

Hungerford



Hungerford Town Council - representing your town

Opening the conversation...

“ A warm welcome to all Hungerford residents from Hungerford Town Council. I hope you enjoy reading our newest Annual Report publication, designed to recap and reflect on the past year, but more importantly, to share some of Hungerford Town Council's exciting new projects and discussions. We're really looking forward to reconnecting, representing, and celebrating our very special community. Please connect with us so we can 'open the conversation'... ”

**Cllr Helen Simpson,
Hungerford Town Mayor**



INTRODUCTION....

I find looking back over the past year exciting. It's nice to remember all the events and occasions I've attended as Town Mayor. I'm always humbled by the enormous volunteer contributions in Hungerford. There are too many to mention in person, but Hungerford Town Council would like to thank all those who make Hungerford a fantastic place to live and work. I was thrilled to have had such an active part in the D-Day Celebration Weekend. The project was a year in planning and led by Cllr Jerry Keates. Truly an event to be proud of so thank you to everyone who helped make it a success. More on the event later.

Date for your diary is this year's Remembrance Parade on Sunday 10th November when Hungerford community comes together in a wonderful collective act of remembrance.

I'm really looking forward to joining many of you again as we approach the Christmas period when the Christmas parties, celebrations and events begin. A firm favourite of mine is the Christmas Lights Switch-on taking place on Sunday 1st December and The Mayor's Carol Concert on Sunday 15th December. I'll look forward to seeing you all at these fun and worthwhile events.

UPDATE ON HUNGERFORD PROJECTS

The all-new Croft Field Centre offers a modern attractive venue in the heart of Hungerford overlooking the canal and Hungerford marshlands. It has excellent new facilities for many different types of use including a large grass area, accessible toilets, kitchen, car parking and much more!

Now available for bookings for all occasions....

Please contact us to book your event whether it's a Party, Dance, Concert, Wedding, Christening, Duke of Edinburgh (over-night camping), fetes and Artisan Markets, regular Coffee Mornings, Training Events, Band Practice, Art Classes, Fitness Classes, Yoga or Baby/Toddler groups (storage available). Call us to arrange a viewing of the facilities for your future event(s) at VERY reasonable prices. Keeping it local.

We have been asked to consider a proposal to use the Croft Field gazebo as a Community Shed (more info later).

All information can be found on our website www.hungerford-tc.gov.uk or contact 01488 686195_admin@hungerford-tc.gov.uk.



The Neighbourhood Plan

This document represents the Neighbourhood Plan for Hungerford parish for the period 2024 to 2041. The Plan contains a vision for the future of Hungerford and sets out clear planning policies to realise this vision.

The Plan builds on the extensive work carried out by the community in the development of the Hungerford 2010+ Plan (2005) and Town Plan Refresh from 2013. These included:

- detailed household survey work
- policies and actions for all the main issues

The principal purpose of the Neighbourhood Plan is to guide development within the parish. It also provides guidance to anyone wishing to submit a planning application for development within the parish. The process of producing a plan has sought to involve the community as widely as possible. The different topic areas are reflective of matters that are of considerable importance to Hungerford, its residents, businesses and community groups.

West Berkshire have been updating their Local Plan and we remain consist with this Plan which is a requirement of the Neighbourhood Plan.

There has been some good progress this year that has included:

- Consultation over the development options for the town
- A completed draft document of the Plan
- Production of a Strategic Environmental Assessment and Habitats Regulation Assessment
- An extensive formal consultation, known as the 'regulation 14 consultation' on the latest Neighbourhood Plan. This has included extensive comments from West Berkshire Council
- Updating the plan in view of all the comments from consultees. The changes have been fairly minor, and the housing allocations are unchanged.
- Preparation of documents ready for the final consultation stage which is done by West Berkshire Council.

It has been seven years in the making so far!... but we hope after the final consultation to have the Neighbourhood Plan ready for a referendum sometime in 2025.



HUNGERFORD EVENTS UPDATE

Hungerford's D-Day 80th Anniversary

The D-Day celebration in Hungerford on the weekend of 28 to 30 June 2024 was probably the largest and most impressive event the town has hosted.

"Event", singular, is wrong, however, as there were several – historical talks and displays, a 1940s dance, a big band in the Town Hall, a parade by REME down the High Street to mark Armed Forces Day, displays of military vehicles, a parachute display, a vehicle convoy, a veteran's parade to the Common, wartime games and crafts for the kids in the Town Hall and the unveiling of a plaque to mark Eisenhower's speech to the Allied troops in August 1944. There were also, as one would expect, plenty of flags and bunting and a several examples of 1940s-style clothes and music. A weekend to remember in commemoration of an event that should not be forgotten.

Indeed, "commemoration" was one of the three aims of the weekend, the other being "education and celebration". Few would deny that all these were achieved. There was also a fourth equally successful aim, with nearly £6,000 raised for the RBL Hungerford Branch. (including the RBL Poppy Appeal and Ladies division).



For those who weren't able to attend, the BBC and local radio stations Kennet and 4LEGS featured it. To access the full programme of events and the photo gallery go to: <https://pennypost.org.uk/2024/05/hungerford-d-day-weekend/>. The organising committee would like to thank all those who took part and helped and supported the weekend, in particular Hungerford's amazing volunteers; also, to all those who in various ways made generous donations.

GRANTS

Hungerford Town Council operates an annual grant scheme whereby grants are awarded to local organisations offering services to Hungerford Residents. Grants are usually awarded in May / June with an awards ceremony taking place later in the year. HTC administers its grant scheme via The Good

Exchange website and encourages all applications to be made directly on their website in order to be considered for matched funding.

ANNUAL GRANT AWARD CEREMONY

In October this year Hungerford Town Council held a joint civic ceremony to present the grant recipients and winners of the Hungerford in Bloom competition with their certificates and prizes.

The first set of awards were held to formerly recognise the deserving local charities and groups of this year's grants. The annual grant award ceremony is a firm favourite on the mayor's calendar. The number of deserving organisations and charities offering advice, encouragement and support to our community is so very humbling especially during recent economic times.



Details of the grants awarded this year and information on the organisations can be found on the Hungerford Town Council website Grants - Hungerford Town Council (hungerford-tc.gov.uk).

Hungerford Mayor, Cllr Helen Simpson says *“the annual Grants Awards remain one of my favourite civic events. So many of these local organisations and charities offer invaluable support to the residents of Hungerford and meeting with the deserving groups to recognise all they accomplish is truly humbling. On behalf of all of Hungerford Town, thank you for all your hard work and commitment to our community”*.

HUNGERFORD IN BLOOM

The month of May sees Hungerford bursting into colour with the launch of our annual Hungerford in Bloom competition. Residents, community groups and businesses are all welcome to enter our annual event and we look forward to seeing your gardening skills at their finest. We are also open to entries from private residential properties, volunteer and school garden as well as commercial properties.

For full details please visit our website www.hungerford-tc.gov.uk or contact HTC Office on 01488686195 or email admin@hungerford-tc.gov.uk.

Thank you to the wonderful Smarten Up Hungerford Volunteer team who work so hard keeping Hungerford in colourful bloom. They are constantly tending the tubs and troughs which always look so glorious.

HUNGERFORD IN BLOOM AWARD CEREMONY

The latter part of the civic ceremony was dedicated to congratulating the winners of Hungerford in Bloom 2024 who faced stiff competition with their enviable gardens, outdoor spaces, and courtyard gardens from the residential and commercial categories. Nothing beats a British summer and with a mix of rain and sunshine over the past few months, the winners showed true resilience and perseverance with all their gardening achievements.

Hungerford Mayor, Cllr Helen Simpson, says:

“It is an absolute pleasure to be presenting the prizes to such talented and green-fingered residents in Hungerford. We had a fantastic response to the Hungerford in Bloom Competition this year which resulted in Hungerford coming alive with colour and vibrant floral displays. This event showcases our residents’ glorious gardens, from small courtyards to large commercial properties and of course, Hungerford Nursery School with their fantastic, colourful display. It is truly wonderful to see such talent in our community”

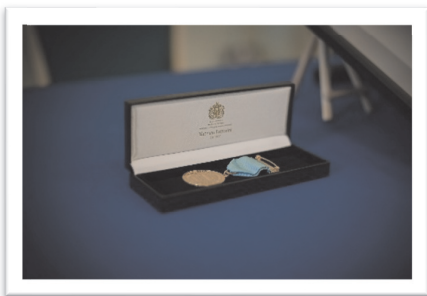
FREEDOM OF THE TOWN AWARD CEREMONY

Hungerford Town Council held its annual Freedom of the Town Award Ceremony on Sunday 6th October.

Each year we consider awarding this Freedom to those, who in the opinion of our citizens, have made a significant contribution to the well-being of Hungerford.



Hungerford in bloom award ceremony



Our Town is blessed with many who through their selfless actions have given so much to our community and by identifying a few with this award, we also give our thanks to the many who volunteer to the huge benefit of the whole town. Congratulations to Tim, Sandie, Barbara & Susan on your well-deserved awards.

TIM CROUTER and SANDIE CROUTER

Tim Crouter took over as Musical Director of Hungerford Town Band in 1994 and Sandie joined the band in the couple of years proceeding this and between them, they have been leading the band ever since. 2024 marks their 30th anniversary –an amazing achievement.

Hungerford now has a training band for local children and Tim offers tutoring for brass and woodwind instruments within the local primary school and other local schools along with private tuition.

Sandy joined the band and along the way has taken on many responsibilities including treasurer, band librarian, engagement secretary and concert organiser. She also supports Tim with the Junior band and with tuition where needed. Thank you for your continued dedication to youth development and for ensuring the bands rankings in the UK Brass Band world today, leading them to national contest success.

The band play at all of the local community events e.g. Mayor's Carol Concert, Remembrance Day Parade and Poppy Concert, the D-Day Commemorations, to name a few. We

are thankful for the countless hours of the time they commit to the band and local community.

BARBARA BARR

Barbara was a long serving Trustee to the Town & Manor and became the first female Constable in 500 years, shattering long-standing gender barriers. include fundraising for the fire station, the swimming pool, cricket pavilion and many other causes. She was also an active member of the United Reformed Church and set up the Junior Church. Her involvement with the Tuttpole restaurant, she was president of the Town Band for 3 years, St John's ambulance cadets for around 20 years and Chairman of the Ladybird Mother and Toddler group.

Barbara was a teacher at John O Gaunt school for over 25 years. As a stalwart supporter of Hocktide, Barbara organised the Tutti girls each year, firstly at school and after retiring by liaising with school on behalf of Town & Manor which she did for 23 years.

SUSAN MAYES

In 1988, when Susan moved to Hungerford, she was an Art and Textile teacher in Calne. These skills were rapidly put to work, making costumes for the historical community play "1688: The Hungerford Connection". These skills are evident today as Susan created many of the panels in the Hungerford Millennium Embroidery, and it would be hard to count the amount of event bunting that has been churned out of her trusty sewing machine! Quite a lot of this bunting was used by Chilton Foliat Primary School, where Susan was head of the Parents Association for six years.

Susan became an active committee member and then treasurer of the Hungerford Friends of Cancer Research. Although this group is no more, Susan continues her fund-raising within a group that organises dolls house sales and auctions, which each year raises thousands of pounds for Cancer Research UK. The latter is also a labour of love, as Susan is a keen collector of dolls-houses, antique toyshops and

other curios, which is why she can often be found browsing and helping out, in the Hungerford Arcade.

The arts are in Susan's blood, so in 2017, working with Tony Drewer-Trump, she played a major role in designing and delivering the Hungerford Art Trail. She also supported HADCAF, persuading schools to participate, and helping to set-up exhibitions of students' artwork.

Susan was a very enthusiastic and practical member of the committee for Hungerford's 80th D-Day Commemoration Weekend. She designed and delivered the ration card tour of the town and the children's craft activities that captivated and included a younger generation in the event. On a weekly basis, Susan is perhaps most noticeable in her Smarten Up Hungerford tabard, working in the team of volunteers that plants and maintains Hungerford's beautiful floral displays; as well as collecting litter, and other disgusting items, strewn about our town. In between looking after her grandchildren, Susan will soon be embarking on her annual poppy collecting for the British Legion.



Bridge Street War Memorial

We have had the War Memorial cleaned in time for Remembrance Day and it now looks splendid. We are planning the cleaning of the paving stones surrounding the War Memorial, again in time for the Remembrance Day Parade.

Remembrance Day

Hungerford will be joining communities around the country as we mark Remembrance Day on Sunday 10th November. The parade will leave the Town Hall at 10.38 and make its way to the Bridge Street Memorial for 10.45. The Remembrance Service will take place from 10.45 – 11.20. The Laying of the wreaths will be carried out by the army and other services in attendance as well as local community and voluntary groups.

We particularly welcome veterans or serving members of the forces to join our parade and please look out for the gathering point outside the Town Hall, that will be signed on the day.





**Proposed image
of Hungerford's
Community
Shed**



Community Engagement

Hungerford Town Council has been approached by local residents keen to establish a 'Hungerford Community Shed' for the benefit of the town's residents. From a possible 15 possible locations in Hungerford, they have decided that the Croft Field Centre is ideal, having been recently refurbished, with parking, accessible toilets and is immediately available and expandable, if necessary, in the future.

Community Sheds are a non-profit organisation that provides a space for craftwork and social interaction. The movement originated in Australia in 1980 and there are now thousands worldwide and 1130 in the UK. There are hundreds of people in Hungerford who will benefit from support with loneliness, wellbeing issues and the Hungerford Shed is seen as an ideal way to offer such support. We look forward to bringing you updates in the coming months.

Welcome to our two new Councillors

We're delighted to report that we have gained two new councillors:

David Reeves

Dave has lived in Hungerford since 2023, having previously lived in various places in the Southeast since growing up in East London. Dave is the owner of a Business Consultancy firm specialising in the Leisure and Hospitality Industry with its headquarters on Charnham Street.

In his early years, he managed gyms for a national chain, and still loves fitness.

Running is a big part of his life and the only thing he doesn't like about Hungerford is having to run up its many hills!

In terms of work for the council, a big passion of his is "Social ecology" which is the study of how people

interact with and respond to the environment around them, and how these interactions affect society and the environment as a whole. With this passion he hopes to make sure that Hungerford is kept looking great, as it currently does and remains a fabulous and welcoming place to live.

Gordon Montgomery

Gordon has lived in the West Berkshire / Wiltshire area for some 34 years ending up most recently on the Hungerford side of Frowfield, where he and his wife have lived for the last 7 years. He loves Hungerford and really wants to contribute to maintaining its existing character and charm whilst helping to facilitate and implement plans to ensure it remains a thriving, attractive and inclusive place to live and work for generations to come.

Although an accountant by training, Gordon has been involved in starting up companies, has helped grow them and has sold companies over the years. He has previously been a Chairman, CEO or CFO of a venture capital investor; corporate finance and M&A broker; turnaround consultancy; furniture manufacturer; ground maintenance business; TV production company; and many more. Most recently a technology start-up, which he started with 2 friends, that now dominates its market



sector in the UK (based in Hungerford) and is also a non-executive director of a chain of shops, of which one is based in the Hungerford parish. In his spare time he volunteers as a Trustee of the Duchess of Somerset Hospital, which operates 50

alms-houses in Froxfield, and as a Trustee of The White Horse Federation, that oversees the running of 33 state schools between Reading and Trowbridge. He also volunteers as a school-reader in a primary school in Aldbourne.

Meet our councillors

Cllr Stella Coulthurst

"Stella said she had little idea, when she became a resident of Hungerford in 2022, how much the town would sweep her up into a new life and she was delighted to have really been made a part of the town through Hungerford Town Council and other voluntary activities in the town. She aims to bring some useful know-how and experience from a long-ish and wide-ranging career to helping create a sustainable and ever more thriving Hungerford. Stella enjoys rugby (union – she shouts for the Newbury Blues, oops!, but has started to attend Hungerford RFC matches, which are also reported on Kennet Radio 106.7FM), soccer, horse riding (dressage), opera, good wine and community life. When she's not in town, you'll likely bump into her in the footpaths, bridleways and lanes around Hungerford walking her (giant) yellow Labrador Retriever."



Helen Armstrong

"I am hoping that by serving on Hungerford Town Council I will be able to give back to Hungerford and the Hungerford community which has served as my home of choice for 20+ years. I enjoy being part of making Hungerford a safer environment for businesses, and residents alike and working with the Highways & Transport committee will help enable this. My aim is to help preserve the wonderful historic nature of our town through the Environment & Planning committee. Finally, I look forward to helping keep the Christmas magic alive which Hungerford achieves so well."



James Cole

"Whilst it has not been an easy year – the Town Centre project has been particularly frustrating. However, it could now be reaching a solution for the Town Square and Canal Wharf that the Town asked for. West Berks has been short staffed so we have not been able to move on the Conservation Area reassessment, but the plan is that over the winter we will put together the background for the document, and then do the footwork next summer. Hopefully, West Berks should have the staff to support us by then. I hope that the time I spent on West Berks Council for Hungerford and Kintbury has proved of some use to the Town Council – I am attempting to make use of that in Environment and Planning, in Highways and Transport and now in Finance, as well as assisting as Deputy Mayor."



Cllr Claire Winner

Another full-on year with Hungerford Town Council; the new Skate Park and Croft Field Activity Centre building renovations having been completed. These are two great assets for Hungerford residents, and I hope they are used to their full potential. There are many aspirations in regard to improving other areas in the town which will be scheduled in as funds allow. My hope is to have made a difference to the town in my years serving as a councillor, chair of Finance & General-Purpose Committee and Deputy Mayor.



Cllr Helen Simpson

As the current Hungerford Mayor, serving my 7th term, I feel privileged to serve Hungerford's wonderful community. As ex officio on all committees, I try to attend as many meetings as possible, gaining a full insight and becoming fully informed on all tasks.



As well as being chair of the council, I also chair the Recreations and Amenities (R&A) committee. R&A look after the town's parks, cemetery, war memorials, community gardens and open spaces.

Hungerford's Skatepark has been one of the largest projects HTC has delivered. I am so proud of the project and what it means to our young (and not so young) community. We really enjoyed talking to the youth within our community, engaging them in our plans and receiving a very knowledgeable wish list of equipment. This year we completed the project by renewing the fencing around the park as well as reinforcing the high traffic areas. HTC recently met with the contractor to review the park; everyone present agreed the park is something Hungerford should be proud of.

There have been lots of events to support over the last year. I would like to thank all those who took part in the Hungerford in Bloom Competition and for attending the annual Award Ceremony. What an incredible achievement on their behalf and so wonderful to see all their creative gardens, courtyards and containers. It was also an honour to present awards to many amazing charities that work in and around Hungerford. The work they carry out, on a voluntary basis is truly humbling and our annual awards of Grants are a small way of acknowledging their hard work and HTC's support.

A major event was Hungerford's 80th D-Day Celebrations which was an inspirational weekend for us all. The committee are so grateful to all those who contributed, making it a truly incredible event. HTC was honoured to present a cheque to the Royal British Legion units for £5,950.91, helping all areas of the RBL who do so much to support the armed forces.

I remain extremely proud of team Hungerford Town Council. The councillors are volunteers who give so much time to benefit their community and deliver so many projects. Our office team work so hard, helping councillors to achieve our action plan projects on time and on budget. A special thank you to our maintenance employee Roger Ballard, who does so much to support the council and the many town events.

Cllr Alistair Fyfe

"This has been a busy year as Chair of Planning with some important developments receiving our support; BMW/Mini are in the process of redeveloping their sites, a significant investment into the town and the proposed flats for the old Oakes Bros area by the station should improve what is currently an unsightly area. Recently, I have been in negotiation with WBC to have items of play equipment improved in the West Berkshire Council run Ramsbury Drive playground. Two new items of play equipment have been provided and two repaired, so this playground is now back in full use though the reduced number of grass cuts by WBC per year means it looks unkempt. As I am also a Trustee for the Town & Manor, this helps to build on the close working relationships between the two organisations.

Cllr Richard Hudson

"It has been a few years now and it seems just part of my life. Most Monday evenings popping along for a meeting, either the Full Council, Planning or Transport. My background is a professional transport planner, so I have mainly aimed to assist with planning and transport related matters. The council is a friendly team; we have a great set up with an office and a Clerk to help. I was chair of the Highways and Transport Committee for several years, but I tend to take more of a back seat these days. This year I have been organising the Speed Indicator Devices (SIDs), which help to slow traffic. I have also been working on the Neighbourhood Plan and recently became chairman which takes up quite a bit of time. Planning and housing are major issues for the town so it's important that we try and protect it and the Area of Outstanding Beauty around us. I'd recommend being a councillor if you are interested in your community and you really can make a difference. Key achievements that I've been heavily involved in include the pedestrian bridge over the canal, the SIDs and Neighbourhood Plan. Don't be scared off by the process and formality as you soon get used to it."



Cllr Keith Carlson

"I moved to Hungerford with my wife in September 2021 and became a councillor in February 2022. During this time, I have found the town to be extremely welcoming and acting as a councillor is an opportunity to help shape the future to ensure that the town is able to thrive while preserving the best of what makes Hungerford a special place to live."



Cllr Jerry Keates

We moved to Hungerford by choice in 2015 and being a councillor enables me to give something back. I am passionate about our wonderful historic town and promoting the amazing community spirit we enjoy. I believe it is imperative that we defend its charms whilst guiding future growth and developments that fit with Hungerford's unique place within an AONB, mindful of needs for all inhabitants. It is a privilege to work collaboratively with fellow Councillors and a wide range of agencies for the benefit of the town's residents and commercial businesses.

It is important to be aware of the needs of all members of our society, acting as a representative to ensure their needs are considered and providing a voice, acting on their behalf when required.

Cllr Derek Alford

As a Hungerford Town Councillor, I will continue to work for the residents of this wonderful town in which I live. Much of my life has been dedicated to working with young people. Since I have moved to Hungerford I have continued to do this. I am a Trustee at the Hungerford Youth and Community Centre and volunteer one evening a week. I would like to see the Youth of Hungerford understand they are important to the Town. They should have a say in youth activities and have a better understanding how the town is managed. They need a voice.



Cllr Keith Knight

"I am chair of Hungerford Hub & Community Trust and Chain Mail, which keeps me very busy. I have also been the editor of Chain Mail since 2022. I have been a resident and part of the council for many years now and enjoyed every moment."



Councillor departures

We said farewell to Mark Greenwell, Mark Cusack and Nick Schlanker. We would like to thank them all for their hard work, dedication and contributions to the town.

Councillor Vacancies

We now have vacancies for two new councillors. If you would like to know more about the position, please contact the Town Clerk at admin@hungerford-tc.gov.uk or call 01488 686195 or see our website for details <https://www.hungerford-tc.gov.uk/>.

We can consider filling these vacancies by co-option <https://www.hungerford-tc.gov.uk/town-council>.

If you decide you would like to apply, we will require Appendix A signed and returned along with your resume for consideration. In the meantime, you are very welcome to attend any of our Town Council meetings to get a feel for how they run and topics for discussion. The next upcoming agendas can be found on the home page of this website. There is always the option to introduce yourself at the meetings should you wish, or you can just listen. Please let the Town Clerk know if you plan to attend.

Most meetings usually take place in the Library and are generally held on a Monday evening at 7pm. Free training is available and outside of meetings most correspondence is by email but there are also site meetings, civic events and hands on tasks depending on your interest. It is quite a commitment but very rewarding.

If you have any queries whatsoever, please don't hesitate to give the Town Clerk a call and she will be very happy to chat through what the role would involve in more detail.

District Councillors

We continue to work closely with our District Councillors. If you have any issues you are struggling to resolve with West Berks Council, you may wish to contact them.



Cllr Dennis Benneyworth

Email: dennis.benneyworth@westberks.gov.uk



Cllr Denise Gaines

Email: denise.gaines1@westberks.gov.uk

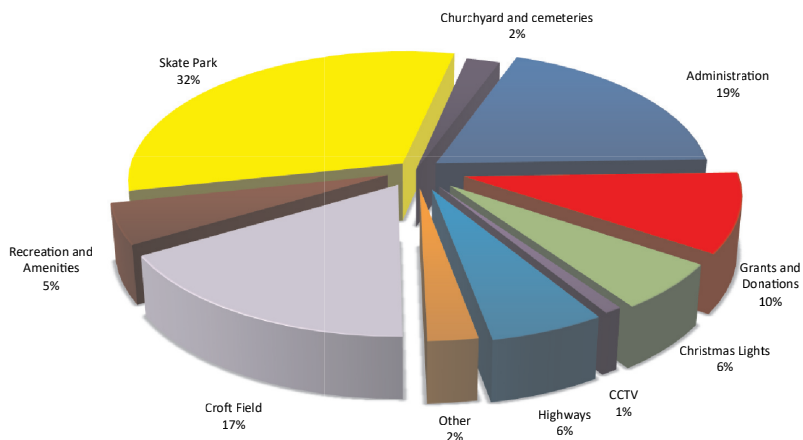


Cllr Tony Vickers

Email: tony.vickers1@westberks.gov.uk

Cost to Taxpayer

Breakdown of our Expenditure



Your feedback

If you think there is something you would like to see done or if you want to help in anyway, we welcome your feedback. Please don't hesitate to get in touch. Contact Hungerford Town Council via email admin@hungerford-tc.gov.uk or by phone 01488 686195. You can follow us on Facebook or X (formerly known as twitter).

Finding out more about HTC's activities

HTC's website at www.hungerford-tc.gov.uk is regularly updated and has a wide range of information on all HTC's activities, including the agendas and minutes of meetings and a list of all the councillors and officers with their contact details. Lookout for our regular newsletter published by Penny Post Hungerford in the first week of each month which includes a summary of Hungerford Town Council's main activities. Subscription is free.

The Fortnightly Adviser (*a free fortnightly printed publication*) regularly features our Hungerford Matters article about our work.