



CROSS*talk*

The latest news and reports from Princes Risborough Town Council | Issue 82 | March 2025



A message from the Town Mayor & Chairman of the Council

Welcome to 2025, albeit we are well into the year by the time you read this! I do hope though that you had a good festive break and enjoyed our wonderful Christmas Lights. It is worth stressing our gratitude for the support of both our volunteers and the North West Chilterns Community Board who stepped in as a one off as our main sponsor in the wake of unavoidable changed funding arrangements from this year.

This edition hopes to provide you with an update on what we plan for the year ahead, and also elaborates upon the difficult decisions we have had to make in light of the financial position that we are facing at Town Council level, but also at Unitary and above. We have listened to your feedback from the Summer consultation on what you expect and value from the Council, and used this to inform our decisions, whilst at the same time

seeking to minimise the inevitable rise in the precept as much as possible. Our intent has been very much to pass to the next Council (with local elections due in May) a sure basis to build upon, focussing on the health and well-being of the people of Princes Risborough, delivering the activities you expect, prioritising the maintenance of the Town and its heritage.

We will be presenting the Annual Report on behalf of the Town Council at the Annual Town Meeting on the 11th March in the Brushwood Suite, where you can question us directly, and we do hope that you will be able join us. This year we are also celebrating the contributions made by our volunteers, who make the Summer Festival and all our other events possible, rather than having a separate occasion, as well as award the Princes Risborough Civic Awards. For those of you who cannot make it, our Annual

Town Report will be available on our website, and copies can be picked up from the Town Council office or the library.

Thank you.

Cllr Neil Rawsthorne – Chairman



Cllr. Neil Rawsthorne - Chairman

Annual Town Meeting & The Mayor's Civic Awards

TUESDAY 11TH MARCH BRUSHWOOD SUITE, WADES PARK FROM 7:15PM
ALL RESIDENTS WELCOME TO ATTEND

2025/2026 Precept

Setting the Precept is a fundamental part of the Town Council's duty and responsibilities which affects all residents and businesses alike.

The precept is the amount of money collected through your council tax for the Town Council to maintain the services they are responsible for. It will be collected by Buckinghamshire Council on behalf of the Town Council.

Once again there has needed to be a great deal of heart-searching within the council in an endeavour to reach a compromise which is agreeable to as many of you as possible and within the remit set to us.

After consultations held last year we have attempted to fulfil, as much as we are able, your wishes and to safeguard the things that matter to you, whilst keeping the vibrant heart of the Town and maintaining the Town to the standard you have rightly come to expect from us.

Much of the increase in the Precept is due to factors beyond our control, similar to those impacting households daily—rising utility bills, fuel costs, and reductions in income.

A clear example is The Dovecote in St. Dunstan's playing field. As a listed building, we are legally obligated to maintain it. During the restoration planning, we discovered bat droppings and potentially a large number of roost features, which has added complexity and cost to the project due to the need for specialised conservation measures.

You will see from the illustration the breakdown of your Council Tax bill and the relatively small amount which comes to the Town Council.

At the start of these discussions, we faced a potential increase of nearly 50%. Recognising that this was unacceptable for both the Council and our community, we worked hard to reduce it. As a result, the increase has been minimised to 11.19% for each Band D residential property in the Town.

Like any sustainable business, the Town Council must balance its books. We have made every effort to minimise the rise in the precept by pursuing efficiency savings and exploring alternative revenue streams. However, some cost increases are simply unavoidable.

Money is very tight but we will do our best to provide the service which you have come to expect and deserve from your Town Council.

Cllr Sue Coombs
Chairman Finance Committee

Don't Miss the Annual Town Meeting: Get Involved!

We warmly invite all residents to attend the Annual Town Meeting on Tuesday 11th March.

This is an opportunity to learn about the work of your Town Council, receive updates on local projects and services, and have your say on matters affecting our community.

It is important to note that the Annual Town Meeting is not a Council meeting but a meeting of the town's residents—a chance for the community to come together.

During the meeting, the Mayor will present the Civic Awards in recognition of outstanding service to the community in the parish of Princes Risborough.

Annual Town Meeting

& The Mayor's Civic Awards

TUESDAY 11TH MARCH
BRUSHWOOD SUITE,
WADES PARK
FROM 7:15PM

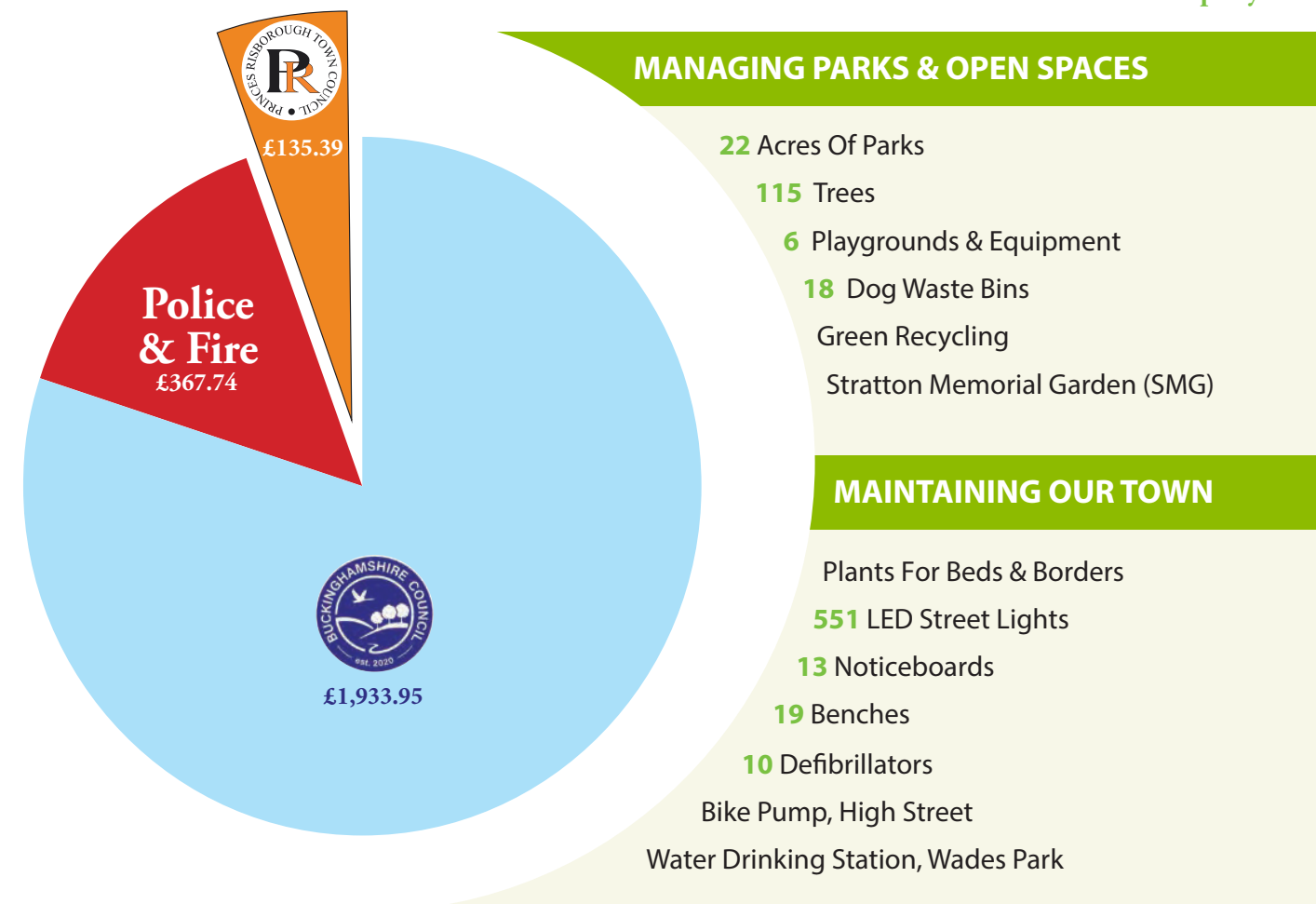


ALL RESIDENTS WELCOME TO ATTEND



In 2025 your £11.28 each month brings you all this

Band D Property



MAINTAINING BUILDINGS

Wades Centre & Café
Dovecote, St. Dunstans Park (Grade II Listed)
Market House (Grade II Listed)
War Memorials

OPERATING COSTS

Staff
Training
Machinery & Equipment

COMMUNITY

High Street Trail Events	Thursday Market	Website
Summer Festival Christmas	Farmers Market	Grants to Schools, Churches & Local Organisations
Lights switch on	Crosstalk Newsletter	Support for Retailers
Annual Town Meeting	Social Media Promotions	

Elections 2025

Princes Risborough Town Council elections are happening on Thursday, 1st May 2025

And we're looking for passionate residents to step up! We need 13 dedicated individuals to join the Town Council and serve the Parish of Princes Risborough. If you're 18 or over and eager to contribute, this is your opportunity to get involved and make an impact.

What's involved?

- **Full Town Council Meetings:** Held on the last Tuesday of every month at the Wades Centre (Brushwood Suite).
- **Committee Work and Meetings:** Choose from a range of six sub-committees covering areas like Events, Planning, Town, and Commercial Services. These committees typically meet on Tuesday evenings at the Wades Centre.
- **Community Representation:** Represent the Town Council at local events and attend local government meetings and advocate for key town issues.

Curious to know more about the role of a councillor and Town Mayor? Scan the QR code to the right to find out more:



No prior experience? No problem! Training is available to help you get started.

Interested? Come along to one of our Council meetings or join us at our Annual Town Meeting on the 11th March, to see what it's all about! All meetings—both Full Council and Committees—are open to the public with a dedicated public participation period set aside at the start of each meeting. Read more about having your say at council meetings on the 'Meetings, Agendas & Minutes' page of our website.

Visit our website for upcoming meeting dates, agendas, and past minutes: www.princesrisboroughtowncouncil.gov.uk. You can also view minutes at the Town Council Offices by appointment.

Ready to Step Up? Details on eligibility and how to apply are now available on Buckinghamshire Council's website—just scan the QR code to right to get started.



Town Council Elections will be held on Thursday 1st May



Town Consultation Update

Our last edition of Crosstalk was a Town Consultation special edition, where we sought to gather your views on a range of topics to help us renew our long-term aims, including community wellbeing, engagement, heritage, and environmental issues.

200 of you filled it in, and many additional comments helped provide a clearer picture. Some were beyond the control or remit of the Town Council, but are useful when approaching the relevant authority. Understanding the feelings of the community helps set the future agenda and direction of the council, so thank you to all that replied. I will try and highlight the more popular issues raised and responses where appropriate.

The appearance of the town garnered the most responses. In particular the play equipment, but also dogs in the park, the latter was covered in the previous edition of Crosstalk. Currently, it is a financial struggle just to maintain the equipment, and like many respondents we would like to do more, if alternative sources of finance can be found or the financial climate improves. Managing the fauna and flora solicited contradictory views, some wanting more natural growth, others wanting the grass verges to be kept under control and neat. To reconcile both is difficult but possible if managed and in the right place.

Crosstalk is the most popular connection between the council and residents, but being the source of the questionnaire it did have a natural advantage. A common comment was wanting more use of social and internet networks to communicate, something as a council we have and will continue to do, but as a compliment to Crosstalk.

Many people asked for a greater use of the noticeboards as sources of information and even a map, something as a council we are working on.

Both the Summer Festival and Christmas Lights Switch On are popular, as are the new events like the Farmers Markets, and more similar activities would be welcomed. The High Street is the most popular venue, with the Farmers market preferred to be there, this would require the closure of the High Street which would make it financially unsustainable. There were many suggested improvements made for the festivals, we do try new initiatives, whilst keeping them familiar.

Environmental issues drew fewer replies, a majority saying the current council is about right in its current approach, but a significant number wanting more action. There was an even split between those wanting access to more information on environmental issues, in particular more information about the natural assets of the area.

The level of Town Council tax was a fairly even split between no increase, 50p and £1 a week. This does not set the charge; it is the cost of providing the current services and facilities that does that. But it does give us an indication of the value placed on these services, and if they should be cut. Over the years many initiatives have been taken to reduce the cost of these services, like solar panels and lower maintenance flower beds to keep them affordable.

Cllr Ian Parkinson



Blooming Sustainably: New Planting in Town Flower Beds

Here in Princes Risborough we love our flower beds and town planting. As you may have noticed our flower beds have been bare this winter, which is quite sad but necessary to reduce costs in the short term. However, I am very pleased to announce that this year we will be moving to more sustainable planting with more perennials being planted. This will give us interest all year round and will be cheaper for ongoing maintenance. Our suppliers, to great success, have introduced this type of planting scheme in other towns as we all move towards a sustainable future, and we look forward to seeing the new look beds in Spring.

Cllr Surinder Marshall
Chair Town Committee



An update from Risborough Youth Club

October 2024 marked a time for celebration as Risborough Youth Club celebrated its 50th anniversary. Readers with sharp memories will recall that an informal youth club existed before 1974, which evolved into the officially founded club that year. We welcomed community members and young people to celebrate at our AGM, where Greg Smith MP presented awards to the youth.

We were delighted to introduce our new youth worker, Jack, who brought a wealth of experience from various youth organisations around the county. Jack made a great impression on the young people over the past few months and shared exciting plans for the future direction of the club and the youth services we could support in the Risboroughs and surrounding villages.

October also featured our annual trip to Thorpe Park for "Fright Night," generously supported by the Rotary Club of Princes Risborough. Their additional funding allowed us to subsidise tickets and provide extra transportation, enabling 24 young people to enjoy a day of fun and adventure. We were also grateful to Harmony Energy, operators of the battery farm near Ilmer, for donating funds to help subsidise a trip to Rush

Trampoline Park in February and a rock climbing outing in April.

The winter months always present a challenge for providing activities at the club. However, thanks to Jack and our team of volunteers, we were able to run several sessions, including boxing skills, bonfires, pumpkin carving, quiz nights, fitness challenges (including a planking competition with PCSO Cabbage!), computer maintenance, lock picking, and retro video game nights. Recently, we were fortunate to collaborate with Khepera, a community interest company promoting healthy lifestyles through plant-based cooking, to run a series of quick and healthy cooking classes for our young people.

None of this would have been possible without our dedicated team of volunteers who supported the youth club. Every week, they gave up their time to provide a positive space for young people. Like many charities and community groups, we desperately needed more people to give up their time to make a difference. If you are interested in volunteering or joining the committee, we encourage you to email us at volunteer@risboroughyouth.club or find us on Facebook and Instagram.



The Youth Club meet every Monday evening from 7:00 pm to 8:30 pm at the Youth Club on Hawthorn Road, Princes Risborough. The club is open to everyone aged 11 to 17 in Princes Risborough and the surrounding villages. Your first visit is free, with only a £1 charge for each subsequent week.



PRINCES RISBOROUGH TOWN COUNCIL 2025 EVENTS CALENDAR

06
March

INTERNATIONAL WOMENS DAY

Brushwood Suite, Wades Centre, Stratton Road

11
March

ANNUAL TOWN MEETING

Brushwood Suite, Wades Centre, Stratton Road

07 – 19
April

EASTER TRAIL

High Street, Princes Risborough

26
April

FARMERS MARKET

King George V Park, Wellington Avenue

08
May

VE DAY 80 BEACON LIGHTING

Stratton Memorial Garden, Long Hide Off Queens Road

21
June

FARMERS MARKET

King George V Park, Wellington Avenue

05 – 12
July

FESTIVAL WEEK

Various locations throughout Princes Risborough

12
July

SUMMER FESTIVAL

High Street, Princes Risborough

20
August

PLAY DAY

Wades Park, Stratton Road

13
September

FARMERS MARKET

King George V Park, Wellington Avenue

25
October

HALLOWEEN TRAIL

High Street, Princes Risborough

09
November

REMEMBRANCE SUNDAY

High Street and St Mary's Church

29
November

CHRISTMAS LIGHTS SWITCH ON

High Street, Princes Risborough

[f @RisboroughTownCouncil](https://www.facebook.com/RisboroughTownCouncil)

[X @PrincesRis](https://twitter.com/PrincesRis)

[@PrincesRisboroughTC](https://www.instagram.com/PrincesRisboroughTC)

www.princesrisboroughtowncouncil.gov.uk

WE ARE HIRING



WADES CENTRE CARETAKER

FLEXIBLE SHIFT PATTERN (INVOLVING EVENING AND WEEKEND WORKING) 15 HOURS ON AVERAGE A WEEK, SATURDAY - WEDNESDAY.

Find out more about this role and download an application form from our 'Current Vacancies' Webpage or scan the QR Code to the right →



This QR Code will take you to the Current Vacancies page of our website.

Contact Us!

Mayor & Chairman: Cllr Neil Rawsthorne

Deputy Chairman: Cllr Josephine Biss

Chairman of Finance Cttee: Cllr Sue Coombs

Cllr Alan Frost

Cllr Andrew Shipley

Cllr Alan Turner

Cllr Gary Hall

Cllr Ian Parkinson

Cllr Surinder Marshall

Cllr Andrew Cross

Cllr Andy Ball

Cllr Cheryl Morgan

Clerk to the Council: Mrs. Susanne Barter

Deputy Clerk: Mrs. Kirsty Pope

Administration Officer: Jayne Mylchreest

Bookings Officer: Tania Campbell

Events and Community Manager: Stephanie Boyle

Admin Support Officer: Cate Holloway

Maintenance Team Operatives:

Steve Moulder, Dylan Griffiths

OFFICE HOURS

Monday – Friday 9.30am – 3.30pm

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W: www.princesrisboroughtowncouncil.gov.uk

Twitter: @Princesris **Instagram:** princesrisboroughtc

Facebook: princesris

The full Town Council meets at 7.00 pm, monthly on the last Tuesday of the month. There is a 10-minute slot at the beginning of each meeting when the public can express a view or concern relating to town matters. The next meetings are:

February 25th 2025

March 11th 2025 – Annual Town Meeting – all residents welcome!

March 25th 2025

The Town Council aims to be as accessible as possible and welcomes the views, comments and concerns of the Princes Risborough electorate. Although the views of the whole Council are given wherever possible, for constitutional and legal reasons we must state that the views expressed herein Crosstalk, and in any personal correspondence received from individual Councillors, are those of the author concerned and do not necessarily express the opinions or policy of PRTC unless explicitly stated.