



A message from the Mayor



Happy New Year to all residents and visitors to Berwick upon Tweed. 2024 brings fresh challenges to your Town Council. Not only are we updating a number of our policies to keep them relevant, we will also be improving our website so that residents can better access our policies/committee minutes and any other relevant documents.

The Town Council is acutely aware that County Council has difficult decisions to make this year over the provision of local services. Therefore, we are currently carrying out our own staffing review in anticipation that we may have to increase our capacity to meet any possible shortfall in that

provision. On a positive note, it has been pleasing to see the response to the online petition to create a woodland walk adjacent to Shielfield Terrace. Currently, there are 245 votes in favour of sensitively pruning and tidying up the current stretch of woodland. The Town Council hopes that it will be an active partner in any scheme which County brings forward.

Finally, we are due to agree on our budget for 2024/25 this month. Be assured that we are acutely aware of the current economic situation in our town and we promise not only to keep any increase in the precept to the bare minimum, but that we will continue to have the lowest precept of any market town in Northumberland.

John Robertson, Mayor of Berwick-upon-Tweed

Community Directory

Do you run a local organisation for people who live and work in the Berwick-upon-Tweed area? If so, we'd like to hear from you! The Town Council is working to build a stronger, more connected community by creating a centralised directory of local community groups based in Berwick. From healthcare and social support to environmental activities and recreation, we want to make it easy for residents to find and engage with the groups that matter most to them. The database is set up so that you can easily add your own group's information directly on our website and update it anytime. Details at www.berwick-tc.gov.uk/advanced/volunteer.php.

Seasons' Meetings

January's meetings are all held in our Marygate office.

All meetings start at 6pm

Monday, 8th Communities and Local Services

Tuesday, 9th Planning

Monday, 15th Budget and Administration

Monday, 22nd Full Council (Budget and Precept)

Monday 5th Feb Staffing and Corporate Resources

Meetings are open to all—come along!

Budget Report from the Town Clerk

Council has to prepare a budget for the following financial year by the end of January.

It's not just a theoretical exercise; by law the council has to justify any money it collects from residents, and it does that by specifying what it will spend, and why.

That does mean the budget can contain a lot of information; we specify what we spend on the contractors who do the safety checks on the splash park, or how much we spend buying Christmas lights or plants for the high street.

The budget has to be clear, but it can be difficult, for instance, to attribute the work of the Town Wardens, who maintain park benches, litter bins, plant trees or water flowers, often in the same day, to a distinct budget heading.

We're also not allowed, by the county council's rules, to divide up staffing costs in that way, so even though we try to use our budget to break down the costs of individual services, there will just be one item for staffing costs on the breakdown you get with your council tax bill.

We consult on the budget each year – we begin the process of preparing a budget in September of the preceding year, and we explore what needs to be done, what council wants to do and what we're likely to have as income.

The bulk of our income, about 65%, comes from the precept, as part of your council tax bill. Your council tax bill is made up of several parts; the county council's share, the separate amount for social care, the police and crime commissioner's precept, and ours.

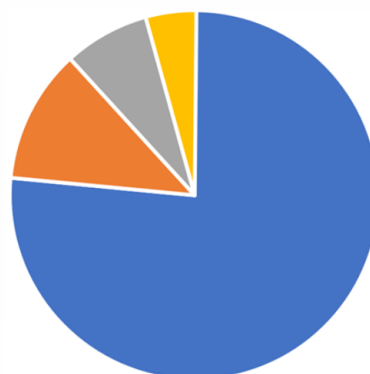
Even though the Town Council's share of each household's council tax bill is the smallest portion, (in 2023-24 a Band D home in Berwick paid a council tax bill of £2254.08 of which £99.94 was the Town Council's precept) we're still totally committed to minimizing our share of the increase in council tax.





That doesn't mean giving up on our ambitions for the town. We want to continue our work greening the town, bringing trees back to our streets and making our floral displays better and more sustainable. We want to continue our work regenerating the High Street, helping to tidy up empty shops and encouraging new businesses. We want to continue upgrading and improving our play parks and green spaces.

Follow our progress in 2024 by subscribing to our newsletter, details on the back cover.

DID YOU KNOW?

WHERE YOUR COUNCIL TAX GOES



-  Town Council
-  Police
-  NCC
-  NCC Social Care

Community Woodland



Would you like to see a new community woodland created on Shielfield Terrace, between Dean Drive and Cornhill Road? The Town Council has been asked if it is possible to turn this area of derelict land into a local park, perhaps similar to the nature walk at East Ord.

We would love to hear residents' views on the matter—what do you think?

There is a petition to support the project on the Northumberland County Council (NCC) website which you can access with this QR code.



Update on the Toilet Facilities at Woolmarket

Installation of the new 'changing places' facility in Berwick

We were very pleased to hear that Northumberland County Council was successful in bidding for DLUHC (Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities) grant funding to place a new changing places facility on Woolmarket.

This will provide more space and equipment than standard accessible toilets in the form of a 'Changing Places' facility - to improve access to toilet provision and support

independence for those with multiple or profound physical and/or learning disabilities. These facilities include a height adjustable adult size changing bench, a hoist system and space for two carers.

NCC are nearing the end of the process to terminate the existing agreement with the provider of the superloo currently

in place (right) and envisage that this process will be completed this January.

This will result in the removal of the current Woolmarket and Eastern Lane Car Park facilities, hopefully also in January but is subject to negotiation with a third party contractor.

The new unit has been approved by Muscular Dystrophy UK



Changes to Bus Routes

On January 3rd, a simplified timetable was launched on service 464; Berwick-Upon-Tweed to Wooler, via Lowick and Scremerston. This saw the removal of the Railway St to Ramparts section route so customers looking to travel this section can do so on service B1, Berwick Town.

The B1 will have a revamp from January 28th, with additional hourly nighttime journeys plus an extra Sunday journey.

From Monday to Saturday the last journey serving all stops will be 2157hrs with an additional 2257hrs journey serving Ramparts to Highcliffe only. To make the town service hourly on a Sunday an extra daytime journey will be added, departing Ramparts at 1327hrs.

The new evening journeys will serve all areas until 2127hrs with an extra journey at 2227hrs serving Ramparts to Highcliffe only.

Claire Lark, operations manager at Borders Buses, said: "We are pleased to be working in partnership with Northumberland County Council and delighted to be introducing more journeys for the town, as well as increasing frequency and adding new locations to our bus network. We hope local people make full use and benefit from the new route and extra journeys."

The new route and service improvements are operated on behalf of the County Council.

Berwick-Upon-Tweed to Wooler

Monday to Saturday

Service No	464	464	464	464	464	464	464
Trip Note Code					Sch	NsCs	
Berwick, Railway Street	06:50	09:05	11:05	13:05	15:20	15:25	17:35
Berwick, Golden Square	06:53	09:08	11:08	13:08	15:23	15:28	17:38
Berwick High School					15:30		
Scremerston, Memorial	07:02	09:17	11:17	13:17	15:34	15:37	17:47
Ancroft, Lamb Inn	07:08	09:23	11:23	13:23	15:40	15:43	17:53
Bowsden, Black Bull	07:14	09:29	11:29	13:29	15:46	15:49	17:59
Lowick, Lambton Avenue	07:21	09:36	11:36	13:36	15:53	15:56	18:06
Doddington, Post Office	07:31	09:46	11:46	13:46	16:05	16:08	18:18
Wooler, Bus Station	Arr	07:38	09:53	11:53	13:53	16:15	18:25
Wooler, Bus Station	Dep	07:40	09:55	11:55	13:55	16:13	18:26
Wooler, High Fair	07:43	09:58	11:58	13:58	16:16	16:19	18:29

Wooler to Berwick-Upon-Tweed

Monday to Saturday

Service No	464	464	464	464	464	464	464
Trip Note Code	Sch	NsCs					
Wooler, High Fair	07:44	07:44	09:59	11:59	13:59	16:20	18:30
Wooler, Bus Station	Arr	07:47	07:47	10:02	12:02	14:02	16:23
Wooler, Bus Station	Dep	07:55	07:55	10:05	12:05	14:05	16:35
Doddington, Post Office	08:02	08:02	10:12	12:12	14:12	16:42	18:42
White Swan	08:12	08:12	10:22	12:22	14:22	16:52	18:52
Bowsden, Black Bull	08:19	08:19	10:29	12:29	14:29	16:59	18:59
Ancroft, Lamb Inn	08:25	08:25	10:35	12:35	14:35	17:05	19:05
Scremerston, Memorial	08:31	08:31	10:40	12:40	14:40	17:10	19:10
Berwick High School	08:35						
Berwick, Golden Square	08:41	08:41	10:50	12:50	14:50	17:20	19:20
Berwick, Railway Street	08:44	08:44	10:53	12:53	14:53	17:23	19:23

Grant Funding

NORTHERN VIEW



The Town Council were delighted to be able to support Northern View in their application for funding their container project. As you may know, they are the only community facility of its kind in the Berwick area, providing bar/room rental facilities and many activities for the community. These include a warm space, seasonal events and as a base for varied community groups.

In response to the cost of living crisis they now act as a collection point and venue for various exchange Pop Up Shops - School Uniform, Warm Clothes and Baby items which are very popular in the community. The response for donations has been amazing and 400+ families have been helped in the past few years and 1000 children benefited from the School Uniform Shop in 2022.

We were able to contribute towards a container for storage that was urgently needed to store school and baby items donated but as yet unsold at the pop up shops, freeing up space at the facility.

Fix My Street

You will remember that Berwick had some very cold weather at the end of November last year and we may well have more in the next few months. So if you have an icy road that needs gritting or a pothole on your street that needs to be filled you

Get an Email Newsletter

Make sure you get a copy every month by joining our mailing list. Simply email info@berwick-tc.gov.uk and ask to be added. Next month's newsletter will turn up in your inbox at the beginning of the month.

Contact the Town Council

You can email us at info@berwick-tc.gov.uk or telephone us on 01289 302391.

Or you can pop into our office on Marygate. We're open to the public 10am-4pm, Monday to Friday.



Contact Northumberland County Council (NCC)

If you have a question about NCC services you can speak to someone in person in the Library on Walkergate on Tuesday and Friday 10:00am-1:00pm or telephone NCC on 0345 600 6400.



can report it directly to NCC on www.fixmystreet.com. This is a site for reporting local problems (like fly-tipping blocked drains, broken paving slabs, graffiti, etc.) and you receive updates when repairs take place. It shows reports that have already been created, plus any planned road works, which saves time and avoids multiple reporting of the same problem.

