

Budleigh Salterton

Annual Parish Meeting

12 March 2026

Committee and Community Reports

Enclosed within this report is a selection of updates and reports from Budleigh Salterton Town Council Committees, together with contributions from a number of the local organisations and groups that the Council works with and supports.

Welcome

Welcome to the Budleigh Salterton Annual Parish Meeting.

This meeting is an important opportunity for residents, local organisations and councillors to come together to reflect on the past year and to look ahead to the future of our town. It is hoped to provide a space for sharing information about the work that has been undertaken across the community, celebrating local achievements, and discussing the issues that matter most to the people who live and work here.

The Annual Town Meeting is a statutory meeting required each year for towns and parishes in England. It is a meeting of the local government electors of the parish, rather than a formal meeting of the Town Council itself.

CONTENTS	Page
About Budleigh Salterton Town Council	4
Message from the Town Mayor, Cllr Penny Lewis	5
Committee reports	7
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Planning Committee• Finance Committee• Public Hall Committee• Climate and the Environment (CEC)• Community Gardens• Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)	
Council Representative reports	14
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Budleigh Salterton Library – Cllr R Doorbar	
District Councillors Report	15
Reports from Organisations that BSTC has supported in 2025/2026	18
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Budleigh Salterton Music Festival• Exmouth and District Community Transport• Shop Budleigh• Budleigh Information Centre	
Powers and Duties of a Town Council	24

About Budleigh Salterton Town Council

Budleigh Salterton Town Council is the first tier of local government for the town and plays an important role in representing the interests of residents and supporting the wellbeing of the community.

The Council is currently comprised of 12 Town Councillors who serve the community on a voluntary basis. Councillors are either elected by local residents or co-opted by the Council to fill vacancies that arise between elections. At present there is one vacancy on the Council, and further information about this can be found on the [Council's website](#).

Town Councillors bring a wide range of experience and perspectives to their roles and work together to consider matters affecting the town. They attend Council and committee meetings, review local issues, make decisions about Council services and spending, and act as a voice for the community. Councillors are expected to follow a Code of Conduct and work in the public interest at all times.

The work of the Council is supported by a small staff team consisting of one full-time member of staff and two part-time staff members, who manage the day-to-day administration of the Council and help deliver its services and projects. In addition to this internal team, the Council contracts specialist works to local firms when required. This may include maintenance, technical advice, or specialist services that support the effective management of Council assets and responsibilities.

Local elections for the Town Council are held every four years, with the next elections scheduled for 2027. These elections provide residents with the opportunity to stand for election and become involved in shaping the future of the town. The Council encourages anyone interested in contributing to their community to consider standing as a councillor or engaging with the Council's work.

Governance and Legal Framework

A Town Council is a statutory body, meaning it is established through legislation and operates within a clearly defined legal framework. Budleigh Salterton Town Council must conduct its business in accordance with a number of statutory requirements and governance procedures.

One of the key governance documents used by the Council is its [Standing Orders](#). These set out the rules and procedures governing how Council meetings are conducted, how decisions are made, and how councillors and officers must operate. Standing Orders ensure that the Council's work is carried out in a transparent, accountable, and consistent manner.

In addition to Standing Orders, the Council operates within a [framework of legal powers and duties](#) established through various Acts of Parliament. These powers determine the areas in which the Council can act and the services it may provide. Equally, they set limits on the activities the Council can undertake. As a result, the Council must always ensure that its actions fall within its legal powers.

Working for the Community

Through its meetings, committees, and projects, the Council works to support and enhance the town for residents, visitors, and local organisations. This may include maintaining community facilities, supporting local initiatives, commenting on planning applications submitted to the principal authority, and working with other organisations to address issues affecting the town.

Public participation is an important part of the Council's work. Residents are welcome to attend Council meetings, raise concerns, and engage with councillors about local matters. By working together with the community, the Council aims to ensure that Budleigh Salterton continues to be a thriving and well-supported place to live.

Chair of Budleigh Salterton Town Council Report

Firstly, I would like to take the opportunity to express the Council's condolences to all those who have lost friends and family over the year; in particular to the family, friends and colleagues of Matthew Upham and Tom Johnson, who lost their lives here on Christmas Day.

In my role as Town Mayor and Chair of Council this has been a mixed year bringing change, challenges and opportunities.

Mrs Jo Vanstone retired in May as Town Clerk, leaving a legacy that Mrs Alice Gater-Wildgust is taking on admirably. The Council's thanks go to both for all the work and commitment shown. Our receptionist / assistant to the Clerk Mrs Lynne Ward has recently resigned, many of you will have appreciated how helpful she has been dealing with your queries at the desk, we wish her well for the future.

Thanks also go to those councillors who stepped down over the year; Caz Sismore-Hunt, David Walsh and Jan Billington. We have welcomed Councillors Catriona Cunningham and Susie Woodman, and have a current casual vacancy for another, closing date is tomorrow.

Your Council has used the Neighbourhood Plan to guide decision making. This has provided a blueprint to advise us on what our residents value and formed the bedrock of the Terms of Reference for the remits of the various workstreams undertaken through committees.

Through the work of the Town Council, we have aimed to bring added value to what is achieved in the town, rather than duplicating community organisations and initiatives. As always, Council decisions have to be mindful of all our residents and the impact of decisions on them, there is a balance to be had, and limited public resources to be used correctly. A Council is governed by law, the list of our Powers and Duties are available.

The lows of the year:

Toilets – the installation of the new block, and also taking on the running of the Station Road facilities resulted in a lot of extra work for the Clerk.

Sewage – the pollution and dumping has been of great concern, as have the tankers trundling through the town. We lost our blue flag status as a result of the pollution. The Council continues to work with colleagues in other councils and organisations to effect change by South West Water.

Libraries – the Council joined with residents over concerns about potential reductions in the service provided. It is heartening to see that it was a genuine consultation by Devon County Council to the extent that money has been found to look at the way forward.

The Public Hall did not bring in as much income as anticipated and therefore cost more to run. We would like your ideas on how bookings can be increased and how, as residents, you would like to see the costs of the Public Hall addressed, it's your hall.

And finally, I know that the tragedy of Christmas Day 2025 will always be in our minds.

The highlights of the year supported by the Council

Late Opening, organised by Shop Budleigh and colleagues, provided a wonderful opportunity for all to enjoy our much appreciated High Street, the new low energy lights help to raise spirits in the dark afternoons and evenings

Gala week and Carnival are regular much-loved events in the town calendar, the money raised benefits local charities and residents in need. Thank you to both Budleigh Salterton Lions and the Carnival Club for all they do for the town. As Town Mayor it was an honour to take part in the proceedings.

Our Music and Literary Festivals continue to put Budleigh on the map and bring in more visitors, these large events are a lot of work, gratitude goes to all involved.

I trust the Council will continue to emphasise engaging with, and listening to, our residents across the town, celebrating what individuals and organisations contribute to making our town the wonderful place it is. We saw examples of what goes on in the Celebration of Civic Service and I personally hope that a similar approach is taken in the future.

Looking ahead

The biggest challenge facing us is the Local Government Re-Organisation (LGR) which is inevitably creating upheaval of all tiers of local government. Restructuring is always a distraction and brings extra costs. For us here in Budleigh Salterton, it has certainly resulted in more work already, and there is more yet to come. However it also opens up possibilities. We are keen to hear your views on what you think the Town Council might take on, bearing in mind there would be costs in terms of money, liabilities, and staff time. An outline of what LGR is about will be available.

My thanks go to my fellow Councillors for their dedication, and effort on behalf of the Council, we are all volunteers, and I am in admiration of the contributions they bring to the table.

And a big thank you to the residents of Budleigh Salterton for the support over the last year, it has been a privilege and an honour to be your Town Mayor and Chair of Council.

Cllr Penny Lewis

Town Mayor and Chair, Budleigh Salterton Town Council

Planning Committee

It has been a busy year for the Planning Committee over the past few months. We have had a large number of applications to review. It is fair to say that the majority of applications we have dealt with have been for various extensions to existing properties as opposed to complete new builds on an individual basis.

We have, however, had a couple of larger developments to review. In particular this applies to sites for future development listed in the Emerging East Devon Local Plan, specifically the site known as EXMO20. This is the potential large development for over 700 houses adjacent to the B3179 just north of Budleigh Salterton on the west side of the road opposite the Pebblebed Heaths. We as a Town Council have spent a considerable amount of time on this issue. Cllr Horn and Cllr Doorbar attended the first Regulation 19 consultation Planning meeting at EDDC offices in Honiton around 12 months ago and spoke to EDDC about this site and concerns raised within the town. A further written response was also sent to EDDC. A second regulation 19 Consultation has now taken place and EDDC will have submitted their documentation to Government for review.

There is also an ongoing Planning application for 35 houses adjacent to Barn Lane which the Town Council has expressed concerns and it not supporting, in its current form.

The Town Council are Consultees only for Planning Applications. To that end BSTC submits a response to planning applications and while this is taken into account it is EDDC who make the final decision.

As members of the Public, you are welcome to attend a Planning meeting . These are held on the second and fourth Monday of the month at 7 pm. If there is a Planning matter that particularly concerns, you then you are entitled to speak on the matter for up to 3 minutes. Please submit questions in advance, the Town Clerk. There is a total of 15 minutes public speaking time at the beginning of every meeting.

Finance Committee

The Finance Committee reports that the Budleigh Salterton Town Council finances are sound and with continued careful consideration and management should be robust enough to :

1. Pursue active communication and negotiations with East Devon District Council regarding the future transfer of potential assets ** to the town during the forthcoming eighteen months and following this with the new Unitary Authority.
2. Cope with any unavoidable or additional costs due in the next Financial year 2026/27.

Residents will have seen from their recent East Devon District Council tax bills 2026/27 summary, that the Precept requested by BSTC for this coming year is £258,000. This will amount to £86.06 per band D property equivalent and still remains in the mid to lower end of the precept scale for the EDDC district.

(Based on a similar number of properties current figures are between £66.88 - £171.24 per household).

During the past year, Budleigh Salterton Town Council has awarded many grants and donations totalling £17,912 across the town. These include Shop Budleigh for the Christmas lights on the High Street (installation and removal), Lions Gala Week, Budleigh Music Festival, Budleigh Information Centre: V.E.Day Street Party May 2025 for the tables and chairs; St Peters School PTA, Budleigh Salterton Carnival, Citizens Advice Bureau for East Devon, Exmouth and District Community Transport Group, Fairlynch Museum and continued support to The British Legion; all organisations which themselves contribute to and improve the lives of many people in the town.

Also, we have a fund of £51,000 to distribute this year, (under Section 106 for open space, recreation and sport). Having sought the input of residents in the recent consultation two organisations supported so far: B.S Football Club and Knowle Village Hall. More to follow soon!

We continue to pay East Devon DC £5,750 + for rates and rent specifically to enable the town to keep a 'Free Car Park' with a contingency for maintenance and upkeep including keeping the site clean paid for from BSTC funds.

The Toilet Block at Station Road (in the car park next to the BS Community Workshop and behind the Public Hall and main road bus stops) is costing BSTC around £30,000 per annum. This necessary expenditure is for 7 days a week 363 days a year opening and closing, regular cleaning, maintenance and unfortunately increased vandalism. Currently these toilets are still free to use. There is also money set aside for a town Emergency plan, Elections and Legal Fees.

The Public Hall, itself one hundred years old, also requires regular repairs, maintenance and cleaning plus hall improvements. The outdated sound and lighting system was replaced in 2025 and sound clouds were installed, to address the feedback BSTC had received about poor and intermittent sound quality from many speakers and residents. This upgrade has already helped attract new bookings from two local theatre groups: Exmouth Youth Theatre and Talent Box. It is hoped that this is just the start. A more active stance on marketing the Hall has been agreed.

BSTC seeks to keep the letting fees for the people of the town affordable and to maximise usage. However, the Public Hall absorbs 31% of the Councils' precept. Following a number of council discussions, in order to ensure viability, BSTC has decided this year (after freezing the rates for three years post COVID) to raise from January 2026, the revenue from the lettings and have increased the hourly rate for the users including a discount for regular customers. £78,000 has been spent YTD on maintaining the Public Hall (plus associated office costs) yet income is expected to be in the region of £30,000.

Councillors are all volunteers. Member workload is expanding rapidly. It is noted that there is only have one full time and two part time member of staff, spread across the office and Public Hall) . This has implications in times of sickness and like all other employers, BSTC is facing a rise in National insurance costs.

The deficit last year was £35,021, taken from reserves. 2025/2026 forecasted deficit this year is around £48,000, but with sensible discussions and planning ahead, there should be have adequate funds to cover essential costs and maintain a healthy reserve for future uncertainties in anticipation of public services and their costs being devolved to local town and parish councils.

The Finance Committee thank the residents of Budleigh Salterton for their active support and interest throughout the year and look forward to engaging with you once again 2026&2027.

**Potential Assets. In this instance tangible assets refer to those with some economic value i.e. grassland, toilet blocks , shelters, industrial units play areas, car parks. Many will require considerable upkeep and maintenance without any funds transferred by EEDC to BSTC to assist with this change of ownership resulting in raising funds via the annual precept from residents as part of the council tax. Key to this legal process is accuracy of information and transparency from EDDC plus consultation with the town residents. This will enable the Council to make the most sensible decisions.

Public Hall Report March 2026.

The Non Statutory Public Hall Committee has been established to manage the Building known as the Public Hall, for the benefit of the local community. The main functions of the Committee are;

- To ensure that Preventative Maintenance is carried out on a regular basis
- To ensure that there is an adequate reserve fund for future renovation work.
- To ensure that the letting of the Main Hall and Norman Centre provide adequate returns and are cost effective.
- To ensure the continued use of the Main Hall and Norman Centre by promoting it as 'The Venue of Choice' for Meetings, Parties, Events, Clubs, Fitness Classes and the like.

Currently the main floor of the Public Hall is being worked upon to secure any loose boards, filing, sanding and re varnishing this work is nearing completion.

Redecoration of the interior is in progress.

The hire charges for the Public Hall had been frozen since 2022 but the Committee agreed that an increase was necessary. This recommendation was accepted by the Town Council and a resolution was passed to increase rates from January 2026.

The Committee are trying to increase the usage of both the Public Hall and Norman Centre by local Community groups and by groups from further afield.

It is great to see Zumba, Pilates, Dance classes, Film Society, Lions, Arts Club, Arts Society , Farmers market etc, using our wonderful facilities including the new sound system.

We would welcome any ideas you may have of what you would like to see available for residents to participate in.

Climate and the Environment Committee

In 2025, members of the Budleigh Salterton Climate Group brought forward a recommendation to the Town Council, which was accepted, leading to the creation of the new **Climate and Environment Committee (CEC)**.

The CEC will build on the important community engagement fostered by the existing Climate Group and will seek to strengthen coordination, governance, and accountability, embedding climate and environmental initiatives firmly within Council decision-making.

At the same time, it is hoped that the Climate Group will continue to operate as an independent, community-led body, focusing on grassroots action and local initiatives. Together, the CEC and the Climate Group aim to support a coordinated approach to environmental sustainability in Budleigh Salterton.

Read more about the CEC [here](#)

An Invitation For You

BSTC Climate Event – Gala Week

Budleigh Salterton Town Council invites everyone to join our Climate Event during Gala Week 2026

Wednesday 27 May 2026

Public Hall

10:00 am – 12:00 pm

Come along to take part in fun activities chat with the Climate and Environment Committee and other local groups or just enjoy a rest in the café.

All are welcome – whether you want to learn, get involved, or just enjoy a coffee and a friendly conversation.

We look forward to seeing you there!

Community Gardens

The first half of 2025 started with very wet conditions followed by the summer heat and drought, this resulting in a year of very mixed results for our plot holder's produce.

The year started off with a waiting list of 19 and plot inspections were carried out in May and November. Following the inspections, a number of plot holders received a letter asking if they were struggling, wished to continue or give up their tenancy.

This resulted in a number of plots changing tenants in January/February 2026.

Despite this the current waiting list is 12.

Overall the allotments are looking very good despite yet another wet start to this year and well attended by all plot holders who have put in a lot of work over the year.

Seachange have now given over the running of the Community Allotment plot 83 to The Lions who are encouraging locals to join in and have made very good progress and are always looking for more help on their plot.

The committee had decided to increase the plot rent by £5.00 to £35.00 per year from January 2027. For a very small outlay plot holders, young and old can enjoy the growing of their fruit, vegetables, flowers etc., and enjoy tremendous views.

We would like to encourage all plot holders to donate any excess produce to Wesley's at the Methodist Church to help those less fortunate and to avoid waste. (Further details can be found at Wesley's).

Finally thank is extend to the Town Clerk for her tremendous hard work in keeping the administration side of the Community gardens running like clockwork and also to thank Jerry Hitt and the committee members for their time in assisting with the plot inspections.

Community Infrastructure Levy

The money raised through CIL is **not a tax on residents** but a contribution to help pay for the infrastructure that new growth creates a need for — things like **schools, roads and transport improvements, healthcare, parks, community buildings and other public services**. This helps ensure that Budleigh Salterton and other parts of East Devon can cope with the impact of new housing and development.

A portion of CIL funds collected from development in Budleigh Salterton is also **passed to the local parish or town council** to spend on projects that benefit the immediate community, giving local people more say in how that funding is used. CIL funds can be invested into a range of infrastructure all aimed at helping the local community cope with growth and improved quality of life.

CIL monies can therefore be directed to quite small-scale projects that enhance the quality of peoples' lives living in Budleigh Salterton. Such funds can go towards projects in Education, Healthcare, Sports and Recreation, Parks and Green Space and improved walking/cycling infrastructure.

During 2026 £6,000 was awarded for the installation and removal of High Street Festive lights and the award was from the Community Infrastructure Levy fund.

We are extremely interested in where you would like funds to be directed using the CIL fund and welcome your ideas.

These are only examples, but your ideas might include :

Bus Shelters in Budleigh

Additional paths for walking

A wild flower scented garden

Additions to the medical centre

Shelter improvements

Cycle racks

A historic trail around Budleigh

Information boards relating to historic and wild life features of Budleigh

Budleigh Salterton Library

Council Representative Report – Councillor Richard Doorbar

The council continues to be very committed to the success of the library and regards it as a pivotal cornerstone to life in Budleigh. Not only does the library act as a superb place for reading and researching, it also is an important hub for the dissemination of information about what is happening in and around Budleigh. In addition, it has the vital role of providing support to a disparate group of people many of whom rely upon the library for their well-being and mental health. The librarians and Friends of the Library do a superb job in welcoming people to the library and in making it a friendly and supportive environment.

The Friends have been hugely successful in raising funds for the library. These funds are vital **add-ons** and in no way supplement the main work of the library. The system we use at the book events is one of purchasers making a donation for the books they require; and we have found that this works very well with purchasers being very generous in their donations. It can not be overemphasised what a fantastic team effort is required to organise the book sales and how much we appreciate the time and effort that Friends give to the selling of books to provide the ‘extras’ for the library.

The liaison between the Literary Festival and the library is highly valued as is the support that the Literary Festival provide to Library fund raising.

The council considers that the accommodation is barely adequate and would like there to be serious exploration of how the library accommodation on the present site can be expanded. This is not a simple task but with imagination and commitment extra space would benefit the library as a whole which remains such an invaluable asset to Budleigh. The council is wholeheartedly supportive of maintaining present staffing levels which it regards as being an absolute minimum for ensuring the quality service which the librarians provide. There must not be any cutbacks in library provision so that the entire Budleigh population can continue to benefit from the library as a major resource. A letter was sent from the council to Senior Staff at Libraries Unlimited expressing strong support for the library and emphasising the importance of maintaining present staffing levels as an absolute minimum.

A great deal of time has been devoted by the Friends to campaigning to retain as a minimum the status quo in terms of staffing and opening hours. Friends have encouraged the completion of the Library Survey as part of the consultation delivered by Libraries Unlimited/ East Devon and have been highly proactive in eliciting support for the completion of the consultation from the town.

The council remains committed to the vital importance of the library and all it provides to the flourishing of Budleigh Salterton as a whole.

Councillor Richard Doorbar:

District Councillors Report

Charlotte FitzGerald, Councillor (Budleigh & Raleigh) and Vice Chair, East Devon District Council

Civic Year 2025-26 in review



'A celebration of kindness', the Budleigh Salterton Civic Service 2025 at St Peter's Church, with (Left) Caroline Leaver, (Middle) Chair of Devon County Council and Eleanor Rylance, Chair of East Devon District Council

As I approach the three-quarter mark in my term of office as a District Councillor, there is much to celebrate in what we as a council and as individual ward members have achieved. Facing an uncertain future, our council is now preparing itself for local government reorganisation and, as councillors, we must do our best to prepare our wards for the transformation ahead.

The Local Plan, which covers residential, economic and sports development in the district between now and 2040, is due for completion and submission to the Planning Inspectorate in June. This has been in train for about five years now and has gathered in pace as we approach the deadline that was set for ourselves by the current government soon after taking office, and which announced higher housing targets for councils that did not submit for inspection within a certain timeframe. Once the plan has been submitted to the inspectorate, it will already carry some weight as a reference for planners and the planning authority alike. East Devon will be required to reach its yearly housebuilding target in order for the plan to be passed, and it is hoped that we will be in the right position to do so. Failure to produce a robust plan that passes its inspection, underpinned by on-target housebuilding numbers, would result in the district being subject to the tilted balance and effectively being required to approve a great deal of housing in order to fulfil its quotas. We are mindful, when selecting development sites for inclusion in the new Strategic Plan, that our council's 'least worst' options of

housing sites are nevertheless preferable to options imposed upon us by higher authorities lacking local knowledge.

This year, the long-awaited the footpath and streetlights at Evans Field were installed, giving relief for residents who had rightfully expected these from occupation. Now, with the adjoining site due for development, I am focused on ensuring that it benefits from safe access from the outset, and that we work with Devon County Highways to secure the removal of the 30 mile per hour zone to outside that development. The Budleigh Traffic and Transport Group, which includes the local Highways officer, Devon County Councillor and Budleigh and Raleigh parish councillors, is making good progress in prioritising and raising awareness of the needs of the town to Highways. Other foci are the stretch from the Knowle roundabout to Knowle Corner and the approach to the town from East Budleigh, including the Cricket Club and South Farm Road, as well as the high street and matters affecting surrounding villages. I welcome the Town Mayor's 'The Tortoise and the Hare' Gala Week event later this Spring, which will invite residents to consider what they would like for the future of their town, including safer and more environmentally-friendly transport options.

Local Government Reorganisation is coming at us at full speed, and East Devon District Council will likely have only one further year of operation after next year's elections before its new 'shadow authority' takes over day-to-day operations.

From an administrative perspective, there are many areas which EDDC will be well-equipped to take leading roles in the new, larger authority. Its waste and recycling service, long established as one of the best in the country, is in the process of being transferred, at the behest of the council, to a Local Authority Trading Company. This will allow it to be independent, efficient, stable and market-ready, poised to scale to cover the new local authority area when this is established.

In addition, East Devon now has the only completed Water Cycle Study in Devon, which means that for the first time we are starting to condition our planning applications (or indeed refuse them outright) if we are unsatisfied that the regional water and wastewater supplier will be able to service the developments without overwhelming capacity. To-date, we have been powerless to stop South West Water waiving intended stops on applications in known hotspots such as Honiton and Feniton, under the spurious claim that their capacity was sufficient. Our Water Cycle Study is a game-changer for this district, and I look forward to seeing the effect it has on preventing developments that are unsustainable by sewage infrastructure. (It is worth noting, that the issues with Lime Kiln pumping station do not count as treatment capacity, though they clearly affect it. In any case, we do not expect significant further development in Budleigh during the plan period beyond the 35 properties already provisioned on the site West of Barn Lane. Exmo_20 wastewater would presumably go straight downhill to Maer Lane.) The Water Cycle Study was hard won, given the obfuscation and delays of South West Water. The Environment Agency have been less helpful than the council would have liked. Nevertheless, it is complete, and holds weight against developer and water company claims, and it will be a model for other areas to use following unitarization.

County and District Councillors will face a decision next year whether to run for this new unitary authority, and given how much of life is taken up by council, no doubt we are all giving it some thought already. My plea from the start to those further up the chain has been to financially recompense

councillors appropriately, in order to ensure diversity on this new council. The new unitary seats will likely be a similar size to a County seat, albeit with the responsibilities of both authorities combined (and potentially some more). Given it takes three district members and one county councillor to represent this town and surrounding villages, and given that an average councillor can expect to work anything between ten and twenty hours per week – or many more if they hold a portfolio position – then it is reasonable to assume that the position of a combined authority councillor would be impossible to conduct in addition to a day job, especially if that person had children or caring responsibilities. It is of great concern to many serving councillors and would-be candidates that without proper compensation in allowances, the new authority will attract a slim cohort of prospective councillors and that representative democracy would suffer in turn.

On a happier note, I have enjoyed deputising for the Chair of EDDC this year, including attending civic events on her behalf when she has been out of district. In the Summer, I was inspired at an event to mark a change of the Chair at Exeter Science Park by the potential for this groundbreaking facility to attract more scientific and tech talent, particularly under a Strategic Mayoral Authority. Having personally worked on the development of the Cambridge Biomedical Campus, it was easy to see the benefits for both East Devon and Exeter of having such a hub of science and tech market innovation on our doorstep. In the Autumn, I represented East Devon District Council at the Budleigh and Exmouth Civic Services, both showcasing deep reservoirs of cultural talent and an abundance of community service, rendered by residents. In Otterton I attended the village harvest supper, a very jolly affair featuring a sung grace led by Rev'd Martin Jacques (to which I mouthed along), a hearty dinner cooked by parishioners, and a raffle. Later this Spring, I hope to attend the Peacemaker Festival organised in East Budleigh to mark the quadricentenary of Roger Conant's passage from here to America and his founding of Salem city. On Remembrance Day, deputising for the chair, I had the honour of laying the wreaths of behalf of East Devon at Exmouth and Exeter. Both the Exmouth Parade and Exeter Cathedral service were moving in their different ways, and also humbling, as my wearing the vice chair's chain seemed to invite conversation with veterans at both events.

Since Christmas, the civic year has continued apace. The Council delivered a balanced budget, despite continued challenges, including a chaotic, eleventh-hour effectual additional funding cut from central government. We obtained a completed audit for the council's financial statements 2024-25, in spite of the ever-increased complexity of local government finance and in contrast with many similar councils which are still failing to complete an audit. Full Council passed a Motion for the Ocean and a Motion to recognise the rights of rivers. Outside council, I started employment as temporary assistant to the Town Clerk, which has helped broaden my understanding of how local authorities work, including the liaison of officers with colleagues from other councils. Some of my fears about impending local government reorganisation have been quieted, as I have come to appreciate the ways in which councils already work together. Dealing with the general public in the office has had its highs and lows. For the most part, it has impressed on me the congeniality, humour and generosity of the town's community leaders, volunteers, and public-facing workers. Through small acts of kindness, people lift each other up. Our national leaders could learn a lot from how things are done around here.

BSTC Grant Monitoring Reports (2025/26)

Budleigh Salterton Music Festival

For the 2025 Festival, BSTC awarded £1,800 towards the costs of the 'Family Day Musical Treasure Hunt' on the last day of the Festival, 5th July 2025. The event, commencing mid-morning and lasting until late afternoon, involved the opportunity for children (accompanied by their parents) to try out different musical instruments and styles/genres, moving among a number of locations around the town and calling in at local shops en route to collect stamps. The Family Day thus involved businesses in the town, local venues, Shop Budleigh and local townspeople – producing a joint unified project. At each location, a welcome, facilitation and instruction were provided by experienced professional musicians. All proper safeguarding arrangements were in place.

Completion of project

The funded project was completed on 5th July 2025.

Use of grant funding

The grant funding was used exclusively to help cover the costs of the Family Day (detailed below), enabling us to stage the event without having to draw on additional funds from reserves beyond our budgeted commitment.

Breakdown of costs

In summary, the costs incurred were those of hiring the four venues used (the Peter Hall, Temple Methodist Church, Church on the Green, and the Public Hall), and professional fees for the musicians leading the groups.

The direct costs of the four workshops amounted to £2109 (artist fees and expenses £1728, venue costs £319, and other workshop expenses £62).

Indirect costs (event management, Education lead, marketing, etc) amounted to a further £1900 approximately.

Total costs therefore: c. **£4,009**

Total ticket revenue (before ticket booking fees of £23): **£300**

Tendering and awarding of contracts

In awarding the contracts, Pamela Marino (the Festival's Education and Outreach lead) recruited workshop leaders whom she already knew to have experience of working with young people in an official capacity and to enjoy a reputation for excellence in musical education and training. These workshop leaders had worked with schools and with County education organisations. Therefore there was no competitive tendering process as such; awarding of contracts was based simply upon suitability and expertise. All workshop leaders were DBS checked.

Reflections on the project

We were uniformly impressed with the quality of the workshop leaders; the chosen locations worked well, and the variety of locations and activities was good. The day gathered momentum as it progressed, and the weather improved; the final get-together workshop for all was a great success. It was lovely to work with a variety of businesses in the town, to involve them in the Festival, and to share an activity – especially for families in the town.

Grant report from Exmouth and District Community Transport

We are very grateful for the grants we have received from Budleigh Salterton Town Council over many years. They help us continue to operate 2 x 8 seater, specially adapted, minibuses, which provide shopping trips on Monday & Friday's and coffee/lunch trips every Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday & Friday.

In 2025, 16 Budleigh Salterton residents came on a total of over 300 trips. Also, we took pupils from St Peters Primary School to the LED centre and to the rugby club in Exmouth. The residents tell us these trips are essential to keep them connected, confident and independent.

We charge each passenger £10 for shopping on Monday/Fridays and £17 for a coffee/lunch trip, but even with grants, we only just about raise enough money each year to keep the services going.

Kind regards

Paul Hudson

Chairman

Grant report from Shop Budleigh

Report prepared by: Jen Mills

Details:

Once again, I'd like to thank the Town Council (and in particular councillors Alan Chaplin, Richard Doorbar and Stephen Horn) for the grant, and for the support offered with regards to the town's Christmas lights.

The 2025 project has now been completed, here is the breakdown of costs:

Insurance	Graham Sykes	333.06
Supply/Maintain/Fit	Mike Harding	7278.84
PAT Testing	Bagwells	174

Total Project Cost: 7785.90 inc. VAT

The Town Council grant funding was used primarily to pay for the installation of the town's festive lighting display. As things stand currently, without this grant the town simply wouldn't be able to have any Christmas lights.

There are very few companies who carry out these installations, I've dealt with 2 in recent years. One of the two let us down quite badly at a very late stage previously, by going away without actually switching the town's lights on. Consequently, that company were not invited to tender this year and the work was awarded to Mike Harding's team. Best practice would be to offer the work out to three contractors, but this is dependent of course on there being three suitable contractors.

Thanks,

Jen Mills

Shop Budleigh

Grant report from Budleigh Information Centre

Budleigh Information Centre (BIC) is a non-profit and self-funded organisation with a significant role within the community and receives valuable support from Budleigh Salterton Town Council.

BIC is run solely by volunteers, whose aim is to provide a central point of contact for residents and visitors, offering information on local services, events, and resources. The centre's location in the town provides a warm welcome to both visitors and locals who call in to ask for information, and our Love Budleigh website offers a vast amount of information about the town and surrounding area. We maintain a strong relationship with many local groups and act as a crucial link between festivals, businesses, restaurants, services, and clubs and societies by displaying brochures, posters, directing visitors to shops and selling event tickets.

As a self-funding CIC, it is important that we raise sufficient income to ensure our survival. We receive income from various means, but it is always a difficult challenge to raise the amount needed to cover our running costs. We thank Budleigh Salterton Town Council for the money awarded to BIC in April 2025, allowing us to continue providing our vital service to the town.

Our biggest highlight for 2025 was the VE80 Street Party held in Budleigh High Street. Having organised two earlier Street Parties in the High Street, the volunteers felt it would be a great way to commemorate the 80th anniversary of VE Day on 8th May. However, after looking at the costs for putting on such an event we doubted if we could go ahead. We approached Budleigh Salterton Town Council and were very pleased to hear that they would sponsor the event by covering the cost for the table and chair hire, which alone came to £3390. Their support enabled us to go ahead and organise what would be reported as one of the largest street parties in the country to celebrate VE80 Day. Around 500 people sat at tables along the High Street with many more passersby stopping to join in the celebration. Fortunately, the weather stayed dry, and the crowds had a fantastic afternoon enjoying the live entertainment from a wartime singer and music from the DJ.

The volunteers of the Love Budleigh team are proud to have successfully organised the VE80 Street Party and greatly appreciate BSTC's financial contribution that enabled us to make it happen. The event brought the people of Budleigh together, singing, dancing and celebrating our community with pride and remembrance. The Street Party gained huge recognition and was covered on the television, in national newspapers and on social media. One Facebook post had over 12k views with many congratulating Budleigh for holding such a wonderful event and saying they would have loved to have had something similar held in their town.

We are always grateful to BSTC for their support of BIC. Their support helps us to continue to bring the community together and to offer a service to both our visitors, residents and businesses. During 2025, BIC also:

- Welcomed 9000 people into our Centre on Fore Street
- Maintained our Love Budleigh website to provide online information about Budleigh and the surrounding area
- Provided an alternative to online ticket sales by selling tickets at the centre for:
 - Local Events
 - Local Festivals
 - National Express coach journeys

- Built on our relationship with both the Music and Literary Festivals through selling their tickets and being a hub for queries and information about the festivals.
- Became a Plastic Free champion and a site for free water bottle refills
- Produced a Community Calendar for 2026, which sold out by the end of November.
- Held our Gala Week Afternoon Tea and November Winter Treat to bring the community together. We kept our ticket prices low to make both events as inclusive as possible.
- Partnered with Shop Budleigh to organise the Budleigh Late Night Shopping event. As well as bringing festive cheer to the High Street, this annual event showcases our amazing community and the excellent array of retail outlets available in the town.
- Continued to work with EDDC to provide and manage the bookings for the beach huts available along Budleigh seafront for daily and weekly hire.
- Engaged with Seachange and their planned Budleigh Connected project
- Continued to successfully partner with Visit Budleigh Salterton to produce our Budleigh Salterton monthly Newsletter and to promote local businesses through our joint advertising packages.

Powers and duties of Local Councils

Function	Powers & Duties	Statutory Provisions
Allotments	Powers to provide allotments. Duty to provide allotment gardens if demand unsatisfied and if reasonable to do so	Small Holdings & Allotments Act 1908 s.23
Borrowing money	Power for councils to borrow money for their statutory functions or for the prudent management of their financial affairs	Local Government Act 2003, Schedule 1, para 2
Baths and washhouses	Power to provide public baths and washhouses	Public Health Act 1936 s.221
Burial grounds, cemeteries and crematoria	Power to acquire and maintain Power to provide Power to agree to maintain monuments and memorials Power to contribute towards expenses of cemeteries	Open Spaces Act 1906 s.9 and 10; Local Government Act 1972 s. 214; Parish Councils and Burial Authorities (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1970 s.1; Local Government Act 1972 s.214(6)
Bus shelters	Power to provide and maintain shelters	Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1953 s.4
Bye-laws	Powers to make bye-laws in regard to pleasure grounds Cycle parks Baths and washhouses Open spaces and burial grounds Mortuaries and post-mortem rooms Public conveniences	Public Health Act 1875 s.164 Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 s.57(7) Public Health Act 1936 s.223 Open Spaces Act 1906 s.15 Public Health Act 1936 s.87
Charities	Duties in respect of parochial charities Power to act as charity trustees	Charities Act 1993 s.79 Local Government Act 1972 s.139(1)
Clocks	Power to provide public clocks	Parish Councils Act 1957, s.2
Closed churchyards	Powers to maintain	Local Government Act 1972 s.215
Commons and common pastures	Powers in relation to inclosure, regulation and management and providing common pasture	Inclosure Act 1845 Small Holdings and Allotments Act 1908 s.34
Conference facilities	Power to provide and encourage the use of facilities	Local Government Act 1972 s.144
Community Centres	Powers to provide and equip buildings for use of clubs having athletic, social or recreational objectives Power to acquire, provide and furnish community buildings	Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976, s.19 Local Government Act 1972 s.133
Crime Prevention	Powers to spend money on various crime prevention measures	Local Government and Rating Act 1997 s.31
Drainage	Power to deal with ponds and ditches	Public Health Act 1936 s.260
Entertainment and the arts	Provision of entertainment and support of the arts	Local Government Act 1972 s.145
Environment	Power to issue fixed penalty notices for litter, graffiti and offences under dog control orders.	Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Act 2005 S.19, s.30 Part 6
Gifts	Power to accept	Local Government Act 1972 s.139
Highways	Power to maintain footpaths and bridleways Power to light roads and public places Provision of litter bins Powers to provide parking places for bicycles and motor-cycles	Highways Act 1980 s.43,50 Parish Councils Act 1957 s.3; Highways Act 1980, s.301 Litter Act 1983 s.5,6 Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 s.57,63

Thank you

The Town Council would like to thank everyone who attended the Annual Parish Meeting and contributed their views. Community involvement is greatly valued, and the Council remains committed to working with residents and local groups to support and improve the parish in the year ahead.

The council offices are open:

Monday, Wednesday and Friday: 10.00am – 1.00pm

office@budleighsaltertontowncouncil.gov.uk / 01395 442245

Town Councillors can be contacted via email [using the link](#) on their BSTC website profile or using:

firstname.surname@budleighsaltertontowncouncil.gov.uk or via the clerk.