



Town Council created in 2003 – eighth full year 2010/11. Third term elections held on 05 May 2011. Originally 16 members serving 6 wards. Following electoral review of Sedgemoor conducted in 2010 now 16 members serving 7 wards – Dunwear, Eastover, Fairfax, Hamp, Victoria, Westover & Wyndham. Political affiliations = 14 Labour, 2 Conservative) separate Ward Councillor list available. 4 members of BTC only, 11 members of BTC & SDC, and 1 member of BTC, SDC & SCC.

Cllr Pat Parker, current Mayor elected May 2011, with Cllr Graham Granter Deputy Mayor. Previous Mayor 2010/11 Cllr Bill Monteith completed term of office on 13 May 2011 having succeeded Cllr Ken Richards. Mace Bearer – Chris Hocking and Mayor's Cadet – Lance Corp. Matthew Dyte (Army cadets). Mayor's Chaplain – Rev. Charles Chadwick. Mayor's charity for 2011/12 - Bridgwater Cultural Olympiad.

Progressive increase in role and impact on service provision, particularly during past 4 years, and even more as we move into this new financial year 2011/12.

Transfer of allotment land from Sedgemoor District Council automatic, land registration virtually completed on all 10 allotment sites, including Bristol Road sites 1 & 2, although use relinquished on B Rd 2. BR 1 site due for re-location at Bristol Road as part of comprehensive development of former Cattle Market and adjoining lands. Long outstanding issue in relation to former Chilton 2 site settled now part of the Building Schools for the Future (BSF) project for Chilton School replacement including development of 25m swimming pool complex. All in-use allotments administered by Bridgwater Allotment Tenants Association under terms of continuing agreement to 2013. New allotments created at the Kidsbury Road site providing additional 42 plots.

Bristol Road 2 allotment surrendered by BATA 5 years ago, and part now leased long-term to Bridgwater Guy Fawkes Carnival Committee who have erected new HQ shed and shed for Marketeers Carnival Club.

Town Hall - BTC took over control and management of the Town Hall and Island site excluding the Engine Room w.e.f. 01 April 2011. This includes BTC accommodation with Mayor's Parlour, vacant offices and buildings to the rear, Carnival Centre and commercial units as well as Town Hall and Charter Hall and all associated facilities. Legal work for transfer of freehold being completed. This achieves BTC stated objective of ensuring Town Hall and associated facilities remain as community resource for the people of Bridgwater in this strategic and prominent High Street location. BTC continue working closely with partner organisations, including cultural and local user groups with prospect of transfer of Town Hall Theatre and associated facilities to trust for management and operation. Intention to work up proposals for refurbishment of interior of main Hall and facilities and Charter Hall and attempt to re-establish some office use - or alternative – in other parts of estate.

Trinity Hall – transferred to BTC w.e.f. 01 April 2010 on 125 year lease to retain for community use. Bookings now made through BTC office. In past, BTC contributed to running costs in for 3 previous years.

Land adjacent to 13 Friarn Avenue transferred to BTC for a peppercorn – location for Civic Society blue plaque (Franciscan Friary) and community garden. New bow top fencing erected.

Bus shelters now responsibility of BTC with new replacement shelter provided in association with Ad-shel at Westonzoyland Road, and several new shelters planned – several existing to be refurbished as resources permit. Regular cleaning and maintenance programme.

Contribution to running costs of toilets at Taunton Road to ensure continued availability, and to CCTV at Blake Gardens to protect refurbished toilets provided by SDC. Contribution to Street Cleaning in 2010/11 at £20k+. Further contributions from facility support budget substantially increased in 2011/12 for street cleaning, dog bins and toilets @ Penel Orlieu and Blake Gardens.

In furtherance of contribution to THI (£100,000.00) largely expended on Cornhill refurbishment BTC continue to build fund to assist Bridgwater Heritage Regeneration Partnership activities – latest project proposed to provide walkway along Durleigh Brook between Museum and St Mary Street.

Earmarked funds also set aside for Street Lighting, main Skatepark (held at 320k), Elections, Community Centres, Xmas Lights (now BTC responsibility entirely) and Civic Enhancement. Grant programme both general and ward based extended to 7 wards together with sponsorship of pre-Carnival fireworks, Blake Gardens Band Concerts, annual Town Guide, new Town Trails booklet and Canal Guide and Chamber of Commerce and cultural groups and main sporting clubs on a rota basis and specific support for Arts Centre, Sydenham Community Centre, ReCreation, Victoria Centre, Hamp Community Association, Home Start and CAB etc. Successful bid to Awards for All for project with Somerset Children's University and Engine Room and local schools 'Fun with Film' – award of £9319.00 – project completed in 2009/10.

Completion of cleaning of both Admiral Blake Statue and 'The Angel' of Bridgwater jointly funded by SDC and BTC in 2009 - example of Councils working together.

Cemeteries (Quantock Road and Bristol Road) transferred to BTC in April 2008 and managed and operated via a Service Level Agreement by SDC. Renewed for further 3 years to 2014. Cemetery costs met from BTC precept and budget rather than Special Expenses. Fencing replacement carried out at Quantock Road and planting and border treatment and new seats planned at Bristol Road. Arrangements working satisfactorily on all counts. BTC extend their appreciation to all staff for recognised improvement of maintenance of cemetery grounds.

Funding support provided to Blake Museum in 2008/9 to ensure continued operation. Agreement reached with effect from 1 April 2009 for transfer of freehold of buildings being Museum and Old Mill to BTC with intention to be run and operated on volunteer basis by the Friends of Blake Museum. Long term intention to transfer operation to Museum Trust and separate Trust for the Old Mill. Superb commitment already by Friends, assisted by Dr Peter Cattermole as Honorary Museum Curator and Deputy Curators to reinvigorate the Museum. BTC extend appreciation to all involved for help in the transfer which included transitional funding from SDC for 4 years initially (£40k 2009/10 and £25k for each of next 3 years) and for re-ordering and refurbishment successfully undertaken. Main roof repairs undertaken. Accreditation under MLA scheme ratified. Visitor numbers increasing.

BTC major partner in Bridgwater Retail Initiative (BRI) with series of innovative measures and successful bid for £10k from Magnox community fund on behalf of partnership.

Policing in Bridgwater – close co-operation maintained, with Inspector Shane Carey and Beat Officers and PCSOs particularly in town centre.

BTC member representation on some 20 plus organisations and groups, including Partnership Board of Bridgwater Challenge.

Detailed comments offered on EDF, National Grid and North East Bridgwater proposals, as well as consultee with opportunity for input on all planning applications. Discussions and negotiations continue on regular basis with EDF, in particular membership of Transport Forum given vital importance of highway issues to town – continuing to press for bypass – and Community Forum. Throughout pursuing all other aspects which impact on the town.

Bridgwater Town Council web-sites active - [www.bridgwatertowncouncil.gov.uk](http://www.bridgwatertowncouncil.gov.uk) and [www.bridgwatersomerset.info](http://www.bridgwatersomerset.info).

The Bridgwater Cup 2010 presented to Bryan Gillard. Christmas Shop window display presented by Mayor and Mayoress to Hooks of Eastover.

Model Publication Scheme revised with effect from 1 January 2009 and new Model Standing Orders and Financial Regulations adopted in May 2011.

Precept (with Special Expense recovery from previous years completed) marginal increase for 2011/12 @ £514,640 = £49.79. per Band 'D'.

#### **KEY ISSUES CONTINUING AND COMING UP:**

Operation of Town Hall and Island site (excluding Engine Room) – following external works and planning for interior refurbishment and active uses of vacant parts of the estate.

Establishment of trust for community and cultural parts

Bridgwater Challenge – Northgate (inc. Tesco plans) and Eastover regeneration

North East Bridgwater inc. Innovia and Little Sydenham Farm and Morrisons Depot

Cattlemarket and land at Bristol Road – re-development of brown field site and residential allocations.

Gerber and Federal Mogul sites re-development

Building Schools for the Future – 4 new Secondary Schools inc. 2 Special Schools

- 2 under construction at Chilton Trinity & Robert Blake. Planning applications processed for East Bridgwater and new Haygrove at Queenswood Farm.

Town Centre pressures and measures to 'improve' dereliction of run-down properties/sites

Closure of Magistrates Courthouse

New Community Hospital

Avon & Somerset Constabulary move to Express Park

St John Ambulance HQ and training room – now open

YMCA – new build - now open

Future of Bridgwater Arts Centre

Bridgwater College – continuing expansion – Nuclear Academy in use and new theatre still planned

Long term future of Blake Museum, Old Mill and trusts

Long term future of ReCreation Centre and Victoria Centre

Eastover Community & Sports Trust & Sydenham Community Centre Trust created

Skatepark/BMX proposed at The Leggar and two micro-parks built and well used at Victoria Park and Cranleigh Gardens

Opposition to loss of any part of Barclay Street car park

Long term future of B&ARFC at Bath Road

Nuclear new build at Hinkley Point 'C' for EDF and associated development and community mitigation and benefits short and long term

National Grid connection routes and 400kv sub-station

Future development ROF site at Puriton

Parrett Barrage & Sluice

Major road plans for Colley lane Southern access and A38/A39 link at NE Bridgwater

Alan Hurford  
Town Clerk

25 May 2011  
BTC resume.doc