

**Delivering a brighter, greener future for all**

# Warminster Town Council Strategic Plan 2024-2029



# Foreword

*Wonderful Warminster,*

*Warminster is a great place that we want to make even better. Warminster is blessed with beautiful countryside, many beautiful buildings (over 220 listed), good facilities for a town of our size and friendly people. There are strong business, community and voluntary sectors.*

*Over the past few years, the town council has taken some big decisions. The council took on the running of the Lake Pleasure Grounds – turning a rundown park into once again the source of pride for residents. The town council took on eight play areas and the public toilets when Wiltshire Council might otherwise have closed them.*

*The town council invested in local facilities, for example; a new skate park, a fantastic splash pad, a new CCTV system and refurbished tennis courts and Multi Use Games Area. It has given substantial grants to the Athenaeum and the Chapel of St Lawrence to ensure these wonderful facilities continue to thrive and provide an excellent service to local people.*

*The town council helps organise events from Spring in the Park to the Remembrance Parade to The Christmas Light Switch-On and street market. The town council has supported a wide range of voluntary and community groups with grants, advice and support and by working in partnership to agreed objectives and shared aims.*

*We are proud of our town and proud of our town council. This strategic plan sets out some of the things we have done and aim to do. It doesn't include everything, but it does give a flavour of what the town council is about.*



*Councillor Phil Keeble – Mayor of Warminster 2023-24*

# Introduction

The purpose of a Strategic Plan is to provide a strategic sense of direction to the town council and provide a context for decision making.

Local Government has changed significantly over the past many years. Unitary Councils exist across Cornwall, Somerset, Dorset, Wiltshire and the role of town councils has changed. Town councils have grown and taken on new services, new staff, bigger budgets and more responsibilities.

There have been several advantages to town councils doing more – they are closest to the people they represent; they can respond to local needs and circumstances in a way a Unitary Council, seeking consistency and uniformity, cannot do. With the right staff, councillors and budgets, town councils can deliver in a way that is impossible for a much larger organisation. The Lake Pleasure Grounds are a prime example of how this can work in practice.

On the other hand, there is a danger that expectations on town councils will become too high. Town councils can end up taking on too much. Without the right resources, leadership and community engagement, councils risk not delivering on ambitions. Town councils work best when they complement the work of others, they cannot succeed in plugging the gaps in services that should by law be provided by others.

Warminster Town Council had a strategic plan but much of it has now been achieved and some of it was no longer relevant as it related to Covid 19 and the proposed devolution of further services from Wiltshire Council which now looks unlikely to take place.

This new strategic plan sets out the role the town council intends to play over the next five years. The strategic plan doesn't set out everything the town council does, or intended to do or might do. It would be impossible to predict all the circumstances, demands and challenges the town council will face in the coming years. Changing circumstances, new ideas and evolving expectations may impact on the council, presenting new challenges. The Strategic Plan should, however, bring a level of consistency and predictability to what the town council does.

Tom Dommett – CiLCA, Town Clerk and Responsible Finance Officer, Warminster Town Council

# The main responsibilities of the town council are;

- The Civic Centre
- Dewey House
- The Lake Pleasure Grounds
- Tynings Allotments
- Eight play areas
- The public toilets in Central Car Park
- The Obelisk and the War Memorial
- CCTV Control Room and systems
- Boreham Road Closed Churchyard
- Yeates Meadow (the Community Orchard)
- Ashley Place amenity space
- 'Basil Brushes' road sweeper
- The hanging baskets
- Commenting on (not determining) planning applications
- Advising on highway improvements
- Organising Events: e.g. Spring in the Park, Christmas Lights, Remembrance Parade and Service



*Warminster Civic Centre*  
*A multi-use venue*  
*for everyone*



# Major achievements since 2018

- Running eight extra play areas
- New Skatepark
- New Splash Pad
- Refurbished Tennis Courts and Multi Use Games Area
- Upgraded CCTV to state-of-the-art digital system
- Drafting of a new Neighbourhood Plan
- Completion of the new Town Centre Master Plan
- Running a road sweeper
- Pavilion Café now profit making
- Taking on a Depot for outside services staff
- Increase in partnership working
- Council tax kept lower than comparable councils
- Organised more community events

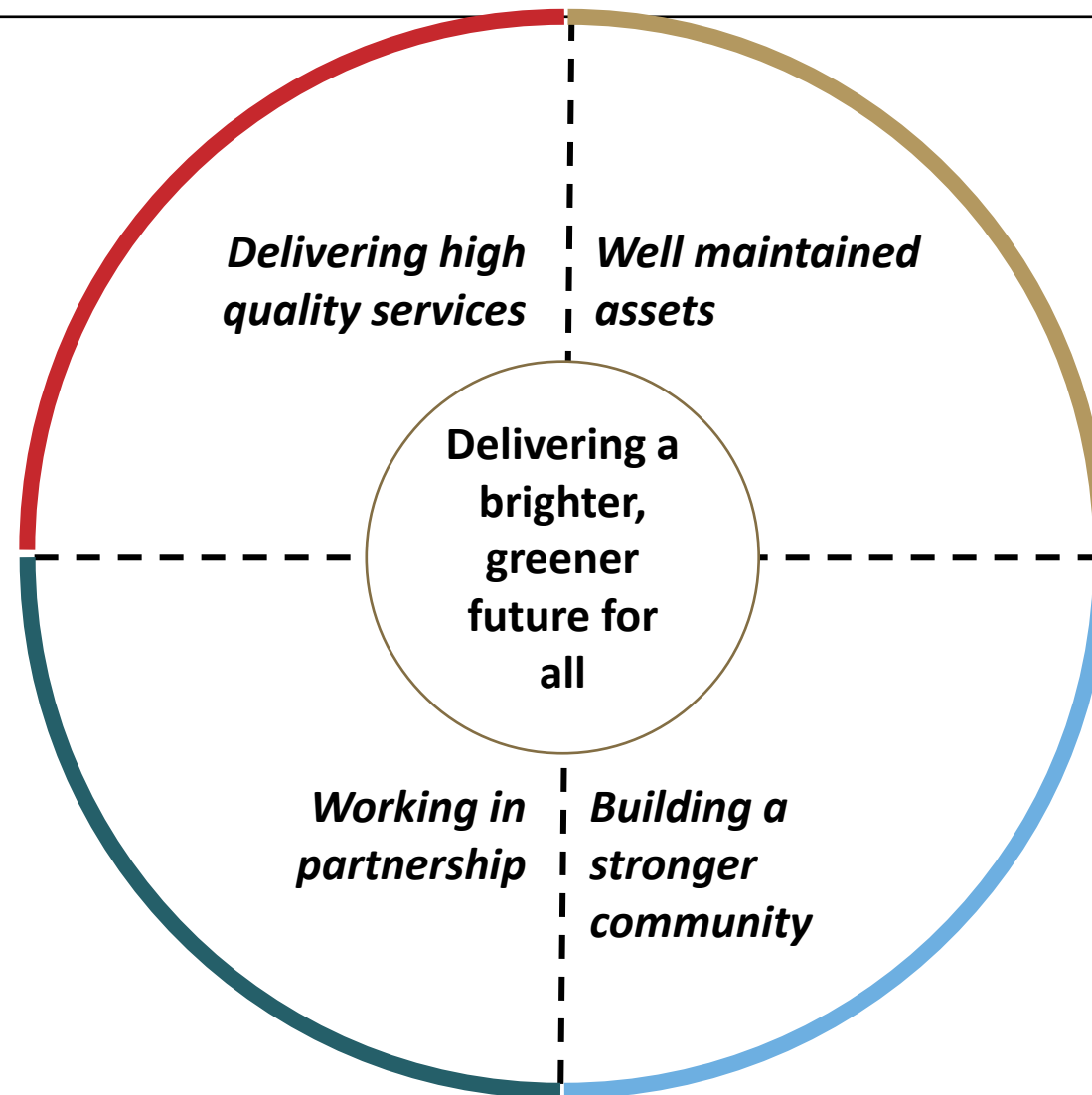


*New Tennis Courts and  
Muga – the majority of  
the cost funded by grants*

# Other achievements in recent years

- Installed an Outdoor Gym
- Installed a Lava Trail in the Lake Pleasure Grounds
- Improved public toilet cleaning (WTC employ the staff)
- Organised community litter picks
- Introduced wildflower planting
- Refurbished the Elizabeth Collyns Garden
- Run shop window competitions – e.g. Christmas, Coronation
- Piloted the new Town Trail App
- Installed the Blue Plaque (Historic Buildings) Trail
- Won multiple Green Flag Awards for the Lake Pleasure Grounds
- Reintroduced boat hire on the Lake
- Planted over 300 trees for the Queens' Canopy
- Purchased electric battery kit for outside services team
- Held 'Bands in the Bandstand'
- Switched to electric vehicles
- Improved footpaths and cycle path maintenance
- Acted on climate change and biodiversity
- Took on hanging baskets in the town centre
- Improved communication with residents especially via social media
- Introduced extra seasonal toilet provision in the Lake Pleasure Grounds
- Revamped the putting green and increased the number of picnic benches
- Installed new brown tourism signs
- Made the Cley Room in the Civic Centre a hybrid conference facility
- Improved Rights of Way signage
- Installed solar panels on council buildings
- Tackled flooding in Portway
- Increased CCTV volunteers from two to 12
- Holding seasonal markets at the Civic Centre
- Reduced pesticide use
- Ensured excellent staff qualifications/training
- Run a successful apprenticeship
- Completed a Housing Needs Assessment

# Our vision and priorities



# Delivering high quality services

- A guiding principle must be that if the town council is to do something, it must do it well. It is particularly important that services provide value for money and deliver what local people want and require
- All services are therefore subject to regular review to ensure they continue to match the requirements of local people
- The town council will work with partners to provide a cohesive approach and deliver flexible, joined-up services that are greater than the 'sum of their parts'
- We will ensure our property portfolio meets our strategic and operational requirements
- Thinking and budgeting long term is essential so maintenance, repairs and renewals are taken into account
- Sound finances – the town council will maintain healthy reserves and balances. Over the next three years the council should not increase council tax by more than inflation
- The council has been very successful in tapping into grant funding because it can put its own resources in as matched funding
- High quality services require motivated and trained staff to deliver them



# Well maintained assets

- Assets, such as machinery, equipment, and buildings, play a crucial role in maintaining productivity and achieving the council's goals. However, these valuable assets are subject to wear and tear, breakdowns, and obsolescence over time
- By implementing proactive maintenance strategies, the council can identify and address potential issues before they escalate into major problems. This saves money and ensures consistent service delivery
- Asset management also involves investing in asset upgrades and improvements to enhance their performance. Upgrading outdated equipment or integrating new technologies can significantly increase productivity, reduce energy consumption, and improve service delivery

The town council will:

- Periodically review the staff structure and skills' mix to ensure we have the right team to deliver
- When designing future service provision, this will be aligned with our climate and ecological strategy and emergency planning
- The council will maintain strong financial reserves sufficient to maintain its assets. The council has earmarked reserves for some specific purposes and maintains an earmarked reserve for capital with which it funds major capital projects when they have been approved
- Where an asset has a life span – e.g. tennis courts, Splash Pad etc. capital funding should be built up year on year
- Continue to commit funding and staff allocation to priority areas
- Seek external funding where possible to keep the call on the council tax lower

# Working in partnership

Working in partnership with other organisations makes the town council more effective in delivering for the people of Warminster. Shared aims and objectives mean co-ordinated action, less duplication and better outcomes.

- Work collaboratively with our partners to deliver what the community identifies and thinks is important
- Provide inclusive and accessible signposting of community activities to connect people and tackle social isolation
- Work with our partners to retain and expand the current network of safe and useable cycle ways and footpaths and to consider integrated bus services and community transport schemes
- Work to ensure the continued provision and maintenance of access to Rights of Way and the countryside
- Encourage volunteering within the community, and recognise when community groups are better placed to provide a service and to support them in their work
- Revise the town's Neighbourhood Plan
- Work with community groups to ensure their vibrancy, longevity and the ability to deliver
- Deliver public events; promoting the town and making our community spirit stronger
- An example of partnership working is the Remembrance Day Service and Parade - which involves the town council, the Royal British Legion, the Garrison, local churches, the Military Wives Choir, Warminster Community Radio, the MS Therapy Centre, Army Cadets, Air Cadets, Scouts, Guides, Beavers, Cubs, Brownies and Rainbows

# Working in partnership

## Some of the groups and organisations Warminster Town Council works with:

- Residents
- Local voluntary groups
- Local community groups
- Wiltshire Council
- The Athenaeum Centre for the Community
- All local schools
- The Warminster Business Network
- The Warminster Garrison
- The Royal British Legion
- Warminster Food Bank
- The Warminster Area Board
- Parish Councils in the Warminster Area
- The Lakeside Community Centre
- Three Horseshoes Walk
- Salisbury Plain Rights of Way Volunteers
- Bus companies and other transport providers
- Wiltshire Association of Local Councils
- Society of Local Council Clerks
- Warminster Model Boat Club
- Wiltshire Wildlife Trust
- The National Trust
- Local churches
- The Avenue Surgery
- Wiltshire Police
- Warminster Community Radio
- Twinning Associations
- Sport England and other national governing bodies
- The LTA (Lawn Tennis Association)
- Other town councils
- Many, many more

# Building a stronger community - volunteers

## Volunteers are vital to the quality of life of residents of Warminster

- Nationally the number of people volunteering has fallen in recent years
- Volunteers do untold hours of work in Warminster that is irreplaceable

### The town council will

- Praise, encourage and recognise the work of volunteers through initiatives such as the Civic Awards
- Communicate the success and the hard work of volunteers at the Annual Town Meeting and throughout the year
- Support voluntary groups by promoting them on the town council's website and on social media
- Provide advice and guidance to support voluntary groups
- Help voluntary groups to network and co-operate with each other
- Help them make grant applications to the council or other funding bodies
- Share information
- Encourage succession planning and volunteer training and development by voluntary groups





# Building a stronger community

## What will we do?

- Encourage co-operation, networking and data sharing
- Promote shared aims and objectives
- Provide funding via grants and by assisting others to access other grants such as the National Lottery
- Support training and succession planning
- Promote positive activities for all – but especially young people
- Strengthen diversity with people from all backgrounds involved
- Embrace technology, virtual and online, promote engagement (e-mails, social media); hybrid meetings where appropriate
- Build capacity with effective and resilient processes in place including finances
- Highlight opportunities and communicate successes





# Building a stronger community

## What will we do?

- Work to improve the economic, social, cultural and environmental wellbeing of the area
- Support the community to be connected, inclusive, safe and active
- Enable all people to participate actively in our community
- Work to integrate the residents of the West Urban Extension so that they use and support facilities in Warminster such as shops and local businesses
- Seek opportunities to apply for Heritage funding/Arts Funding and National Lottery Grants to invest in our town
- Listen to and engage with local residents



*We will work with residents and partners to build and maintain a stronger community*

# Building a strong community – Further reducing our environmental impact

## What will we do?

- Adopt 'reduce, reuse and recycle' across all aspects of our operations
- Promote behavioural change to reduce waste and increase reuse and recycling
- Strive to become a carbon neutral organisation by 2030
- Work with our partners to retain and expand the current network of safe and useable cycle ways and footpaths and to consider integrated bus services and community transport schemes
- Build and celebrate community pride in our environment to help keep it clean and safe
- Implement a climate strategy working with our partners, government and local community
- Responsibly manage the spaces, building and land we have control over
- Support the Environment Agency on flood protection projects
- Revise the town's Neighbourhood Plan to strengthen its environmental provisions





# Town Centre Vitality

Town centre vitality is a crucial issue. The town council is working in partnership with the Warminster Business Network to:

- Hold large markets in the town centre
- Encourage empty shop units back into use
- Increase the number of public EV charging points locally
- Improve cycle path and cycle rack provision
- Allow unused buildings and upstairs premises to be converted to residential dwellings where appropriate
- Keep the core of the town centre for business, hospitality, leisure and retail

The Regeneration Working Group is focused on improvements to the public realm and visitor experience, they wish to:

- Improve signage/street scene in the town centre
- Promote Town Trails
- Have pop up shops or art galleries/exhibitions
- Hide empty shops with window dressing or other methods
- Hold more events in the town centre
- Offer businesses support and mentoring



## *Christmas Lights and Markets 2023*

# The Lake Pleasure Grounds

These are widely regarded as the jewel in the crown of Warminster and the envy of other towns in Wiltshire and beyond.

It is the community of Warminster that makes the park so special and keeps it so lovely.

The Lake Pleasure Grounds have won a Green Flag Award for many years in a row.

The town council has a comprehensive management plan for the park. The council runs the park to balance the views and wishes of different user groups and different activities.

A looming problem for us is that the sides of the lake are starting to crumble. As the lake was built 100 years ago, this is not surprising. A study has been commissioned which will look at this and how to improve biodiversity in the Lake.

The council will improve signage in the park and explain its history and wildlife and environmental benefits.

The council plan to organise more activities for young people such as free tennis coaching and canoeing.





# Events – bringing the community together

**Spring in the Park**  
Sunday 7th May, 10:30am – 4pm

TUG OF WAR SAMBA BAND STALLS & GAMES  
CHILDREN'S MAGIC SHOW FOOD & DRINK  
MAYPOLE & MORRIS DANCING DONKEY RIDES

WEYMOUTH STREET, WARMINSTER, BA12 9NP

Warminster Town Council  
Green Flag Award

**Warminster Book Festival**  
July 2023

Saturday 22nd Warminster Civic Centre 12pm – 4pm

Author Talks  
Exhibitions  
Craft Workshop  
Drinks & Snacks

Sunday 23rd Warminster Town Park 11am – 3pm

Character Parade  
Storytelling, Arts & Crafts  
Pop-Up Book Shops  
Tanya Hinton Trail

info@warminster-bookfest.co.uk  
WarminsterBookFestival

INSPIRE OF WARMINSTER

PRESENTS  
**FREE LIVE MUSIC IN THE PARK**  
SUNDAY 2ND JULY 1PM–7PM

HEADLINERS: SIREN

SUPPORTED BY...  
- THE DYLAN SMITH BAND  
- AM JAM - FOLIO - THE FULL MOTLEY

**WARMINSTER CHRISTMAS CELEBRATIONS**  
SATURDAY 25th NOVEMBER

Civic Centre Market: 10am - 4pm  
Three Horseshoes Walk Market: from 12:30pm  
Market Place Food, Live Music & Entertainment: from 2pm  
Lights Switch On: 5:30pm

Warminster Town Council  
www.warminster-tc.gov.uk  
@warminstertowncouncil

**PUMPKINS IN THE PARK CARVING CONTEST**  
BRING YOUR OWN BEST CARVED PUMPKIN TO THE LAKE PLEASURE GROUNDS, WARMINSTER

PRIZE FOR THE WINNERS  
• FACE PAINTING  
• LIGHTS PROVIDED  
• FANCY DRESS OPTIONAL  
• PUMPKIN DISPLAY LIT UP

PUMPKINS IN THE PARK | SUNDAY 29th OCTOBER  
REGISTRATION FROM 4:30PM | JUDGING 5:30PM  
WARMINSTER LAKE PLEASURE GROUNDS, WEYMOUTH STREET, BA12 9NP

**Ice Cream & Bubbles Festival**

Burgers  
Chinese Street Food  
Ice Cream Chunks  
Crepes  
Bubble shows & Bubbleology  
Prosecco  
Lots & lots of delicious ice cream  
Balloon modelling & children's entertainer  
Free entry!

12 noon – 5pm  
Saturday 5th August  
Lake Measure Grounds Warminster BA12 9NP

**Summer Live Music in the Band Stand**  
11am - 1pm  
Every Saturday  
Warminster Town Park

Saturday 3rd June: Sackful of Sovereigns  
Saturday 10th June: Bratton Silver Band  
Saturday 17th June: Sour Apple  
Saturday 24th June: Trowbridge & District Youth Band  
Saturday 1st July: Rock Choir  
Saturday 8th July: Warminster Community Choir  
Saturday 15th July: The Sylvertones  
Saturday 22nd July: Cantiamo  
Saturday 29th July: Warminster Brass Band  
Saturday 5th August: NO BAND - Ice Cream & Bubbles Festival  
Saturday 12th August: Cantiamo  
Saturday 19th August: Coyote Country Band  
Saturday 26th August: Sticky Toffee Jazz



# Future Ambitions

- Work with Wiltshire Council to increase spraying of kerbsides
- Hold 100 years of the Lake Pleasure Grounds celebrations
- Help set up a Community Land Trust (providing low-cost housing for rent)
- Improve the public toilet provision in the Lake Pleasure Grounds
- Sell Dewey House now it is no longer needed
- Improve footpaths/cycleways
- Support the rebuilding of the 97-year-old Scout Hut in the Park
- Undertake stronger partnership working
- Maintain sound finances
- Take on the lease of the Community Hub building
- Look to expand the CCTV Partnership to cut running costs
- Find a local site for sweeper waste



CCTV went from 42 cameras to 162 cameras.

*#WonderfulWarminster*

# Longer Term Ambitions

## Town Council

- Secure more allotments
- Crowd fund or grant fund purchase of land for a community woodland or other community use
- Revamp the public toilets in the Central Car Park
- Secure the sides of the Lake and improve biodiversity in the Lake
- Repurpose the Boat House for an active use

## With Others

- Review the car park charging policy
- Deliver biodiversity improvement schemes
- Improve flood prevention
- Further action on climate change
- Get a new Neighbourhood Plan ratified



*Anyone for Tennis?  
#WonderfulWarminster*

# Valuing Staff

## How will we do it?

- Paying competitive pay and terms and conditions
- Providing excellent, appropriate training
- Providing robust and consistent management systems
- A positive attitude with a willingness to learn and embrace change
- Promoting staff development opportunities
- High standards of conduct for staff and councillors
- Councillors to be, well briefed and trained
- Decision making is transparent and open
- Develop our brand to generate a sense of pride for both the council and the town



# Lobbying – A Strong voice for Warminster

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Some issues are beyond the power of the town council, but we will use what influence we have and constructively engage with others. These are issues such as:

- No.3 High Street
- Empty shops
- Drs' surgery
- Lack of NHS dentists
- Traffic congestion
- The lack of banks
- The supply of 'affordable' housing
- River pollution