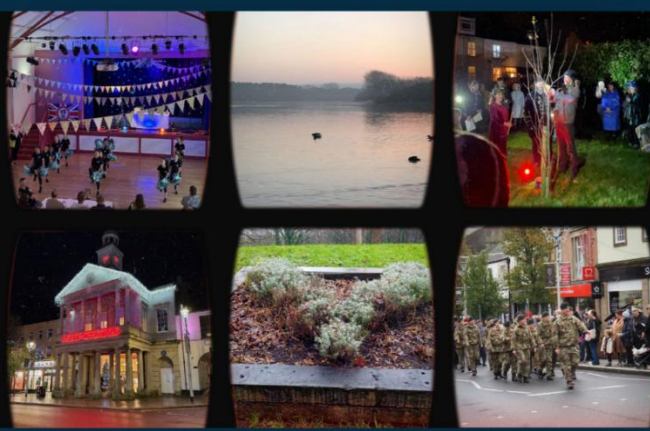


ANNUAL TOWN'S MEETING



- Review the year's achievements
- Hear from community grant recipients
- Presentation of civic awards
- KINDChard preview and progress

MONDAY 27TH APRIL 7:00PM

The Guildhall, Fore St, Chard, TA20 1PP

Chard Town Council 2025/2026 Annual Town Report

Finding Common Purpose

Finding Common Ground



CHARD TOWN COUNCIL

The Guildhall, Fore Street, Chard, Somerset TA20 1PP

01460 239567 www.chard.gov.uk

Mayor: Councillor Victoria Bates - Chief Executive & Town Clerk: David Bell

Contents:

- 1. Mayors Address –**
A Summary of the last Council Year and acknowledgements.
- 2. Chief Executive & Town Clerk Report –**
Turning The Ship Around – Part 1
 - i. The Hive – Youth Provision Service Level Agreement**
 - ii. KINDChard – Public Community Preview & Progress**
- 3. Operations & Amenities – Achievements & Aspirations**
- 4. Events – Achievements & Aspirations**
- 5. Financial Summary**
 - i) Community Grants**
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- 6. Know Your Councillors**
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1. Mayors Address – A Summary of the last Council Year and acknowledgements. (suggested headings/ topics):

Including

- Mayoral Invitations
- Civic Events
- Community Grant Recipients
- Mayor's Charities – raised to date £ £2,381.48

Mayor of Chard, Councillor Victoria Bates





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2. Chief Executive & Town Clerk Report – Turning The Ship Around – Part 1

Last year I promised you:

- *Acknowledgment of the Public Gallery for their questions and expressing thanks for listening to the answers provided, Your questions and participation continue you to be valued.*
- *Confirmation of my style of Leadership being one of providing 'clarity not control', Staff have responded in magnificent fashion and the Guildhall is a brighter, more welcoming place.*
- *An ambitious programme of work for the future that aspires to include:*
 - *The development of Council Strategy*
The Council now has a Strategy, agreed at Full Council. Not perfect yet but, as with all good strategies, it is evolving.
 - *Working with other agencies and organisations to identify needs within Chard.*
More successful in some parts than others. Flood agencies responses to the need for development of strategies and measures has been disappointing. NHS discussions regarding dentistry and primary care have been significant and brought benefits to Chard. We welcomed a new dentist practice in Chard.
 - *Take on non-statutory public facing services*
We are expecting to hear from the Somerset Council Asset Working Group soon about the “devolution” of projects Full Council have suggested.



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- *Improving our council and community relationships*

We have worked with many community groups and continue to do so. There are far more community groups than most people give Chard credit for.

Two examples are; The Hive – Young People’s Centre and KINDChard. Add to this the numerous other projects, celebrations, public events, Guildhall hire events, the new Thursday Market and general facilitating work showing we have improved and built relationships.

The MANTRA “Talk Chard up, not down”!

- i) **The Hive – Youth Provision Service Level Agreement**

Signing the new Service Level Agreement takes youth provision for the Chard community, and especially the younger members of our community, to the next level. It now includes enhanced provision for outreach in our parks and town centre.

- ii) **KINDChard – Public Community Preview & Progress**

This project has been developed using grant funding from SALC and the significant efforts and expertise of community organisations and our staff at Chard Town Council. It is being developed from the Community Plan work and is YOUR community asset. – 19 organisations and growing.



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Operations & Amenities – Achievements & Aspirations

Our Parks

The management and redevelopment of all Chard Town Council Parks, Cemeteries and Open spaces continues to take priority, new redevelopment plans are established now for all our playgrounds working towards a 5-year redevelopment plan.

This includes the planting of new trees and installation of park benches to turn our green open spaces into more family friendly environments. Working closely with our local schools and authorities to combine efforts.

We'd like to thank Fern Garden Tree Care, for their own going support, with special thanks to Scott and Alice who have been brilliant with ideas and suggestions to help develop our parks and open spaces.

We have taken on the responsibility of supporting Somerset Council with the maintenance of all of Chard's footpaths, ensuring that Chard has safe pathways for the community to use.

Our Cemetery

Zembard Lane Cemetery continues to be the jewel in the crown for our open spaces with tourist travelling far and wide to visit Zembard Lane. The opening of the Cemetery area was completed in July 2025.

We are working with and supporting Chard Rotary Club with the new peace garden project that is being completed this summer, this will create a unique area for families to reflect and give new life to the Cemetery area.

The Chard and Ilminster Cycle Path

We continue to work with other authorities and community groups to improve the feel and look of Chard. Chard Town Council cut and maintained our part of the Chard and Ilminster Cycle Path for the last 18 months to allow continued access for the public.



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Great Mead and Holyrood School

We work in collaboration with Holyrood School and the Great Mead project to create and redevelop the Great Mead site to develop and create a natural open space for the public in the centre of the town.

Thank you to all the team at Holyrood for helping develop the Chard Community through the business breakfast and moving Chard forward in many ways.

Chard Allotments

Chard Allotment Committee and Chard Town Council continue to work hand in hand to redevelop and improve the allotments and the facilities for the community to use. Another long-term plan, with a further extension to the lease agreed and signed. Thank you to the Sulley family for their on-going support.



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There's More...

Flooding

Working hand in hand with CARG and its amazing volunteers who are out in all weathers protecting and supporting the Chard community to prevent flooding. Storm Chandra visited the country this winter, with devastating effect, Thanks to those dedicated and committed volunteers Chard suffered no major flooding.

We as a Council continue to work alongside Somerset Council and Somerset River Authority, FWAG (Field, Wildlife, Agriculture Group) CARG, to support the flooding issues in Chard.

Chard Gardening Club

We as a Council are committed to improving the look and feel of our town, Chard Town Council agreed late last year to take on the responsibility of looking after all the flower beds within the town centre that were previously owned and controlled by Somerset Council.

This is a mammoth task and will take time to get right however the help and support generated from Josh Parker and Mike Hodges alongside Chris King from our Amenities Team and help from Chard Gardening Club we have a bright and colourful future.



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Events: Highlights - May 2025 to April 2026

May

10th and 11th – VE Day Reflections and Celebrations. An array of live entertainment while the Beacon was lit, then a continuation of celebrations.

following day with performances at the Guildhall and a Tea Dance in collaboration with the Inner Wheel.

17th - Blackdown Acapella Show

29th May-1st June – Vicar of Dibley stage show

June & July

28th June – Chard Town Crier Competition – Now an annual competition, with 15 Criers from as far flung as Australia!

3rd-5th July – Cloks performances – “The Sound of Music”

12th July – Annual Chard Horticultural Show

WC 21st July – John Lawson Circus

August & September

16th August -VJ Day Reflections and Celebrations at Chard Museum – Held on a very warm day in the community orchard and museum. An array of stalls and artefacts, as well as some light entertainment.

6th September – supported Chard Carnival

February & March

21st February – Chard Community Showcase – Around 30 different groups, services and organisations were present and a great opportunity to learn what is available locally.

21st March – Chard Together – The annual multicultural event, showcasing many different communities integral to Chard. An amazing spectacle for the eyes and ears, and a great range of foods from around the world.

October & November

11th October – Supported Chard Carnival

31st October – Halloween event organised by Chard Town Team

9th November – Remembrance Sunday Parade

22nd November – Christmas Lights Switch On

28th November – Numatics Charity Dinner Dance

29th November – Blackdown Acapella Christmas Craft Fair

December & January

3rd and 5th December – The Mayor’s Christmas Shows

6th December – Belly Dance Winter Hafla

18th January – Chard Wassail led by Chard Town Crier at Chard Museum and **community orchard**

19th April -St. George’s Parade – **The annual dragon** parade always brings a splash of colour and sense of pride in the town, this year we had glorious spring weather, with the Town Crier the ‘Shakespear Shout’ completing the festivities.



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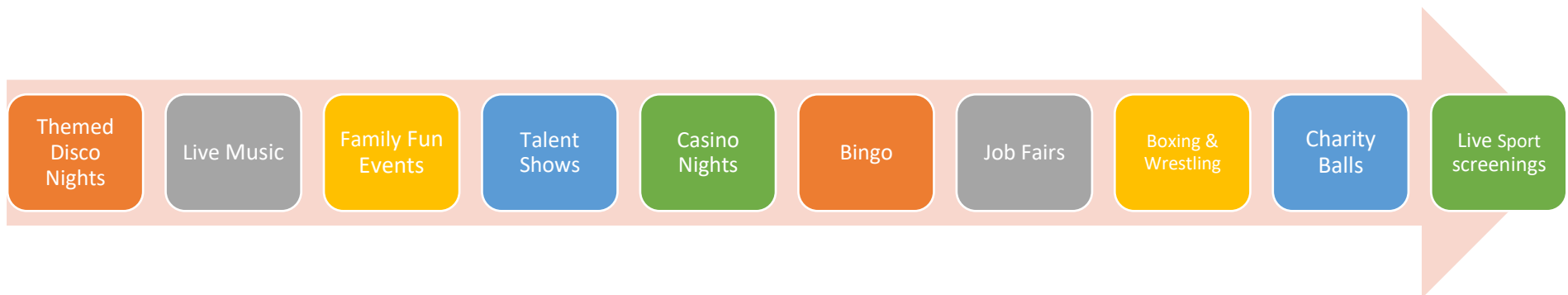
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Comin Up

In this forthcoming year the Guildhall will be further developing as a conference and events venue. As well as expanding in other areas, such as our weekly markets, with the indoor Thursday market moving to its pre-covid location of the auditorium, there are plans in place to see far greater use of the building by the community and a selection of what to expect includes:



The increase in traders has prompted an increase in footfall and efforts are also focussed on the Saturday market. When Saturday is thriving once again, longer term we'd like a Tuesday market also, thereby seeing all three days under the market charter up and running.

Acknowledgements and Thanks

Many events especially the larger, more notable celebrations are thanks to the collaboration with other organisations. Other events the Town Council has supported financially and/or with the support of our staff and equipment.



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c) Financial Summary

The budget was set in January and resulted in a small increase to the precept of 0.20% for 2026/27.

- **Tax Base**-The number of chargeable properties has increased slightly from 4,660 to 4,752 — a rise of 1.96%.
- **Precept (Total Parish Budget Requirement)** -The total amount to be raised has increased marginally from £1,185,000 to £1,187,378 - an increase of just 0.20% (£2,378).
- **Band D Precept** - The charge for an average Band D property has decreased slightly from £254.27 to £249.87 — a reduction of £4.40 (-1.73%).

Overall, this reflects a stable budget, with the small increase in the tax base allowing for a slight reduction in the average household charge.

	2025/26	2026/27	Difference	Difference %
Tax Base	4,660.44	4,751.94	91.50	1.96%
Precept	£1,185,000.00	1,187,378.00	2,378.00	0.20%
Band D Precept	254.27	249.87	(4.40)	-1.73%

Agreed Council Reserves - Dedicated Project Areas:

Sports & Changing Facilities	Play Equipment	Civic Regalia	Guildhall Sinking Fund	Cemetery Sinking Fund	MUGA	Play Areas
£100,000	£100,000	£25,000	£100,000	£75,000	£50,000	£100,000



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i) Community Grant recipients for this last Council year were:

Organisation	Grant Awarded
Chard Museum	£1,000
Blackdown Acapella	£660
Chard Churches Together	£750
Chard Carnival Committee	£1,000
Trident Swimming Club	£400
Citizen Advice Somerset	£1,000
Chard Cricket Club	£1,000

ii) Core Grant recipients for this last year were:

Organisation	Grant Awarded
Chard Carnival	£1,000
Town Team	£1,000



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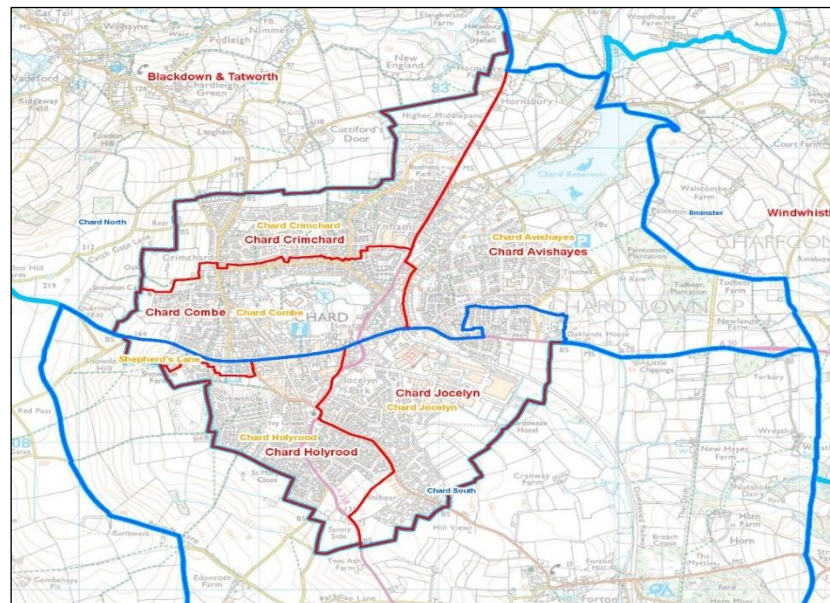
Know your Councillors - Ward Boundary Map

Chard Town Council has 15 Councillors representing six wards of Chard. The map below includes the boundaries of each ward:

All Councillor E-mails are available on the Chard Town Council website and available on request.

Councillors & Wards

Avishayes	Combe	Crimchard	Holyrood	Jocelyn	Shepherd's Lane
Victoria Bates Banah Crook Andy Kenton	Craig Hussey Jenny Kenton	Tricia O'Brien Claire Richter Zak Williams	Jason Baker Shakil Hassan Garry Shortland	David Bulmer Tim Eggins Harry Tribble	Natasha Watson





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Get In Touch

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Telephone: 01460 239567

Email: chardtowncouncil@chard.gov.uk

Visit: The Guildhall, Fore Street, Chard, Somerset TA20 1PP

Our current opening times are:

Monday	9.30am to 4.00pm
Tuesday	9.30am to 4.00pm
Wednesday	9.30am to 4.00pm
Thursday	9.30am-4.00pm
Friday	9.00am -3.00pm

Your Guildhall: Bookings & Events
[Chard Guildhall](#)

Talk Chard up, not down

