

Update

WEST BEDLINGTON TOWN COUNCIL'S NEWSLETTER

FREE
Please take a copy

IN THIS ISSUE:

Fabulous community events

Remembrance, Halloween and Christmas events for everyone to enjoy.

Neighbourhood Plan consultation

We are now welcoming comments about our draft Neighbourhood Plan.

Competition winners announced

Best of Bedlington, photography and gardening competition winners.

AUTUMN/WINTER 2025



**WEST BEDLINGTON
TOWN COUNCIL**

Hello and welcome



It's the season for pumpkin-spiced lattes, cosy jumpers and thinking ahead to the festivities. In this autumn/winter issue of Update, you'll find all of the latest news from West Bedlington Town Council, from our draft Neighbourhood Plan consultation to Christmas events and so much more.

The striking front cover image is from the winner of our photography competition, taken by Graeme Ogle. Well done Graeme! You'll find our other competition winners in this issue too, so why not pop the kettle on and see what's been going on and what's planned for the months ahead.

We need your views on our draft Neighbourhood Plan



West Bedlington Town Council has prepared a draft Neighbourhood Plan which has been informed by feedback from residents, community groups and statutory consultees. We need your input again before we formally submit it to Northumberland County Council.

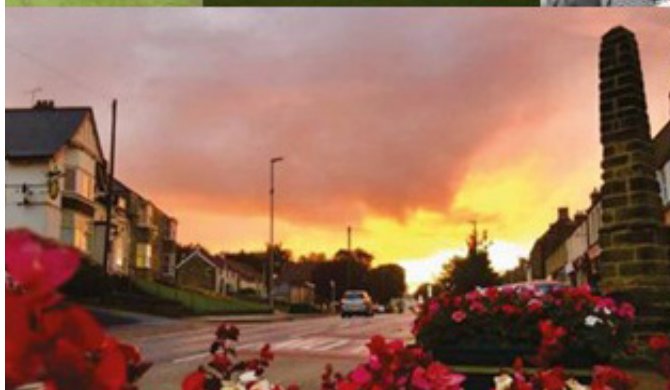
Visit westbedlingtontowncouncil.gov.uk to view the draft plan and supporting documentation.

Please come to our drop-in event

We are hosting a drop-in event on Thursday 16th October 2025 in Bedlington Community Centre, Front Street West, Bedlington, NE22 5TT.

The drop-in event will start at 4pm and end at 8pm.

We would like as many responses as possible, so feel free to pop along to have your say.



Wow, what a summer

We hope you agree, West Bedlington Town Council's summer events were absolutely sensational. And the weather was fantastic too, so it was a win-win all round.

The fun started in June with our super-popular festival on 20 Acres, followed by a cram-packed line-up of events to keep the little ones entertained all summer long. We provided lots of free events in the holidays, including a disco and show, pottery and craft classes, Animal Antics sessions, and day trips to Flamingo Land and Beamish Museum.

Then it was Bedlington's street fair on 23rd August with music and entertainment on two stages, free rides, craft stalls and face painting. We were delighted so many of you came down and enjoyed the day and helped to bring our amazing community together. And finally, to end the

summer on a high, we provided an 'it's a knockout' style event on 30th August with a huge inflatable obstacle course on 20 Acres playing field. It was an afternoon of fun, laughter and, of course, lots of friendly competition.

If you attended any of our events, and you can spare a few minutes to provide feedback, please drop us a message at clerk@westbedlingtontown-council.gov.uk and make sure you're following West Bedlington Town Council Events on Facebook for updates about next year's offering. But until then, here's a selection of pics from West Bedlington Town Council summer's events.



Funding that supports our amazing community

Supporting our community is super important to us at West Bedlington Town Council. Many organisations have benefitted from our Community Chest scheme over the years, and we wanted to share this information with you, so you can see how the funding directly impacts our town and those who live here.

We hope this article raises a little awareness about some of the work we do behind the scenes and shines a light on the not-for-profit organisations who have received funding from us in the financial year 2025/26.

Organisation	Reason for funding	Date granted	Awarded
Wansbeck Community Links	To provide transport for elderly and disabled residents	10.04.2025	£500
Bedlington Salvation Army	Civic reception	10.04.2025	£500
Bedlington Foodbank	To purchase food-bank items	10.04.2025	£500
Toys, Snacks and Chats Playgroup	Weekly running costs	15.05.2025	£480
Ashington & District Male Voice Choir	Outdoor uniforms	12.06.2025	£500
Paramount Boxing Club	Equipment to help set up a new boxing club	12.06.2025	£500
Bedlington Cricket Club	Junior kit	10.07.2025	£500

Paramount Boxing Club

A brand-new boxing club has opened this year at Paramount Health and Fitness Centre in Bedlington for kids aged eight plus, right through to seniors. The funding provided by West Bedlington Town Council has been used to help fund their new boxing ring.

The team is affiliated with England Boxing and they have over 25 years' experience in boxing and coaching. They are a voluntary club with a passion for improving people's fitness levels, boosting mental health, and bringing the community closer together.



Brand new this year, Paramount Boxing Club.



Ashington & District Male Voice Choir performing at Bedlington's Remembrance service.

Male Voice Choir

Ashington & District Male Voice Choir has performed many times in Bedlington over the years, including at our Remembrance service and St Cuthbert's Church. The funding provided by West Bedlington Town Council will be used to help fund uniform for the Choir to keep them warm and dry when performing outdoors. Not only can being part of a choir be a rewarding pastime, but singing has also been proven to have positive health benefits, too.

Visit ashingtonmalevoicechoir.org.uk to find out more.

Bedlington Salvation Army

The Salvation Army in Bedlington is a great support to the local community, offering everything from a foodbank service to lunch for the over 60s, and so much more.

The funding from West Bedlington Town Council was used to host a civic reception in summer 2025 to welcome the Canadian Staff Songsters to Bedlington. The Songsters visited St Cuthbert's for a talk about the history of the church and the town, then after the reception, they performed at The Salvation Army in Bedlington to an audience of over 200 people.

By all accounts, a fantastic day was had by all.



Civic reception at Bedlington Community Centre for the Canadian Staff Songsters.



Thursday Club with link worker, Graham (standing).

Wansbeck Community Links

Wansbeck Community Links is a team of social-prescribing link workers, employed by Cygnus, a local counselling charity.

The team offer general advice and link people into voluntary and community groups and services to

get the practical, emotional and social support needed to help.

The funding provided from West Bedlington Town Council has helped to provide transport for some of the older attendees who have poor mobility, so that they can still get out and socialise.



Bedlington Cricket Club Juniors, Under 11s.

Bedlington Cricket Club Juniors

Bedlington Cricket Club Juniors is a thriving community club, providing cricket opportunities for

children aged five to fifteen, with over fifty juniors currently training and competing in local leagues and festivals.

Our junior programme also includes ECB All Stars and Dynamos sessions, which help introduce younger children to the sport and create a pathway into competitive cricket.

The funding provided from West Bedlington Town Council has been used to purchase new junior match and training shirts, as well as replacing protective equipment for players who do not yet have their own.

The support means that all children can participate safely and proudly represent Bedlington, regardless of family income, helping to promote healthy, active lifestyles and a strong sense of community pride.



Thursday 9.30—11.30am

(term-time only)

Bedlington Community Centre

60 W End Front St, Bedlington NE22 5TT

£2.50 for first child—additional children £1.50 each

(0-9 mths free/ 9-12mths £1.50)

For more information please contact:
Julia Masters : 07759481781



Funded by 

Toys, Snacks and Chats Playgroup

Having a safe, engaging environment for little ones to play while grown-ups can chat is such an important part of the week for many parents, grandparents and carers.

The parent and child playgroup – Toys, Snack and Chats – runs from 9.30am to 11.30am every Thursday in

term time at Bedlington Community Centre, and the funding provided will help with the weekly costs associated with running such a worthwhile group.

To find out more, call Julia Masters on 07759481781.

Bedlington Foodbank

Bedlington Foodbank is a charitable, voluntary-run organisation that supplies emergency food parcels in the community.

The funding from West Bedlington Town Council's Community Chest scheme was used to purchase food-bank items to support the not-for-profit organisation.



Our Community Chest scheme is now closed for the financial year 2025/26, but will reopen again in April 2026. Visit [westbedlingtontowncouncil.gov.uk/community-grants](https://www.westbedlingtontowncouncil.gov.uk/community-grants) to find out more.



Everyone's welcome at our monthly meetings

Everyone's welcome to attend our regular monthly meetings, where councillors get together to make informed decisions about projects and spending, as well as discussing general Town Council business.

It's ok if you're washing your hair that day, but if you're interested in popping along, the meetings usually take place on the second Thursday of the month at 6.30pm in Bedlington Community Centre.

All meetings are subject to change; however, provisional dates for the next six months are as follows: 13th November; 11th December; 8th January; 12th February; 12th March; 9th April.

At the start of each meeting, there's a fifteen-minute open session where the Chair will invite members of the public to ask agenda-related questions directly to West Bedlington Town Council. We're always interested in hearing your views and comments, but once the question-and-answer session ends and the Town Council meeting commences, the public are politely requested just to observe so we can conduct our business, unless specifically requested by the Chair to speak. There is an opportunity to ask questions which are not related to the agenda at the end of the meeting too.

Mobile phones must be switched off during the meeting, and if the meeting is disrupted in any way, the person/people causing the disruption will be

asked to stop, and if they refuse, asked to leave. Written questions received in advance of the meeting are encouraged, but not essential. If provided in advance, it's easier for an answer to be prepared for the meeting.

West Bedlington Town Council can only make decisions on topics that are publicised on the agenda, except items delegated to the Clerk. Agenda items may be suggested via email – clerk@westbedlingtontowncouncil.gov.uk – no later than ten days before each meeting, otherwise the item will be included on a future agenda (if it's a matter that we're responsible for).

You can view meeting agendas and minutes on our website, westbedlingtontowncouncil.gov.uk, and they will also be displayed on the noticeboard in front of Bedlington Community Centre. If you would like our meeting agendas emailed once a month, please get in touch and we'll add you to our mailing list.

We hope to see you at a West Bedlington Town Council meeting or event in the not-too-distant future.

Congratulations to our Best of Bedlington winners

We have so many exceptional people in our community, and this year, for the first time ever, we have created the Best of Bedlington Awards; nominated by residents and celebrating those who go the extra mile. So, in no particular order, here are this year's winners.

Ashleigh Donnelly

The team at Paramount Health and Fitness Centre in Bedlington (incorporating Fitness Freaks) are community-orientated at heart.

Ashleigh and the team collect presents for The Salvation Army Christmas Appeal every year, raise money to support Macmillan Cancer Coffee Morning and other charities, and are raising money to buy a defibrillator to mention just a few of the great things they are doing in the community.

Well done Ashleigh and the team from everyone at West Bedlington Town Council.



Ashleigh and the team at Paramount Health and Fitness Centre.



Derek Ions and his handcrafted walking sticks.

Derek Ions

Derek has raised over £140,000 for the Air Ambulance over many years, making handcrafted shepherds' hook walking sticks at home, selling them at Alnwick Castle and other regional shows, and giving the profit to charity.

Congratulations Derek – this is a truly remarkable achievement.

Our Best of Bedlington Awards celebrate the town's unsung heroes who go above and beyond to make a difference to the lives of others.

Kim Jackson and Julia Ricaton

Kim and Julia do a wonderful job of supporting adults with learning disabilities. Every month, they organise and run a disco for the people they care for, and their carers, which is loved and greatly appreciated by all who attend.

Great work Kim and Julia.



Left to right; Kim and Julia.

John Laws

John is a local lollipop man who's out in every weather with a smile on his face. He makes a special effort to learn all of the kids' names and even most of the parents' names too. He's an asset to the community and helps with the flow of traffic during busy periods.

Well done, John.



John Laws, aka 'John the lollipop man'.



Left to right; Angela, Stephen and Hilarie.

Angela Clark

Angela has worked with local charity, MIND Active for 14 years, dedicating her time to improve the quality of life of hundreds of isolated, frail and lonely older people, unpaid family carers, and older people in residential care and nursing homes, all of whom are made to feel valued. She has contributed to supporting 198,978 beneficiary attendances to more than 27,000 social-inclusion activities; a fantastic achievement. Congratulations Angela.



Prizes and awards were presented at a small celebration event before our Town Council meeting on 11th September at Bedlington Community Centre. Thanks to everyone who nominated someone for a Best of Bedlington Award and well done to the winners.

Switching on the sparkle



Enjoy festive fun for all the family at our Christmas lights switch-on event on 29th November, 2pm to 6pm.

West Bedlington Town Council's Christmas light switch-on event is taking place on Saturday 29th November 2025 in the Market Place, and we'd love you to join us. Just like previous years, there's so much going on all afternoon, including **FREE:**

- Ice skating – no need to book, just turn up
- The Elfie Central where you can post your letter to Santa
- Festive face painting
- Marshmallow station
- Roundabouts and rides for the little ones
- Singing from our local schools
- Live entertainment from Harriet Louise Performing Arts
- DJ Cam Stubbs playing all your festive faves

The Christmas tree lights will be switched on at 5pm and Santa will be arriving at approximately 5.15pm with a little gift for all children on the Nice List. You can also browse a selection of market stalls and grab a bite to eat.

We're looking forward to welcoming the whole community to this joyful event, so why not pop it on the calendar now, and hopefully we'll see you there.

More festive events to enjoy

Once again this December, there will be a Magic of Christmas event for yesterday's youngsters at Bedlington Community Centre, including a festive meal, bingo and a show. And for that lull in between Christmas and new year, we'll be providing a panto for the whole family to enjoy. To book, (once the tickets are available), head over to West Bedlington Town Council Events on Facebook.

From everyone at West Bedlington Town Council, we hope you have the best Christmas ever and enjoy all of the fantastic events we've got planned.



Hubble bubble, toil and trouble

Enjoy a spooktacular night at our family Halloween party on 31st October, 6-9pm.

West Bedlington Town Council is throwing a Halloween bash for the whole family on Friday 31st October 2025, 6-9pm at Bedlington Community Centre. As well as live entertainment, a disco, games and a fancy dress parade, all children will get free chicken nuggets, chips and spooky treats.

Head over to West Bedlington Town Council Events on Facebook where our dedicated events organiser will provide all the information needed to book.

We can't wait to see your costumes and frightfully-good dance moves on the night.



Round-of-a-paws for Ciara



Eight-year-old West Bedlington resident, Ciara Moat, showed Alfie – a gorgeous cairn terrier – at Crufts, and was absolutely delighted he came 1st in the puppy classes.

Crufts is a famous, four-day annual dog show, considered the world's premier dog event, held at the National Exhibition Centre (NEC) in Birmingham. Crufts puppy classes are age-restricted categories where young dogs compete, defined by their age on the first day of the show.

Dogs in these classes are judged against others of



the same breed and gender, and successful participation can lead to qualification for Crufts. At the event, Ciara showed Alfie to the judges; showcasing his conformation and movement as she walked him around the ring.

Ciara's grandma has five cairn terriers and has bred dogs for over 20 years. When the judges placed Alfie first, she said "I felt very proud. My grandma said I did a very good job".

Well done Ciara, from everyone at West Bedlington Town Council.

We're really digging our winners' gardens

We absolutely loved seeing all of your gorgeous gardens this summer, so thank you to everyone who went to the time and effort to apply, and congratulations to our green-fingered residents who won this year's gardening competition.



1st place, Pauline Baker



Joint 2nd place, Gill Glass



Joint 2nd place, Deborah Watson



3rd place, Gary Dixon

Back in July, a team of local gardeners and councillors judged West Bedlington Town Council's 2025 gardening competition entries based on the condition of their plants, variety of colour and interest, special features, and overall visual impact. It was a close one, but Pauline Baker's garden was awarded first place, then in joint second place was Gill Glass and Deborah Watson, and in third place,

was Gary Dixon's garden. We were delighted to award all four winners with their prizes at a small celebration event before our Town Council meeting on 11th September at Bedlington Community Centre.

Well done from everyone at West Bedlington Town Council.

Selection boxes for local primary schools

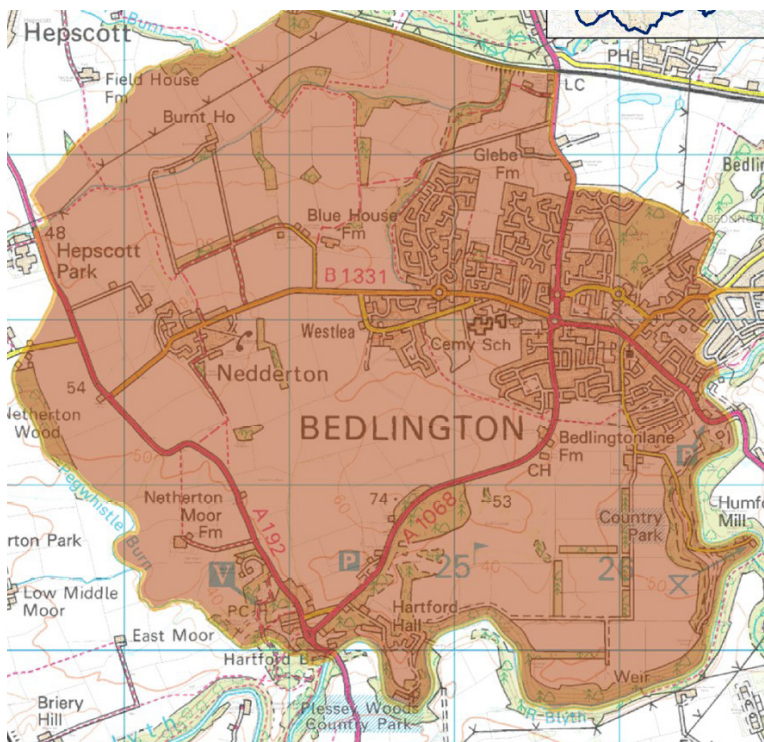


West Bedlington Town Council will be spreading a little festive cheer once again this year by giving out chocolate selection boxes to all pupils at our four fabulous primary schools, and sweet treats for those with allergies.

It's important for us to support local businesses, so we liaised with Morrisons in Bedlington to purchase over 1000 selection boxes which we will deliver to the schools in December.

So, if you know any little angels (or mischievous little elves) that go to St Bede's Catholic Primary School, Meadowdale Primary Academy, West End Primary School or Whitley Memorial C of E Primary School, we hope they enjoy their selection boxes and have a wonderful Christmas when it comes. In the meantime, here are some silly cracker-style jokes that you can share with the kids.

"What did one snowman say to the other?" "Do you smell carrots?" "Where does Santa stay on his holidays?" "In a ho-ho-hotel." "Why are Christmas trees so bad at sewing?" "They keep dropping their needles." "What's an elf's favourite type of music?" "Wrap." "Who's Santa's favourite singer of all time?" "Elf-is Presley." Ok, we'll stop now.



You asked, we listened

West Bedlington Town Council represents two thirds of Bedlington, including the town centre and the villages of Nedderton and Hartford Bridge to the west.

Feedback from our Residents' Panel and Residents' Survey suggested there was a little bit of confusion for some surrounding the boundary line for West Bedlington, so in response to this, we have now added this image alongside a link to an interactive map to our website's homepage.

So, if you ever want to see West Bedlington's boundary line, head on over to our website, westbedlingtontowncouncil.gov.uk, and take a look.

Photography competition winners snap up their prizes



1st place, Graeme Ogle



2nd place, Haly Nomm



3rd place, Anthony Barret

We had a great response to our 2025 photography competition, so thank you to everyone who took the time to enter.

Local professional and amateur photographers judged the photographs based on subject, depth of field, colour, contrast and overall visual impact.

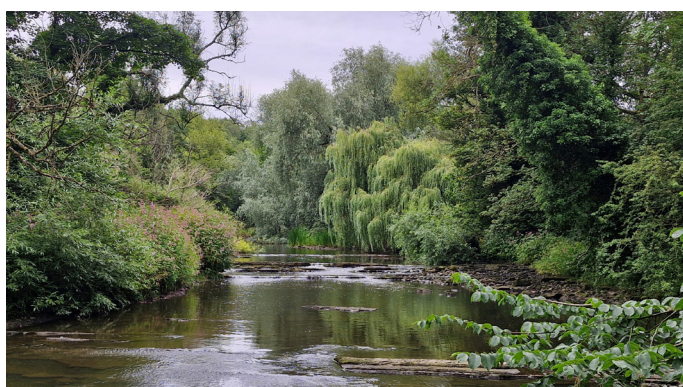
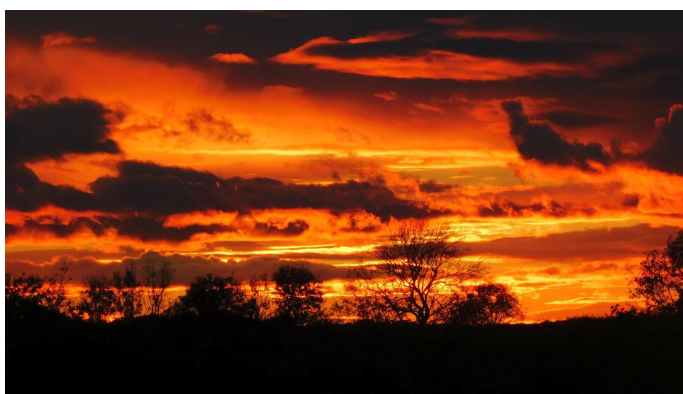
The judges chose Graeme Ogle's image for the first-place prize, which has pride of place on the front cover of this issue of Update. We think this is a fantastic image of Bedlington; well done Graeme from everyone at West Bedlington Town Council.

In second place, was Haly Nomm's image of the front street in all of its floral glory. And in third

place, was Anthony Barret's photo of a shadow on trees (including his little dog Lemmy) taken when they were walking in Bedlington Cemetery.

Prizes were presented at a small celebration event before our Town Council meeting on 11th September at Bedlington Community Centre.

Here are some more eye-catching photos taken by our talented residents who took the time to enter. Thank you so much for sharing them with us.



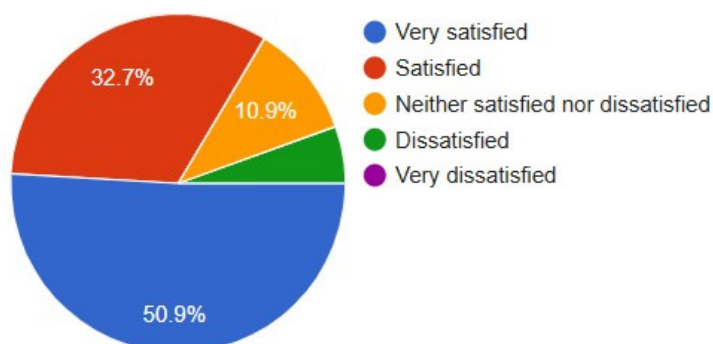
Thanks for your feedback

We believe it's super important to give the good folk of West Bedlington a voice and representation, so we created a Residents' Survey in the summer to find out how you feel about the services we provide. Thank you to everyone who took the time to reply and engage with us, it's really appreciated.

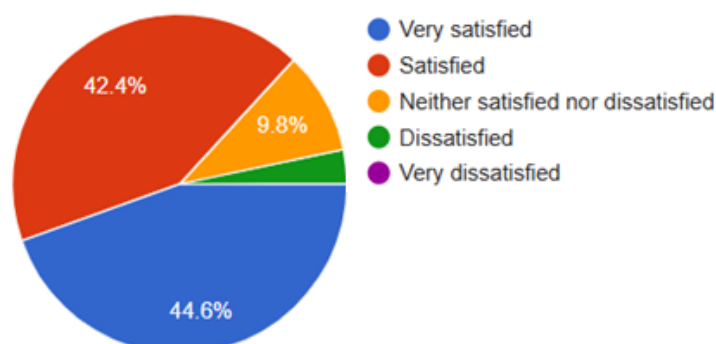
West Bedlington Town Council is responsible for the lower level of local government services such as providing bus shelters, litter bins, play park maintenance, public seating, community events, and so on, not the bigger things such as road works,

parking issues, housing, Council Tax, providing a leisure centre, etc. So, the answers from this survey* are related to the services we provide, not Northumberland County Council.

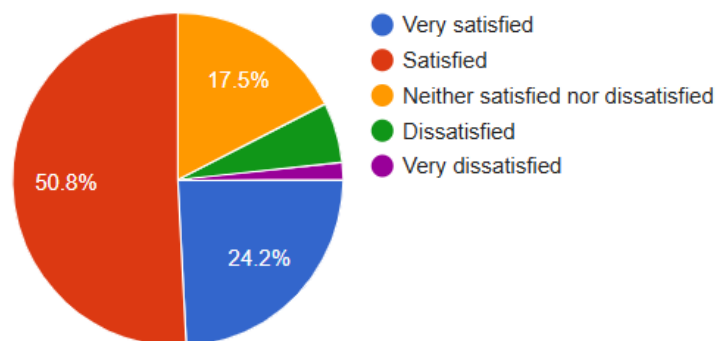
Q. When you contacted West Bedlington Town Council by phone, email or in person, how did you feel about this interaction?



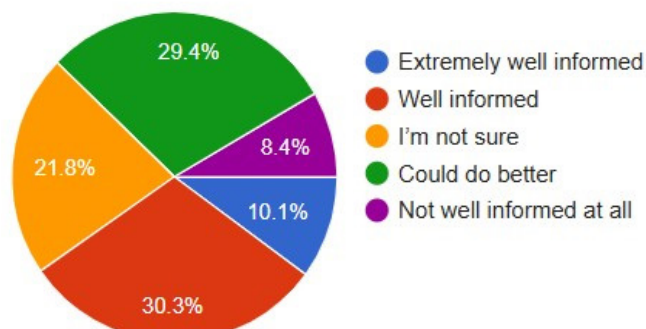
Q. Thinking about the services and events that we provide and that you have used/attended, which of the following five options best sums up your feelings?



Q. West Bedlington Town Council is responsible for the provision of bus shelters, litter bins, public seating and the provision and maintenance of Westlea, 20 Acres and Meadowdale play parks. Please note, the removal and disposal of litter-bin waste is the responsibility of Northumberland County Council. Thinking of these specific areas, how do you feel about the services we provide?

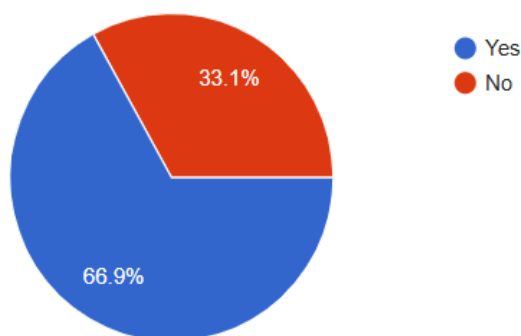


Q. How well informed do you think the Town Council keeps residents about the services, facilities and benefits it provides?

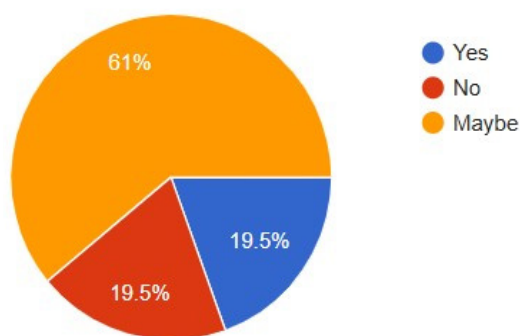


* Survey responses from 122 residents.

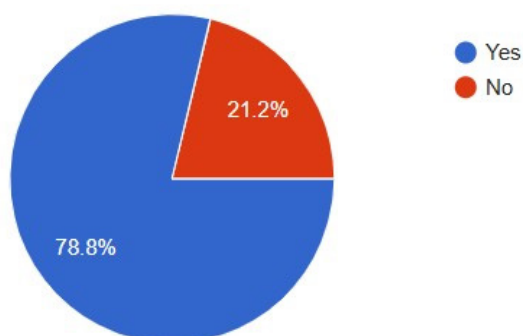
Q. For this question, we are talking about councillors from West Bedlington Town Council, NOT from Northumberland County Council. Do you know how to contact a town councillor, if you needed to?



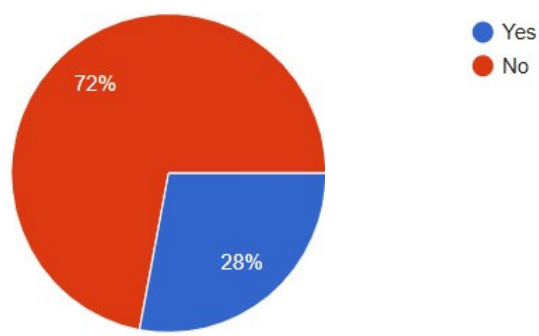
Q. Would a monthly drop-in session be something you'd be interested in, so you could chat to a councillor at a specific time and place?



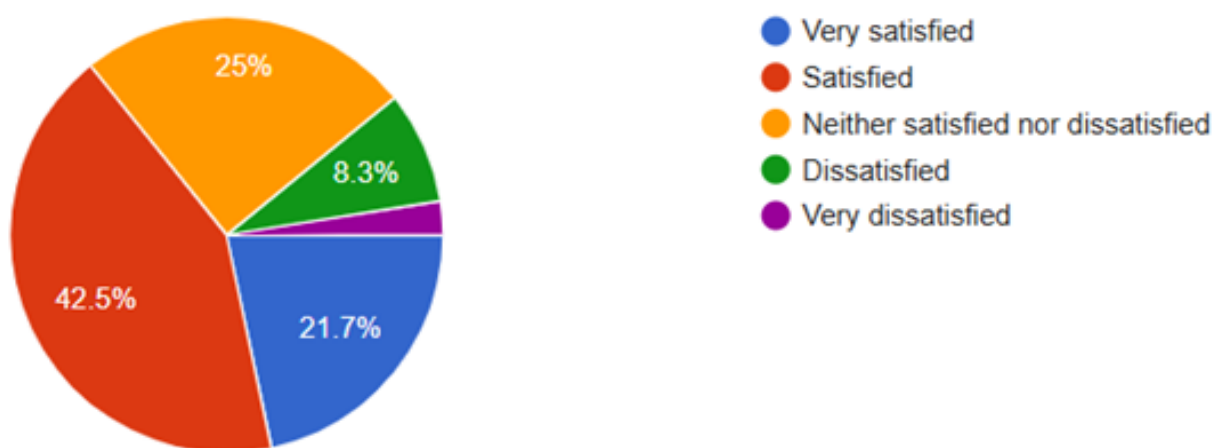
Q. Do you know that you pay for the services provided by West Bedlington Town Council through your Council Tax bill?



Q. Do you know that West Bedlington Town Council's level of Council Tax is one of the lowest in South East Northumberland?



Q. How satisfied are you with West Bedlington Town Council in general?



Your town council, here for you

Here at West Bedlington Town Council, we work hard to safeguard Bedlington's past, present and future to ensure the town continues to be a great place to live, work and visit, whilst preserving Bedlington's rich heritage.

West Bedlington Town Council employs two part-time members of staff to support residents and councillors (we aren't a huge team like Northumberland County Council). We have nine voluntary, unpaid councillors, representing two electoral wards – Bedlington Central and Bedlington West – who help to inform decisions about local services and contribute to the overall wellbeing of our community.

Our services include the provision of:

- Children's play areas (Meadowdale, 20 Acres, Westlea – not Doctor Pit Park)
- Bus shelters
- Litter bins (we provide them, but Northumberland County Council empty them)
- Public seating
- Events for the whole community, including

school-holiday activities, music festival on 20 Acres, Christmas lights switch-on event, Remembrance Sunday, etc

- Community grants
- Grants for primary schools
- Community CCTV
- Community defibrillators
- Planters and flowers on the Front Street (not the bedding plants)
- War memorial and flagpole maintenance
- Christmas tree and lights
- Christmas and Easter gifts for primary schools
- Town gateway features (for example, the train sign at Atlee Park and the Bedlington terrier sign on Hartford Road East)
- Road speed-awareness signs (maintenance only, not their provision)
- Sun dial in the Market Place

All other local council services, for example, housing, refuse collection, Council Tax and housing benefits are the responsibility of Northumberland County Council. You can report all sorts of issues, from fly tipping to street lighting at fix.northumberland.gov.uk or by calling 0345 600 6400.

For everything Town Council related, you can get in touch with us via email or telephone, or feel free to pop in and see us during our office opening hours.

Email: clerk@westbedlingtontowncouncil.gov.uk

Website: westbedlingtontowncouncil.gov.uk

Phone: 01670 457070

Address: West Bedlington Town Council
Bedlington Community Centre
Front Street West
Bedlington
Northumberland
NE22 5TT

Office opening hours:

- Monday 9.30am to 1pm
- Thursday 9.30am to 1pm
- Friday 9.30am to 1pm



**Scan QR code to
visit our website**

westbedlingtontowncouncil.gov.uk

West Bedlington Town Council

Working to safeguard Bedlington's past,
present and future

Meet your councillors



Christine Taylor

Central Ward

christine.taylor@westbedlingtontowncouncil.gov.uk
07591621238



Trevor Austin

Central Ward

Bedlington has been home to my family for over twenty five years. Now I feel it's time to give something back. I want to use the experience I've gained over a lifetime of work to make a meaningful contribution to our community.

trevor.austin@westbedlingtontowncouncil.gov.uk
07767880507



Sian Denny

West Ward

I am really honoured to have been elected on to our Council and will endeavour to do my very best for our great town and its community.

sian.denny@westbedlingtontowncouncil.gov.uk



Catherine Henderson

West Ward

catherine.henderson@westbedlingtontowncouncil.gov.uk



Al Roberts

West Ward

alyn.roberts@westbedlingtontowncouncil.gov.uk
07760818525



Adam Hogg

West Ward

I have lived in Bedlington all my life and have been a Town Councillor since 2013. I have a particular interest in planning and have raised residents' views at public meetings.

adam.hogg@westbedlingtontowncouncil.gov.uk



Brian Denny

Central Ward

As an avid traveller and photographer, I stood as a councillor so I could do the best for the town I know and love, bringing new ideas from my travels.

brian.denny@westbedlingtontowncouncil.gov.uk
07407690897



Dave Chapple

West Ward

After growing up in Bedlington Station and completing a full career in the Army, I chose to make Bedlington my permanent home. I care deeply about our town and want to do my best for its residents.

lawrence.chapple@westbedlingtontowncouncil.gov.uk
07721692020



Victoria Thompson

Central Ward

victoria.thompson@westbedlingtontowncouncil.gov.uk



WEST BEDLINGTON
TOWN COUNCIL

Dates for your diary this winter

Remembrance Sunday: 9th November

Join us for our Remembrance Sunday service and parade on 9th November 2025 to commemorate the sacrifices of members of the armed forces and civilians in times of war. As always, there will be representation from dignitaries, local schools and groups who will lay wreaths to show their respect. The parade will leave from The Salvation Army on Hartford Road West at 2.15pm and the service will start at 2.30pm at the War Memorial on Front Street, Bedlington.

West Bedlington Town Council will provide free refreshments at Bedlington Community Centre before the service, from 1pm, and afterward, too. As well as tea, coffee and juice, there will also be a selection of delicious cakes and bakes available from Nedderton and District Women's Institute.



The Town Council will also host a separate, informal act of Remembrance at 11am on Tuesday 11th November 2025 at the War Memorial specifically for school children and their families.



Community Christmas Carols: 23rd December

Join us in Bedlington Market Place on 23rd December at 6pm for a good old-fashioned sing-along and festive get-together. There will be traditional carols and music from Bedlington's brilliant Salvation Army band and choir. This event is free to attend, and West Bedlington Town Council will be providing complimentary mince pies and non-alcoholic mulled wine and tea/

coffee in Bedlington Community Centre afterwards. Booking is not required – just turn up with your best singing voice and enjoy a real sense of community spirit this Christmas.

Visit westbedlingtontowncouncil.gov.uk for more information.