No.	



(PLEASE COMPLETE ELECTRONICALLY)

Organisation			
Name of Organisation	Bright Futures Oxfordshire		
Registered Address (including Post Code)	[REDACTED]		
Website	www.thestation.life	Telephone	[REDACTED]
Facebook/Twitter		Email	[REDACTED]
Contact Name	Paul Meathrel		
Position in Organisation	Trustee (i.e. Chairman, Treasurer, Secretary)		
Registered Charity	YES/NO	Registration Number	1143123
<p>What are the activities and/or aims of the organisation?</p> <p>Our mission is to give people across Oxfordshire a bright future. We do this through the provision of community projects which seek to relieve poverty and hardship, promote education and social cohesion and inclusion.</p> <p>Most recently this has been through setting up the Station, a detached youth work programme in Witney, funded by Witney Town Council, offering a number of services:</p> <p>Youth workers connect with young people on a weekly basis, going to where they congregate around the town as well as serving hot chocolate at Henry Box and Wood Green Schools (plus soon to become mobile with our customised milk float taking hot chocolate to the streets!).</p> <p>We also run two very successful school holiday football programmes, Break (half term) and Kick (summer holidays), which have been really well attended.</p>			

<p>We recently launched Spark, offering parenting support through courses and one-off sessions with the aim of supporting whole families and improving home life for some of the young people we meet.</p> <p>Finally, we are about to launch one-to-one youth mentoring for some of the young people identified as needing extra support.</p>	
Membership	
How many members do you have?	No members as such.
Approximately how many of your members live in Witney?	Almost all the young people we work with live in Witney itself.
Is membership restricted in any way?	No
What is your annual subscription, if any?	N/A
Are you affiliated to Oxfordshire Youth or other similar umbrella organisation? If so, which one?	No formal affiliation but we do work with Oxfordshire Youth and we are part of the Witney Forum and the WODC Witney Youth Partnership.
Do you have safeguarding procedures in place?	Yes
Local venue/meeting place (if applicable)	N/A
Grant-Funding	
<p>Purpose for which the grant is required:</p> <p>We have a vision to launch a youth cafe in Witney - a permanent place where young people are welcome and can simply spend time with friends and with our youth workers - a safe space with safe people.</p> <p>The grant would cover six months' employment at eight hours per week, for a Project Coordinator, to begin to make this vision a reality. The role would include gathering and facilitating youth voice, investigating options for premises, producing a feasibility and sustainability study, networking with stakeholders and investigating funding options.</p> <p>We feel this role is the first step in getting the project off the ground and will continue to seek further funding. A larger grant would obviously enable us to continue this employment beyond the initial six months and would therefore be gratefully received.</p>	

Amount of grant applied for	£3,500
Has your organisation previously applied to the Town Council for a grant?	YES/NO
If YES, please give details	We have received funding for the past three years to run the Station, and last year also received a Youth Services grant to launch Spark, our parent support project.
Have you applied for a grant to any other body or organisation?	YES/NO
If YES, please give details	
Financial	
Please enclose a copy of your latest audited accounts, a financial projection for the period following the balance sheet or a Business Plan if a new organisation.	
Fundraising	
<p>What fundraising events or activities will your organisation be holding this year?</p> <p>We will be seeking further grant funding for different elements of our work, including beginning to apply for grants for launching the cafe.</p>	
General	
<p>Please provide or attach any additional information which may assist the Council in reaching its decision.</p> <p>One of the areas for improvement highlighted in the 2025 Annual Residents' Satisfaction Survey was the lack of structured spaces for youth, where they can gather to socialise, without having to spend money or being made to feel unwelcome.</p> <p>This theme has come through in our own conversations with young people as well, and more than just the need for a social space: they have mentioned the lack of support outside of school, not knowing who to turn to if they have problems and issues arising outside of school hours.</p>	

Our half term and summer holiday schemes, Break and Kick, have been very well attended, confirming that there is a real demand and a need to provide more permanent facilities for young people.

Thames Valley Police have highlighted the two hours after school as the time when most anti-social behaviour incidents occur (Strategic Needs Assessment 2024).

These are exactly the needs we want to address by establishing a permanent youth cafe, where young people can relax in a safe and welcoming environment, free of charge, and our trained mentors and youth workers can be on hand if they need someone to talk to or are looking for further support.

Having built relationships and trust over the past two years with young people, schools and parents, we believe we are very well placed to provide such a facility. Furthermore, our detached youthwork and the use of our new hot chocolate van to go to young people where they are in the town, enable us to make contact with greater numbers and harder to reach young people, engaging with them in a low key and relaxed way to develop trust and draw them in to use the facility once established.

Since the cafe would be used by young people primarily after school hours, there would be potential to run sessions during the day for other groups, for example our own parenting support sessions - or working with other organisations to maximise the use of the facilities at all times.

We have already begun to explore possible venues and we would be very keen to work with Witney Town Council to make this idea into a reality, for the benefit of our young people and the wider community in our town. There are a lot of avenues to explore and factors to consider, which is why this role is so key.

I certify that the above information is true to the best of my knowledge and belief, and that I am authorised to make this application for Grant-aid.

Signed:



(Completing this application on behalf of the Trustees)

Date: 05/06/2026

If posting, please return your completed application form to the address overleaf, for the attention of the TOWN CLERK

For office use only:			
Acknowledged		Previously Applied	
Grant Aid Awarded/Amount	Y / N	Chq No.	



WITNEY TOWN COUNCIL

Youth Services Grant

APPLICATION FORM

(PLEASE COMPLETE ELECTRONICALLY)

Organisation			
Name of Organisation	Witney Buttercross Scout Group		
Registered Address (including Post Code)	Scout Hut, Marlborough Lane, Witney, Oxfordshire, OX28 6DY		
Website	https://www.witneyscouts.org/	Telephone	██████████
Facebook/Instagram	@WitneyScouts	Email	chair@witneyscouts.org
Contact Name	Richard Lord		
Position in Organisation	Chair of Witney Buttercross Scout Group – Chair of Trustees Board (i.e. Chairman, Treasurer, Secretary)		
Registered Charity	YES/NO	Registration Number	304425
<p>What are the activities and/or aims of the organisation?</p> <p>To promote the development of young people in achieving their full physical, intellectual, social, and spiritual potential as individuals, responsible citizens, and members of their local, national, and international communities. We provide a wide variety of interest-led, exciting, and adventurous indoor and outdoor activities to help young people develop skills for life.</p>			
Membership			

How many members do you have?	375
Approximately how many of your members live in Witney?	<p>The vast majority (virtually all) of our youth members live in Witney and the immediately surrounding communities.</p> <p>Local villages and towns have their own Scout Groups which serve their communities, such as North Leigh, Burford, Long Hanborough and Eynsham.</p>
Is membership restricted in any way?	No. We are entirely inclusive and open to all young people, both boys and girls, regardless of their background.
What is your annual subscription, if any?	£50 per term.
Are you affiliated to Oxfordshire Youth or another similar umbrella organisation? If so, which one?	Yes, we are affiliated nationally with The Scout Association (Group Registration Number: 39626) and locally via the Oxfordshire County Scout Association.
Local venue/meeting place (if applicable)	Our primary headquarters is the Scout Hut on Marlborough Lane, Witney. We also utilize local spaces including Madley Park Hall, Cogges, and Blake's School. Our new outdoor activity hub and campsite is located at 'The Old Oak' on Park Road, North Leigh.
Grant-Funding	

Purpose for which the grant is required:

This grant is requested to fund essential infrastructural and environmental improvements at our newly approved 6.5-acre campsite and outdoor activity hub, 'The Old Oak' in North Leigh.

Following successful planning approval, this site will serve as a fundamental outdoor recreation facility for our hundreds of Witney-based Scouts. Crucially, the grant will specifically support the provision of a temporary access facility/toilet block near the entrance (as recommended by the planning officer to establish the site). These improvements will ensure a safe, accessible, and inclusive environment for weekend camps, weekday evening sessions, and collaborative use by other local youth groups and primary schools.

Our group provides active, skills-for-life outdoor education to young people in the Witney area, giving them vital opportunities to develop resilience, teamwork, and a deep connection to nature. To continue delivering safe, high-quality night-away experiences and expeditions, we urgently need to upgrade our aging outdoor kit. Many of our current tents and cooking utilities are nearing the end of their operational life, suffering from heavy wear and tear that compromises their weatherproofing and safety.

A modern, reliable kit store is crucial to ensuring our scouting program remains fully inclusive. By providing high-quality group equipment, we remove the financial barriers for local families who might otherwise struggle to afford expensive personal outdoor gear. The requested funds will be used to purchase durable, commercial-grade patrol tents and camp kitchen utilities that will withstand the elements and serve our Cubs, Scouts, and Explorers for many years to come. Your support would directly impact young people in our local community, empowering them to step away from screens, build confidence, and experience the rewards of the great British countryside.

Amount of grant applied for

£7000

Has your organisation previously applied to the Town Council for a grant?		YES/NO
If YES, please give details	We have applied for grants over the last few years. We have benefitted greatly from the funding for some camping equipment, and our young people are really benefitting from the councils support for our newer kayaks. The kayaks really do support in training our young people on the water, training them to be able to use water safely.	
Have you applied for a grant to any other body or organisation?		YES/NO
If YES, please give details		
Financial		
Please enclose a copy of your latest audited accounts, a financial projection for the period following the balance sheet or a Business Plan if a new organisation.		
Fundraising		

What fundraising events or activities will your organisation be holding this year?

At the heart of our Group's success is the incredible effort put in by our young people. From the Beavers and Cubs to the Scouts and Explorers, every single unit works tirelessly to raise funds for their own activities. Whether it's through sponsored events, community projects, bake sales or creative tallies, their energy and enthusiasm keep our adventures affordable and accessible for everyone.

Behind the scenes, the WBSG Trustees are working equally hard. Their current mission? Finding the vital volunteers needed to support and drive these fundraising efforts forward.

Volunteers and young people also spend their time erecting marquees for local organisations, such as Audley Travel and Witney Music Festival. However, these funds go into providing fun, adventurous activities for our young people, rather than the operational spending for our spaces.

The Challenge We Face

It's no secret that we are living in challenging times. Everyone is busy, and finding spare time is harder than ever. Due to this, finding new volunteers has become an uphill battle.

But here is the reality; **our leaders want to focus on delivering world-class scouting and unforgettable activities for Witney's young people.** Many do not have the additional time to support with fundraising activities for the entirety of Witney Buttercross Scout Group. That's why WBSG's Trustees are embarking on a recruitment drive for volunteers to support with fundraising efforts.

General

Please provide or attach any additional information which may assist the Council in reaching its decision.

I certify that the above information is true to the best of my knowledge and belief, and that I am authorised to make this application for Grant-aid.

Signed: 

Date: 04/06/26

If posting, please return your completed application form to the address overleaf, for the attention of the TOWN CLERK

For office use only:			
Acknowledged		Previously Applied	
Grant Aid Awarded/Amount	Y / N	Chq No.	



WITNEY TOWN COUNCIL

Youth Services Grant

APPLICATION FORM

(PLEASE COMPLETE ELECTRONICALLY)

Organisation			
Name of Organisation	West Oxfordshire Levellers RL		
Registered Address (including Post Code)	6 Park View Lane, Witney, Oxfordshire, OX28 1FZ		
Website	westoxfordshirelevellers.co.uk	Telephone	██████████
Facebook / Instagram	Facebook: West Oxfordshire Levellers RL Twitter (X): WestOxLevellers	Email	████████████████████ ██████████
Contact Name	Ian Ferry		
Position in Organisation	Club Secretary (i.e. Chairman, Treasurer, Secretary)		
Registered Charity	YES/NO	Registration Number	n/a
<p>What are the activities and/or aims of the organisation?</p> <p>We are a community focussed not for profit Rugby League club providing different forms of the sport to Primary and Secondary aged children, along with Mixed Adult opportunities.</p> <p>Core Values & Vision: Inclusion • Support • Growth • Respect • Resilience • Togetherness • Fun</p> <p>We promote staying healthy by having fun. We use sport as a tool to develop players, and young people especially. We teach the skills needed to work as a successful team. We support player confidence to use individual inspiration when opportunities arise, within and outside the club. We aim to work with partners to facilitate young player opportunities to gain insights into the business world as they prepare for life after school. Work with our sponsors to encourage adult workers into sport and improve fitness whilst making new friends.</p> <p>The health and wellbeing of players are the club's highest priority. We have at least one first aider for every coaching session or match. All senior coaches are fully qualified with valid DBS checks and have passed safeguarding training. We align with national standards and seek new approaches to meet Physical and Mental Health needs. We don't alienate. We encourage players with additional needs to join us. We support players who wish to use their sessions for physical or skill sections of their Duke of Edinburgh awards. For those who wish to play in matches, we assist players and their families in RFL registration.</p>			

<p>We are dedicated in facilitating Primary and Secondary children in trying something different, making new friends, keeping active, building confidence and having fun. As the club grows, we aim to enhance support of female players; and those from ethnic, cultural or religious minorities to ensure we thrive as an all-inclusive club.</p>	
<p>Membership</p>	
<p>How many members do you have?</p>	<p>66 (including 58 players, 7 coaches and 1 volunteer). This is a 10% increase from last year and includes a considerable increase in female participation.</p>
<p>Approximately how many of your members live in Witney?</p>	<p>55 (including around 20 in Eynsham).</p>
<p>Is membership restricted in any way?</p>	<p>No, we are all-inclusive (all genders, all ages, all abilities). We actively encourage children with ADHD to join our club.</p>
<p>What is your annual subscription, if any?</p>	<p>We ask players to pay £4 subs per training session. This year we have planned 22 of these, some paid up front for £88 and some pay weekly.</p>
<p>Are you affiliated to Oxfordshire Youth or another similar umbrella organisation? If so, which one?</p>	<p>No</p>
<p>Local venue/meeting place (if applicable)</p>	<p>Wood Green School, Woodstock Road, Witney (training and home matches)</p>
<p>Grant-Funding</p>	
<p>Purpose for which the grant is required:</p> <p>Building on our successful inaugural Girls Skills Day on International Women's Day 2026 (supported by Witney Town Council), West Oxfordshire Levellers RL aim to hold a second Girls Rugby League Activity Day for school years 2 to 11 with separate groups for younger and older ages. The information and activities will be specifically designed for girls; and be appropriate for those currently partaking in sports and those who do not play team games. The club will utilise the feedback from our first event, to enable us to enhance and fully optimise the opportunity for our current girls and those attending for the first time.</p> <p>Each activity will be themed around Rugby League to include skill development, problem solving, team-working/building and learning leadership qualities. The club will follow the Rugby Football League's principles of Respect and Togetherness. The skills learned and advice provided can be adapted to other sports or school activities to help develop girls as the individuals they are. Success will not be measured by strength, stamina or ability to play; but on involvement and enjoyment.</p> <p>We aim to provide instruction from experienced coaches, advice from strength and conditioning leads and nutritional support. Coaches will provide their assistance free of charge. However, we budget for up to £200 for other experts. All our coaches and experts are fully qualified and have passed enhanced DBS checks. All these costs have been funded by the individuals themselves. There are no additional insurance costs as this is already included in our Rugby Football League insurance.</p>	

Part of the funding will be used prior to the event in booking facilities* (up to £100 for 4 hours, including set-up for pitches), promotion and recruitment (up to £200). Promotion will take the form of posters, flyers and wayfinding on the day (signage and banners). Social media promotion and liaison with schools will be cost-free, and the club already has the majority of equipment required. We aim to provide refreshments up to £300 (either by hiring a catering company with trailer or by using the Coffee Shed. Each participant will receive a pack for their further development; and we budget up to £100 for design and production. We aim to provide spot-prizes during the day and budget for up to £100 for these (some items we have already, paid for by the committee or donated by the RFL, so will not incur charges). If the costs of the event exceed that of an awarded grant, the difference will be covered by our budget reserve, without compromising the offer to our participants.

Summary of budgets:

Facility Hire	£100*
Promotion	£200
Experts	£200
Refreshments	£300
Development Packs	£100
Prizes	£100

*Dependent on availability of The Leys and if there is a cost. If there is no cost for event hire, the funding will be used to boost support on the day.

Outcomes:

Rugby League benefits from players of all shapes and sizes. By encouraging young players (especially girls and those who may identify as someone else, but are not biologically male) to be who they are and how they are; we can increase the number of female players enjoying more and more regular team activities.

The Girls Rugby League Activity Day (Part 2) will also serve as a recruitment event for the club. However, the club acknowledges some participants may not wish to join the team; and will therefore ensure all are treated with equal respect and provided with the same support, regardless of their choices.

Amount of grant applied for	£1000	
Has your organisation previously applied to the Town Council for a grant?	YES/NO	
If YES, please give details	<p>We were fortunate to be awarded £50 in celebration of the Town Council's 50th anniversary.</p> <p>Last year we also applied for £1000 to run our inaugural Girls Skills Day at The Leys on International Women's Day. We were overjoyed to receive the full amount and used the money as set out in our application. Since this event we have seen a dramatic increase in the number of secondary aged female players especially.</p>	
Have you applied for a grant to any other body or organisation?	YES/NO	

If YES, please give details	<p>Thames Valley Police (TVP) – We applied for and were successfully awarded £800 from the TVP Community Fund (money raised by the ill-gotten proceeds crime and donated to local causes) to further our anti-knife crime/drugs initiative. To add to the balls we commissioned from a previous fund we will purchase bespoke/customised bottles, carries and banners for matches and sessions.</p> <p>The Rugby Football League (RFL) - This year we had the opportunity to apply for a grant up to £1500 which will be used recruitment and retention of female players. Within the criteria we are also allowed to use funding for such things as providing transport for girls to get to away matches/festivals and provide any specific equipment or items they require to help them enjoy the experience fully. The decision on the award is still pending with the possibility of a smaller amount granted or none at all. We do feel confident we will receive an amount that will help us though.</p>
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Financial

Please enclose a copy of your latest audited accounts, a financial projection for the period following the balance sheet or a Business Plan if a new organisation.

We have attached our most recent bank statement to the email as part of this application. (Please note the balance is higher than a typical month as hire of our training facilities are payable by credit card only. As we do not have a club card, a member of the committee has temporarily paid all fees so far this season (£400), pending reimbursement).

When parents pay subs etc, we ask that they use their child's name as reference. These details and those of their bank accounts have been redacted from the versions shared to comply with our club GDPR policy. Please note the invoices have the home address of our Club Chair John Connaughton as the account was set-up by the latter. Our 2026 season will be officially closing in July (although we will explore the wish for summer holiday sessions with our parents), so our projection will be for our 2027 season, commencing in February.

Our costs for next year are for facilities hire only as we already have all our equipment and playing kits. We do also set-aside a small budget to replace any vital damaged assets. Our Primary and Secondary sessions take place at the same time (different areas of the grounds) which reduces the cost to £25 per hour. We plan to hold 22 sessions as per our previous 2 years, which totals £550 in hire charges which are paid 1 month in advance. We plan at least 2 home fixtures which will total £100. Most games are played away from home and incur no charges.

Our subs for each session are currently £4 per hour per player* and we aim to have a bare minimum of 30 players at each session, this will total £2520. Regular attendance can be affected by player's school commitments and family holidays, hence the average number of 30 provided. If we deduct the pitch fees this will leave a remainder of £1870. We naturally aim for attendance to be higher and therefore increase the amount of subs paid, but have to be realistic about our players balancing other commitments, including their schoolwork.

Our coaches and first aiders are volunteers so incur no charges. Mandatory training requirements that are chargeable are paid for by those volunteers and not the club. We also provide a range training wear for players and each order gains a surplus of approximately £5 to cover postage etc.

Summary of income and expenditure for 2027:

Item	Income	Expenditure
Subs from players (current rate £4 each per session)	£2520	
Hire of facilities for weekly training sessions (22)		£550
Hire of facilities for matches		£100
Total estimated surplus for 2027	£1870	

*The figure of £4 per session has been in place since 2024. This was reviewed by the committee prior to our 2026 campaign. It was agreed to maintain this rate to make it affordable, especially for families who have two or more children playing in the club. We do not currently envisage raising this figure in 2027, unless there is a considerable increase in pitch hire costs.

Fundraising

What fundraising events or activities will your organisation be holding this year?

Each year we take part in fund raising events for our chosen charity, MNDA Oxfordshire Branch. This includes the annual Blenheim Park "walk2dfeetmnd" and some of our players craft items for sale at other MNDA Oxfordshire Branch events/meetings. All proceeds from these activities go to MNDA Oxfordshire Branch and not the club. Last year our Chairman also ran a marathon in aid of MNDA Oxfordshire Branch and generated funding through sponsorship.

General

Please provide or attach any additional information which may assist the Council in reaching its decision.

As a Rugby League club serving a population outside of the traditional heartlands (Lancashire, Yorkshire, Cheshire and Cumbria) we do receive a small amount of support from our governing body, the Rugby Football League (RFL). The club formed in 2019, has continued to build membership, strengthen our offer and encompass our aims to provide wraparound player support.

This year we had the opportunity to apply for a grant from the RFL for up to £1500. If successful, use funding for recruitment and retention of female players. This is still pending a final decision, but we are hopeful of further assistance. RFL funding, personnel and time are extremely limited, but we are ever grateful to them for organising meetings and online workshops.

The vast majority of the endeavour in managing the club is made by volunteers, players and their parents. We also have our highest number of Facebook followers (currently 2134) who help spread our message. Funding and support from local organisations such as councils, local police, schools and our amazing sponsors; are vital in underpinning our aims and values. Recognition of our efforts is invaluable for a club made-up of volunteers.

I certify that the above information is true to the best of my knowledge and belief, and that I am authorised to make this application for Grant-aid.

Signed:



Date:

7th June 2026

If posting, please return your completed application form to the address overleaf, for the attention of the TOWN CLERK

For office use only:			
Acknowledged		Previously Applied	
Grant Aid Awarded/Amount	Y / N	Chq No.	



WITNEY TOWN COUNCIL

Youth Services Grant

APPLICATION FORM

(PLEASE COMPLETE ELECTRONICALLY)

Organisation			
Name of Organisation	Witney Mills Cricket Club		
Registered Address (including Post Code)	[REDACTED]		
Website	www.witneymillsc.co.uk	Telephone	N/A
Facebook/Instagram		Email	[REDACTED] [REDACTED]
Contact Name	Tim Allen [REDACTED] [REDACTED]		
Position in Organisation	Committee member (i.e. Chairman, Treasurer, Secretary)		
Registered Charity	YES/NO	Registration Number	N/A

What are the activities and/or aims of the organisation?

We are an active cricket club in the heart of witney. We aim to promote cricket and to increase participation in the sport. We run 4 adult sides, where a significant number of players have come through (or are still in) our junior section, as well as running age group cricket for boys from U9-U15's. In addition we are part of the English cricket boards (ECB) all stars and dynamos programs allowing us to run activities for children from 5-11 in a safe and organised environment. Our dynamos club is girls only, and one of the long term aims of the club is to align ourselves with Oxfordshire crickets aim to increase participation in cricket for girls and women. Our aim would be to provide more training and match facilities, as well as upgrading our female changing facilities – to allow us to also have a pathway for girls into hardball cricket that we can provide in witney, currently we work with other clubs to do this in west Oxfordshire. We have a strong belief that the

strengthening of our junior cricket provision is key to keeping the club thriving and growing as well as it benefiting the children and families involved.	
Membership	
How many members do you have?	Approximately 270 (This includes Adult members and junior members)
Approximately how many of your members live in Witney?	More than 75%
Is membership restricted in any way?	Membership to the club is open to all, without prejudice.
What is your annual subscription, if any?	Adult membership £100 Junior membership £50 (first child), £25 (second child), free for 3rd+ child
Are you affiliated to Oxfordshire Youth or another similar umbrella organisation? If so, which one?	Oxfordshire Cricket Board (OCB) English Cricket Board (ECB)
Local venue/meeting place (if applicable)	Witney Mills Cricket Club - Newland
Grant-Funding	

Purpose for which the grant is required:

The grant would be used to purchase a new mobile batting cage. We use the mobile batting cage to allow for multiple junior age groups (and our senior players) to train whilst ensuring the safety of others on the ground – it is an essential tool that we used multiple times per week. Our current cage has lived a long life but has been battered by the weather over the last few years; and despite regular maintenance and care it has recently structurally failed. The cost to repair and replace the effected sections is significant, and there is high likelihood that some of the other parts will fail soon due to the additional strain put on them by the sections in the photos below having buckled/sheared off; so a replacement cage would be the most cost effective way of us being able to continue to provide this essential piece of equipment for our training purposes.



Amount of grant applied for	£1700	
Has your organisation previously applied to the Town Council for a grant?	YES/NO	
If YES, please give details	In 2021 we applied and were awarded £2,079.00 for a new lawnmower. Prior to 2021 we received an annual award of £500.	
Have you applied for a grant to any other body or organisation?	YES/NO	

If YES, please give details	We have not applied to any other organization for a grant in relation to the replacement of our batting cage
Financial	
<p>Please enclose a copy of your latest audited accounts, a financial projection for the period following the balance sheet or a Business Plan if a new organisation.</p> <p>Please find attached the Profit and Loss accounts for 2025 and 2026 so far. These have not yet been audited for 2025 yet but will be shortly.</p>	
Fundraising	
<p>What fundraising events or activities will your organisation be holding this year?</p> <p>We have a long-term plan, in line with the ECB and OCB's aim to increase the participation in cricket – particularly aimed at increasing the level of participation through women's and girl's cricket. In order to achieve this, we are setting ourselves an adventurous target with the hopes of being able to improve the facilities within the cricket clubhouse to accommodate an improvement to the women's toilets and changing facilities; as well as increasing the playing area available for matches and training by inserting an artificial pitch onto our second field.</p> <p>Our fundraising efforts include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • two cricket days: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ a 'family fun day' with multiple matches going on from 10am – 6pm starting with a girls only "dynamos" festival in the morning but with activities for all age groups throughout the day. With plenty of games/activities and even a bouncy castle! ○ A kids vs parents day in September with all ages groups battling for the bragging rights in their respective households (from our all stars (5+ years) up to our Under 13's) – then culminating with the Den Harvey memorial match, a fixture between any U18s against the coaching team. • Quiz nights • Raffles • Sponsorship • We have also entered the club into the Toyota 'cricket for all' raffle. This is a raffle set up by the ECB in conjunction with Toyota where 100% of ticket sales are given to the respective club. <p>All of the activities above were planned to raise funds for the long-term plan aiming at the advancement of cricket in the witney area to allow for us to provide opportunities for girls cricket and expand our current junior cricket offerings – we had not factored in the need to replace this equipment. This grant would aid us in our overall aim and we are extremely grateful for your consideration.</p>	

General

Please provide or attach any additional information which may assist the Council in reaching its decision.

Please see attached document showing the long term aims and ambition of the club.

We are very grateful for your consideration and look forward to hearing from you. Should you have any further questions please don't hesitate to reach out to the contact details above.

I certify that the above information is true to the best of my knowledge and belief, and that I am authorised to make this application for Grant-aid.

Signed: 

Date: 4th June 2026

If posting, please return your completed application form to the address overleaf, for the attention of the TOWN CLERK

For office use only:			
Acknowledged		Previously Applied	
Grant Aid Awarded/Amount	Y / N	Chq No.	



WITNEY TOWN COUNCIL

Youth Services Grant

APPLICATION FORM

(PLEASE COMPLETE ELECTRONICALLY)

Organisation			
Name of Organisation	Witney Basketball Club		
Registered Address (including Post Code)	Wood Green School Woodstock Road Witney OX28 1DX		
Website	www.witneybasketballclub.co.uk	Telephone	[REDACTED]
Facebook/Instagram	@WitneyWolvesBasketball	Email	[REDACTED]
Contact Name	Gavin Fielding		
Position in Organisation	Chairperson (i.e. Chairman, Treasurer, Secretary)		
Registered Charity	NO	Registration Number	N/A
<p>What are the activities and/or aims of the organisation?</p> <p>To offer: 1) accessible grassroots basketball opportunities to local children of all backgrounds; and 2) basketball training, playing coaching and officiating opportunities to members of the club.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ To work with local schools and facilities providers to promote the game of basketball by improving awareness and accessibility; ❖ To promote and facilitate involvement of club members in the running of the Club to improve its foundations ❖ To contribute to the Oxfordshire Basketball Association and the development of basketball in the county ❖ To establish a strong network of funders, local authorities, basketball teams, local businesses, infrastructure planners and developers to improve basketball in the area and ❖ Meet its duty of care to all officers and members of the club. 			

Membership	
How many members do you have?	131
Approximately how many of your members live in Witney?	60
Is membership restricted in any way?	Ages 7 and over
What is your annual subscription, if any?	Depends on the amount of training sessions but approximately £180 for 8 months for one session a week. This increases if training twice a week and participating in games.
Are you affiliated to Oxfordshire Youth or another similar umbrella organisation? If so, which one?	No but part of the Oxfordshire Basketball Association and have attended WODC Youth Partnership meetings and contribute as an "information member".
Local venue/meeting place (if applicable)	Usually at Wood Green School unless it is exam season
Grant-Funding	
<p>Purpose for which the grant is required:</p> <p>To purchase a second set of basketball kit for juniors and adults that will act as an away kit to the one we already have. Three sets of kit will be required and we invite Witney Town Council to be involved in the design process if they'd like to be where a local landmark or reference could be included.</p> <p>To contribute to ever increasing court costs. To hire out Carterton Leisure Centre is now £64 an hour after a recent increase in court fees. These costs fall on our members where sadly, despite the club offering You Move discounts, members have had to stop attending sessions as they are unable to pay. We are hoping that the council will help cover one month's court costs which will help the club recuperate some reserves it is currently using to keep sessions over the summer going.</p>	

Amount of grant applied for	£ 3,500
Has your organisation previously applied to the Town Council for a grant?	YES
If YES, please give details	Witney Wolves Basketball (Men's team) obtained a £50 donation during the 50 for 50 initiative.
Have you applied for a grant to any other body or organisation?	NO but may do in future
If YES, please give details	
Financial	
Please enclose a copy of your latest audited accounts, a financial projection for the period following the balance sheet or a Business Plan if a new organisation.	
Fundraising	
<p>What fundraising events or activities will your organisation be holding this year?</p> <p>We may be looking into applying for grant funding with Sport England.</p> <p>If there is capacity in the committee, fundraising events for the club could be considered if deemed necessary. We also occasionally run a small 'tuck' shop during games to raise funds.</p> <p>Continued efforts are being made to receive sponsorship and funding from local businesses.</p>	
General	
<p>Please provide or attach any additional information which may assist the Council in reaching its decision.</p> <p>Basketball is the second most popular team sport for young people and reaches diverse communities whilst promoting a healthy lifestyle.¹ However, the amount of funding basketball receives falls behind other</p>	

1

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/nba-and-uk-government-announce-comprehensive-plan-to-elevate-basketball-in-the-uk>

sports where the national governing body, Basketball England, is under-resourced and unable to liaise with clubs and local governments regularly. Basketball in England has been overlooked for decades where the potential for the sport to really breakthrough wider society is starting to become clear. There is a real need for investment in the sport where the positive impact will be wide and long lasting.

Basketball's popularity and potential in Witney and West Oxfordshire is no different. Less than three years ago, there was no junior basketball programme in Witney and nowhere for young people to try the sport. Today we have over 80 young members and the demand has not stopped. With over 10 different nationalities represented in the club, the club goes further than just offering basketball but a means for the local community to come together, and for young people to acquire life skills being part of a team, and getting involved in coaching and officiating. Investing in the club to purchase additional kit will have lasting benefits and strengthen the club's ability to compete in more leagues. Funds for court hire will help the club recoup some reserves it has spent to keep expensive sessions over the summer running and avoid passing on higher costs to our members.

I certify that the above information is true to the best of my knowledge and belief, and that I am authorised to make this application for Grant-aid.

Signed: 

Date: 07/06/2026

If posting, please return your completed application form to the address overleaf, for the attention of the TOWN CLERK

For office use only:			
Acknowledged		Previously Applied	

Grant Aid Awarded/Amount	Y / N	Chq No.	
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WITNEY TOWN COUNCIL

Youth Services Grant

APPLICATION FORM

(PLEASE COMPLETE ELECTRONICALLY)

Organisation			
Name of Organisation	Yellow Submarine		
Registered Address (including Post Code)	12 Park End Street Oxford OX1 1HH		
Website	www.yellowsubmarine.org.uk	Telephone	01869 233119
Facebook/Instagram	https://www.facebook.com/ysubcharity https://www.instagram.com/ysubcharity/	Email	[REDACTED]
Contact Name	Alice Margey		
Position in Organisation	Grants and Trusts Fundraiser (i.e. Chairman, Treasurer, Secretary)		
Registered Charity	YES/NO	Registration Number	1136735
<p>What are the activities and/or aims of the organisation?</p> <p>Yellow Submarine is an award winning Oxfordshire charity that believes people with learning disabilities and autism deserve to live life to the full!</p> <p>We offer a variety of social activities and life-changing projects to 11-18s and to adults with mild to moderate needs including social clubs, activity days, residential holidays, life skills, personal development and workplace training. These projects increase confidence and independence in our members as well as provide respite for families and carers.</p> <p>We are well known in Witney, especially through our popular social enterprise cafe in the Windrush Leisure Centre, and last year we were delighted to open our new small commercial Bakery in the Stanley Court development.</p>			

Membership	
How many members do you have?	740 across Oxfordshire, young people and adult
Approximately how many of your members live in Witney?	74 adults and young people, of which 19 are aged 11-18. Our Witney youth club attracts young people from surrounding villages too; in total 60 11-18s are on our Witney membership list.
Is membership restricted in any way?	To individuals with mild to moderate learning disabilities and/or autism, aged 11 or above.
What is your annual subscription, if any?	None
Are you affiliated to Oxfordshire Youth or another similar umbrella organisation? If so, which one?	Yes, to Oxfordshire Youth and OSCP
Local venue/meeting place (if applicable)	Various, the main being the Children & Family Centre, but also Burwell Hall, the Methodist Church, the Scout Hut, The Leys, Windrush Leisure Centre, Rush, the Corn Exchange and others.
Grant-Funding	
<p>Purpose for which the grant is required:</p> <p>Our Witney Youth Club summer activities, which directly support families with learning disabled children aged 11-18 in Witney and West Oxfordshire. Our activities give families respite, and provide stimulating, fun activities for their children out and about in the local community, building their confidence and friendships. We will be organising nearly £2000-worth of activities, for groups of 12-16 young people each time. These costs are only for the activities and do not include staffing, volunteer or overheads costs, which are funded from elsewhere.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Gaming with APCAM - £300, plus approx. £60 transport costs (going by S1 bus) - Wheels for All - £80 - Trampolining in Carterton - £7 pp, approx. £105 for 15 young people - Fat Squirrel - £300 for activities, plus £120 for transport - Adventure Plus - £450 - Music Workshop @ Inspire Sounds - £450, plus approx. £60 transport costs (going by S1 bus) - Blenheim Palace Adventure Playground – £7 pp, approx. £105 for 15 young people, plus approx. £60 transport costs (going by S7 bus) 	

We are also running some low cost/free activities utilising Witney contacts to facilitate our sports activities, as well as using the Yellow Submarine bakery facilities for baking, pizza-making etc. Also in the pipeline is Karate, going to the OPA play day at the Leys, and perhaps a trip on the bus into Oxford.

We recognise that funds are limited and any contribution towards our work would be gratefully received s, and exclude staff, volunteer and overheads costs, which are covered by other funding.

Amount of grant applied for		£2000
Has your organisation previously applied to the Town Council for a grant?		YES/NO
If YES, please give details	£2000 awarded 2025 towards our summer activities for 11-18s	
Have you applied for a grant to any other body or organisation?		YES/NO
If YES, please give details	We constantly fundraise towards our activities from local and national grant funders, and are very pleased to accept support from fundraising events and individuals.	
Financial		
Please enclose a copy of your latest audited accounts, a financial projection for the period following the balance sheet or a Business Plan if a new organisation.		
Fundraising		

What fundraising events or activities will your organisation be holding this year?

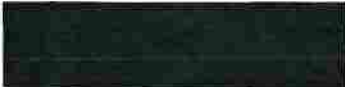
We attend Witney Carnival every year; our members love to vote for who or what they are to represent within the theme of the parade! We are very grateful to a wide variety of community groups and many individuals who raise funds to support us, plus we now have a regular stall at the Farmers' Market, and Yellow Submarine goodies are stocked in The Shop.

Further afield we have Witney runners in the Oxford Half – including parents of our Witney 11-18s - plus schools, businesses and individuals support us through their own fundraising events or initiatives, and we are active participants in schools' Make A Difference (MAD) week. We are also a part of the charity Food Tent at Truck Festival, near Abingdon, serving up delicious cheese toasties!

General

Please provide or attach any additional information which may assist the Council in reaching its decision.

I certify that the above information is true to the best of my knowledge and belief, and that I am authorised to make this application for Grant-aid.

Signed: 	Date: 3 June 2026
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If posting, please return your completed application form to the address overleaf, for the attention of the TOWN CLERK

For office use only:			
Acknowledged		Previously Applied	
Grant Aid Awarded/Amount	Y / N	Chq No.	



WITNEY TOWN COUNCIL

Youth Services Grant

APPLICATION FORM

(PLEASE COMPLETE ELECTRONICALLY)

Organisation			
Name of Organisation	Yes Futures		
Registered Address (including Post Code)	3Space International House, Canterbury Crescent, London, SW9 7QD		
Website	www.yesfutures.org	Telephone	020 8144 4393
Facebook/Instagram	yes_futures	Email	info@yesfutures.org
Contact Name	Ali Jaffer		
Position in Organisation	Chief Executive <small>(i.e. Chairman, Treasurer, Secretary)</small>		
Registered Charity	YES	Registration Number	1155082
<p>What are the activities and/or aims of the organisation?</p> <p>Yes Futures exists to empower young people facing challenging circumstances to build their self-belief and aspiration for the future. We combine structured, intensive youth coaching with a range of inspirational experiences to help young people develop the confidence, resilience, and communication skills they need to thrive in education and beyond. We deliver our programmes in partnership with schools, colleges and community organisations across the South-East and London.</p> <p>Our expert coaches are typically professional executive, leadership and life coaches who have undertaken further training in youth coaching. They are integral to the support of the students on our programmes.</p>			

The children we work with set clear, achievable goals and their coaches encourage them to push themselves outside their comfort zones. Failing safely is by design, and the success that follows is transformative.

Membership – N/A we are not a membership organisation

How many members do you have?	N/A
Approximately how many of your members live in Witney?	N/A
Is membership restricted in any way?	N/A
What is your annual subscription, if any?	N/A
Are you affiliated to Oxfordshire Youth or another similar umbrella organisation? If so, which one?	No
Local venue/meeting place (if applicable)	N/A

Grant-Funding

Purpose for which the grant is required:

Yes Futures requests a £7,500 grant to deliver the Witney Inside Track & Action Project in 2026/2027. This is a “dual-track” youth initiative designed to build long-term personal resilience through tangible, real-world competence.

Traditional open-access youth provision often fails to reach vulnerable or highly anxious youth because those who need the support most lack the confidence to self-select and attend. Our model directly solves this challenge by blending an inclusive universal tier with intensive, targeted 1:1 intervention, ensuring council funding lands exactly where it is needed most.

The universal tier consists of four modular, two-hour masterclasses open to the wider youth population of Witney. Spaced three to four weeks apart, these sessions involve participants mastering hard, adult-world ‘systems’ in a fun and interactive way.

The session are: **Graphic Typography** (visual design geometry/calligraphy), **Courtroom Clash** (legal logic and formal debate), **AI App Generation** (prompt engineering and screen-based software design), and **The Startup Blueprint** (business plan development).

Every session is self-contained and drop-in friendly, guaranteeing that every attendee creates a tangible digital or physical asset within 120 minutes, earning genuine confidence through proven capability.

Operating in parallel is our targeted tier, delivering intensive 1:1 professional coaching for 18 of Witney's most disengaged or anxious young people, identified through strategic autumn partnerships with local school pastoral leads. For these vulnerable youth, group settings might feel difficult initially. Our coaches work 1:1 with them to establish deep psychological safety, provide a consistent, trusted adult sounding board, and co-create practical strategies to build personal agency. This is the core of our traditional 'Rising Futures' programme we offer to secondary schools.

This intensive coaching journey transforms into civic responsibility during the project's anchor event: a student-led Community Volunteering Day. The 18 coached young people are joined by up to 6 additional peers (forming a unified team of 24), who will collaboratively design and execute a physical rejuvenation project for a local Witney community asset or green space. This day builds a profound sense of place, shifting their identities to active, proud young citizens who realise they have a real stake in their town.

By backing this work, Witney Town Council will secure local impact: four premium skills workshops for the wider community of young people, a profound and intensive 1:1 intervention for 18 hard-to-reach teenagers and a visible legacy of local community service.

Amount of grant applied for	£ 7500	
Has your organisation previously applied to the Town Council for a grant?	NO	
If YES, please give details	N/A	
Have you applied for a grant to any other body or organisation?	NO	
If YES, please give details	Not for this work in Witney.	
Financial		

Please enclose a copy of your latest audited accounts, a financial projection for the period following the balance sheet or a Business Plan if a new organisation.

We have enclosed a copy of our latest financial accounts (ended December 31 2025)

Fundraising

What fundraising events or activities will your organisation be holding this year?

Yes Futures' fundraising is focussed on two key areas: applications to grants and foundations and donations from corporate partners.

As a small organisation with a relatively heavy and intensive delivery load we do not have much capacity to organise specific community fundraising events. However, we are always open to new ideas and would consider organising a local fundraising event if this helped embed our work and local presence

General

Please provide or attach any additional information which may assist the Council in reaching its decision.

Yes Futures is increasingly working directly with a range of organisations (beyond schools) whose priorities align with our own. We have recently won a contract with Woodley Town Council in Berkshire for 2026/2027, where we will offer our coaching programmes to a selection of vulnerable young people, and although that project is in the early stages of development, they would be able to provide a reference based on the set up and planning work we have done. We also have a range of long-standing school partners who could provide additional references as to the quality and depth of our work.

We have attached an accompanying short proposal document which outlines our project in more detail, and our impact statistics for 2025. Our historical annual reports are available via the Charity Commission website and we are happy to share any additional information on request.

I certify that the above information is true to the best of my knowledge and belief, and that I am authorised to make this application for Grant-aid.

Signed:

Date:

	6 th June 2026
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If posting, please return your completed application form to the address overleaf, for the attention of the TOWN CLERK

For office use only:			
Acknowledged		Previously Applied	
Grant Aid Awarded/Amount	Y / N	Chq No.	

STRONGER COMMUNITIES COMMITTEE



Agenda Item: Litter picking cabinets
Meeting Date: 15 June 2026
Contact Officer: Administrative Asst - Facilities

The purpose of this report is to present options for the provision of community litter picking equipment within Witney, and to seek Members' views on the preferred approach.

Background

The provision of community litter picking equipment was previously discussed by the Committee on 17 November 2025 (Minute SC662 relates). Officers were asked to explore options that would support volunteer litter picking initiatives across Witney, while ensuring appropriate control, safety, and maintenance of equipment.

Current Situation

Research findings / issues

Research has identified that open-access litter picking stations may be vulnerable to vandalism, theft, and misuse. In addition, effective management would require a system for logging users, maintaining stock levels, and ensuring compliance with health and safety requirements, including the secure storage of sharps boxes.

Options

Option 1 – Lockable Vault (Amnesty-style unit)

- Very Secure
- Weatherproof
- Installed by works team
- Lower cost

Option 2 – Combined Bin & Equipment Unit

- Dual purpose
- Maintained within bin collection round
- More integrated

Proposed Locations

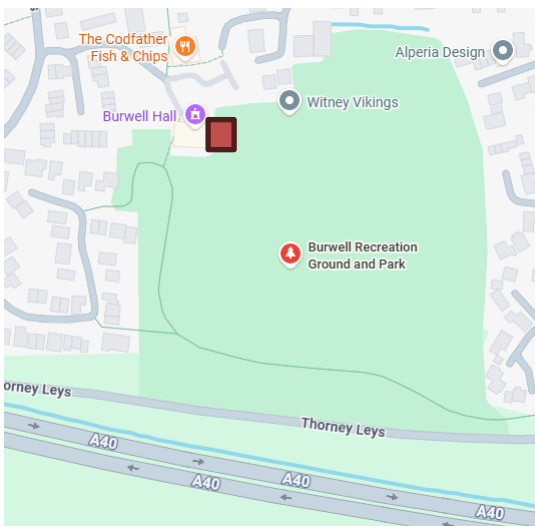
A number of potential locations have been identified to ensure geographic coverage across the town, including The Leys, King George Field, and Burwell Hall.



A possible location at The Leys for a central location



A possible location to King George Field



A location next to Burwell Hall

Contents of the Litter Picking Vault

- Gloves x 20 disposable latex free.
- X 5 Litter picking sticks.
- X 20 Litter collection bags.
- X 5 Litter picking Hoops to aid the collection of litter safely and effectively.
- Litter picking guidelines clearly displayed inside door along with Admin office contact details and a comments sheet for feedback or concerns.
- X1 pack of Hand wipes.
- X1 Sharps box sealed.

Maintained and replenished as required.

Option 1:



With added Vinyl Witney Town Council Logo and Litter Picking Vault Vinyl Stickers. Colours Vary available; Dark Blue, Green, Grey, Light Blue, Magenta, Pure Orange, Recycling Green. Red, Silver, Titanium, Turquoise, White or Black. Colour needs to complement as a base for Witney Town Council Logo also being reader friendly

Costs involved:

- Amnesty Bin cost £412-568 – Various suppliers - Lead time 3-5 weeks
- Cost of additional Vinyl Signage which would be obtained from our existing local printer and supplier of signage and decal. £35
- Fixtures kits - £20
- Dependent on location a concrete base may be required, this would be similar to that used for bench installations

Option 2:



Available as coloured. Installation by Works Team. Above Park bin would be provided with Witney Town Logo.

Costs involved:

- Park Bin cost £574 – Lead time 4 weeks
- An additional would be applicable to have a plastic side advertising frame added. £25 for A4 and £30 for A3 size.
- Cost of additional large Vinyl Signage which would be obtained from our existing local printer and supplier of signage and decal. Approx. £100
- Fixtures kits - £20
- Dependent on location a concrete base may be required, this would be similar to that used for bench installations

Sponsorship could be considered to mitigate overall costs.

Advantages	Disadvantages
Weatherproof	Appearance resembles a Knife Amnesty Box or litter bin only – although signage added will be clear.
Authorised Access Only	An Extra asset alongside existing Street Furniture.
Secure and Presentable	Cost of replacement/lost equipment

Corporate Strategy

The Council’s Strategic Plan 2025–29 sets out the Council’s long-term priorities and direction, supporting its mission to ‘make Witney a great place to live, work and visit.’ This report contributes to the delivery of the following strategic pillar of the plan:

5. A Beautiful Witney

Impact Assessments

The Town Council has a duty to consider the effects of its decisions, functions and activities on equality, biodiversity, and crime & disorder. Consideration should also be given to effects on the environment, given the Council's Climate Emergency declaration in 2019.

- a) Equality - Provides accessible volunteering opportunities for all age groups and backgrounds.
- b) Biodiversity - Reduction in litter supports local ecosystems and wildlife.
- c) Crime & Disorder – Increased community presence however Risk of misuse/vandalism
- d) Environment & Climate Emergency - Litter reduction aligns with the climate and environmental goals.

Risk

In decision making Councillors should give consideration to any risks to the Council and any action it can take to limit or negate its liability. Such as theft, vandalism, misuse of equipment, Health & Safety (e.g. discarded needles, excrement) However these are mitigated by lockable units, controlled access, regular monitoring and maintenance.

Social Value

Social value is the positive change the Council creates in the local community within which it operates. The introduction of units could improve community cohesion, volunteer engagement, intergenerational involvement, individual mental health and wellbeing and bring about civic pride.

Financial implications

- The cost of units. £400-600 per unit with £35-100 required to apply the councils branding or other encouragement advertising options.
- These units could be a consideration for the proposed two litter bin installations at The Leys (P&R Committee 01.06.2026 relates)

Recommendations

Member are invited to note the report and

1. Consider the two proposed options for litter picking equipment provision;
2. Determine whether to proceed with Option 1 (lockable vault) or Option 2 (combined unit) and desired specification.
3. Identify preferred locations for implementation.
4. Should sponsorship be considered.