



**Wimborne Minster
Town Council
Draft Strategic Plan
Consultation
January 2024**

Contents

Foreword by the Town Mayor	page 2
Wimborne Minster	page 3
Wimborne Minster Town Council	page 4/5
Vision statement	page 6
Priorities	
Support a thriving and independent town	page 6
Tackle climate change and improve our natural habitat	page 7
Deliver inclusive access to services and facilities	page 8
Build on community engagement	page 9
Promote local democracy	page 9
Effective governance and value for money	page 10
Prioritise and deliver projects	page 11
How we will deliver our plan	page 12
Contact information	page 12

Front cover image courtesy of Flickr and Jack Pease Photography, 2017

Foreword

A strategic plan is one of the most important documents any organisation can produce. It sets out an organisation's values and priorities and gives direction to all involved in delivering its work.

We have identified seven strategic priorities to deliver between now and 2029, as detailed above.

This consultation aims to help us identify and understand whether these priorities are in line with those of our community so we can ensure that delivering on those priorities forms the core of our work.

Once the consultation responses to our draft plan have been reviewed and agreed upon, we will formally adopt our plan in April 2024. Please let us know what

Dain March you think by **25 March 2024**.

Councillor Diann March, 23 January 2024



Wimborne Minster

A history of the town

Nestled in the heart of East Dorset on the banks of the rivers Allen and Stour, the town was founded in the Saxon period and is believed to have developed along a historic Roman route between Christchurch harbour and Badbury Rings. The town is home to some of the best collections of historic buildings from the 16th to 18th centuries in Dorset, including the town's centrepiece, the Minster Church of St. Cuthburga (the Minster), Deans Court (formerly a Saxon monastery and ancient house from the Tudor period with a Georgian facade) and the Priest's House Museum.

The town today

Full of independent shops, old inns, and cafes, the town also boasts independent venues including the Tivoli Theatre, the Museum of East Dorset, the Allendale Community Centre and Wimborne Model Town Gardens. The town also hosts an amazing range of events throughout the year, including music, arts, farmers' markets and a winter carnival.

With a rich culture and heritage, the town is currently undergoing its greatest expansion in 50 years. While the demographic profile of



Wimborne Minster is typical of Dorset, property prices are higher than the national average. With Grade I listed bridges and Grade II listed buildings, the town faces challenges in terms of accessibility and increasing pressure on the existing infrastructure. We also recognise the challenges associated with climate change.

Image courtesy of Chris Downer

Wimborne Minster Town Council



The Town Council in May 2023 with the Town Mayor's Serjeant Chris Brown

The Town Council was established in 1974 as a successor to Wimborne Urban District Council and is the first tier of government, followed by Dorset Council and Parliament. As a statutory body, our legal powers come from various government acts and regulations. Our role is to serve and represent our electorate by improving community well-being and delivering services to meet local needs.

We provide the following facilities and services in Wimborne Minster:

- allotments at Parmiter Drive
- Redcotts Recreation Ground
- Leigh Park open spaces, toddler and older children's play areas
- the Town Hall (including room and wedding hire)
- Wimborne Cemetery and allotments in partnership with Colehill Parish Council and Pamphill and Shapwick Parish Council
- support for local services, including the Community Bus 88 Service, Citizens Advice and other local organisations via our Community Grant Scheme
- street furniture (including bus shelters and noticeboards)
- CCTV

We work in partnership with local organisations and partners, including Dorset Council, Wimborne Business Improvement District and our neighbouring town and parish councils, to make Wimborne Minster a better place to live, visit and work.

Services delivered by Dorset Council include healthcare, highways, parking, education, household waste collections, planning and licensing, environmental health, libraries, open spaces, and council tax/business rate collection. The Town Council seeks to work with Dorset Council and other regional/national organisations to influence service delivery and act as a consultee (especially on planning applications in Wimborne Minster) by providing recommendations that benefit the town.

Our budget for 1 April 2024 to 31 March 2025 is £683,183 with an income of £98,590 and the balance funded through the precept (an annual amount that we instruct Dorset Council to collect as part of the overall Council Tax and is often expressed in terms of the amount Band D households will pay annually).



Recent Town Council projects include the completion of the Queen's Tree Trail, in commemoration of Queen Elizabeth II (for more information visit www.wimbornehistorytrail.uk/treetrail).

The Town Council meets once a month (excluding August) and has five standing committees. Our meetings are open to members of the public where you can ask questions on any items relevant to the agenda for that meeting. The Town Council has 14 elected councillors and the next elections are on 2 May 2024 when the number of councillors will increase to 16. During May each year councillors elect a Chairman who also has the civic role of Town Mayor and First Citizen of Wimborne Minster and undertakes their own charitable fundraising. Our unique relationship with Wimborne Militia is cemented every year in May when the Town Mayor commissions the Militia to protect the Town Mayor and town from disorder and rebellion. The Town Council has 10 members of staff, led by the Town Clerk, who are responsible for the administration and delivery of Town Council's services and facilities.

Our vision is to support a connected, diverse and inclusive community through collaboration and transparent decision-making processes that respect the heritage of the town, improve the quality of life for our residents and the resilience of our community

Our priorities for 2024 to 2029

To support a thriving and independent town for residents and visitors by implementing the following objectives

TC/01/01 Advocate for suitable housing stock that provides opportunities for younger and older families to live in the town.

TC/01/02 Support sustainable development in the town in line with Dorset Council's policies and plans.

TC/01/03 Work with partners to develop a town centre plan that addresses accessibility, pedestrian movement, parking and incorporates more sustainable transport options to ensure the town remains an attractive place for independent businesses to operate and encourages footfall.

TC/01/04 Address residents' concerns around infrastructure as the size of the town's population increases, and lobby Dorset Council to tackle these issues with practical solutions.

TC/01/05 Support the provision of street furniture with our partners to retain the town centre's street scene in line with heritage design and conservation status.

TC/01/06 Encourage and promote volunteer involvement to bring the community of Wimborne Minster together and enhance the attractiveness of the town.

TC/01/07 Support tourism within the town through enhanced service delivery and collaborative partnership efforts.

TC/01/08 Work with partners to improve accessibility in the town.

TC/01/09 Work with partners to manage green space, footpaths, and rights of ways.

To continue to address climate change and improve our natural habitat by implementing the following objectives

TC/02/01 Review the work of our Climate Action Working Group, implement and monitor agreed actions within budget and timescales.

TC/02/02 Review the carbon audit of our assets and services and implement recommendations within budget.

TC/02/03 Ensure the ethos of positive action to tackle climate change and biodiversity loss is reflected within our governance, our responses to consultations, and our delivery of services and facilities.

TC/02/04 Protect and restore our natural habitat by implementing management and maintenance plans for our land and green spaces, thereby supporting the recovery of nature.

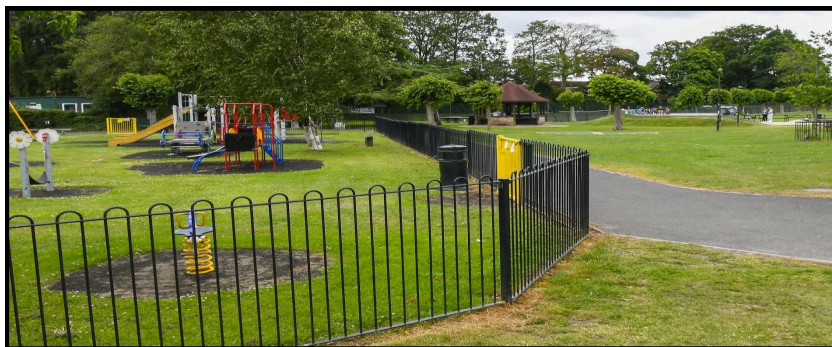
TC/02/05 Encourage the planting and maintenance of trees as part of an integral approach to our natural infrastructure.

TC/02/06 Collaborate with others, including community groups, to support and implement sustainable and climate-friendly practical information and actions for our residents.

TC/02/07 Work with partners to develop and implement risk management and infrastructure plans, enhancing the town and our residents' resilience to climate-induced extreme weather events.



Members of Wilding Wimborne receiving the Bee Friendly Town award from the Bee Friendly Trust. Wimborne Minster was one of six towns awarded Bee Friendly status in 2022. Image courtesy of DorsetBizNews, 21 July 2022.



Redcotts Recreation Ground

To deliver inclusive access to services and facilities that enable all our residents to live happy, healthy and safe lives, and increase resilience within the community by implementing the following objectives

TC/03/01 Address antisocial behaviour by supporting the continued provision of CCTV in the town in partnership with Wimborne Business Improvement District and police, and support speed initiatives.

TC/03/02 Promote the access and use of recreation, sport and leisure facilities, green/open spaces, and allotments for the health and wellbeing of our residents.

TC/03/03 Deliver the best use of assets that are inclusive, accessible, and provide value for money.



On 10 September 2022 the Town Mayor, Cllr Carol Butter, opened Wimborne Community Garden next to Redcotts Recreation Ground and the Town Council subsequently supported a grant to install an irrigation system in the Garden. On 29 September 2023 the Garden won gold in the “Our Community 2023” category at the regional South and South East In Bloom Competition. Image courtesy of Wimborne Community Garden.

To build strong and inclusive community engagement by supporting events that promote and enhance the heritage of the town by implementing the following objectives

TC/04/01 Deliver events with partners that are inclusive, diverse and bring the community of Wimborne Minster together.

TC/04/02 Produce and distribute an annual report to publicise our work.

TC/04/03 Explore the delivery of a newsletter (both hard copy and electronic) that promotes our work, our partners' work for the town, and provides signposting information and news.

TC/04/04 Support the work of local organisations via our Community Grant Scheme.

To promote local democracy and a sense of community ownership to attract councillors who have a passion for our town by implementing the following objectives

TC/05/01 Secure involvement of organisations at the Annual Parishioners Meeting that have contributed to our work or benefited from an award or our Community Grant Scheme.

TC/05/02 Undertake activities that promote and value the role of councillors, especially during elections or co-option vacancies.

TC/05/03 Ensure we are represented through the appointment of our councillors onto other local organisations.

TC/05/04 Deliver hybrid/streamed meetings.

TC/05/05 Support councillors via inductions, training and mentoring.



The first meeting of Wimborne Minster School Council on 21 November 2023.

To have effective and transparent governance procedures that enhance our professionalism and provide our residents with value for money by implementing the following objectives

TC/06/01 Retain our General Power of Competence (this allows us to do anything an individual can do, provided it is not prohibited by other legislation) by ensuring two-thirds of our councillors are elected, our Town Clerk is appropriately qualified and we continue to fulfil our statutory duties and responsibilities.

TC/06/02 Implement policies that value and support our employees, councillors and volunteers.

TC/06/03 Develop a five-year forward budget plan that supports current/planned delivery of services and facilities, and regularly review our current budget against operational performance.

TC/06/04 Maintain our reserves at an appropriate level and acknowledge any spending from our reserves will reduce our capacity to mitigate risk and build resilience against unknown events.

TC/06/05 Explore service level agreements and sponsorship opportunities that offer residents value for money.

TC/06/06 Consult with residents and partners to ensure any new events, services, or facilities are supported.

TC/06/07 Support initiatives run by local organisations that help our community and contribute to the delivery of local services through our Community Grant Scheme (subject to budget constraints).

TC/06/08 Manage all procurement, contract, or tender processes in line with statutory guidance and, where possible, support the local economy.

TC/06/09 Secure recognition under the Local Council Award Scheme that reflects high standards of governance, transparency, community engagement and accountability.



Armed Forces Covenant signing on 12 November 2023. The Covenant is a promise from the Town Council to treat fairly those who serve or have served in the armed forces and their families. Image courtesy of Marilyn Barber, Dorset View.

To prioritise and deliver projects within agreed budgets and timescales by implementing the following objectives



Wimborne in Bloom volunteers, image courtesy of Anthony Oliver.

TC/07/01 Work with Dorset Council on any agreed asset transfers.

TC/07/02 Implement Redcotts Recreation Ground Working Group recommendations following consultation with the community.

TC/07/03 Address planning and infrastructure concerns identified by councillors and residents through our Planning and Environment Committee.

TC/07/04 Review supporting youth services provision.

TC/07/05 Review our outstanding projects, including supplying maps, information boards and a town centre market.

TC/07/06 Research the viability of a community lottery scheme.

TC/07/07 Implement a plan for the use of our Community Infrastructure Levy monies (a development tax payable by developers to Dorset Council, of which 15% is allocated to the Town Council and must be spent on infrastructure) in accordance with our Strategic Plan and five-year forward budget plan.

TC/07/08 Consult with residents to determine the level of support for a Neighbourhood Plan that will enhance the town's commercial viability, heritage and infrastructure. If not supported, establish an alternative means of influencing and directing planning issues within the town, including the development of a town centre strategy.

How we will deliver our Strategic Plan

Councillors and employees will receive a briefing, and we will delegate responsibility for implementation and delivery to a relevant committee and appropriate officer via objectives that are specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and time-bound. Committees will deliver objectives, monitor progress, and report back to the Full Council on a quarterly basis. We will monitor, review and publish the progress of the plan on our website and at our Annual Town Council meeting in May and the Annual Parishioners meeting in April.

We will respond to issues and opportunities as they arise, adapting our plan if they contribute to meeting our priorities. The Town Clerk holds operational responsibility for ensuring we deliver this plan, while overall accountability rests with the Full Council. All councillors and staff will be aware of this plan and understand how their work contributes to our priorities.

Contact information

Address: Wimborne Minster Town Council, The Town Hall,
37 West Borough, Wimborne Minster, Dorset, BH21 1LT.

Telephone: 01202 881655. **Email:** office@wimborne.gov.uk.

Website: www.wimborne.gov.uk.

Please respond by 25 March 2024

If you are interested in becoming a councillor please contact us



**MAKE A DIFFERENCE
BECOME A COUNCILLOR**

