

Beccles Town Council

Annual Report

2024-2025



Our Mission:

As a vibrant, forward-looking market town, rich in heritage, natural attractions and community spirit, Beccles will develop its strengths and assets sustainably and inclusively to be the best it can be for residents and visitors alike



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<https://becclestowncouncil.gov.uk>



www.facebook.com/becclescouncil

The Mayor's Introduction



Colin Hill

It has been a great honour to serve as your mayor for the last year. I have had the chance to see for myself many aspects of the wide variety of voluntary organisations of all kinds that operate in the town. I have been particularly delighted to attend several events with young people, including the Sir John Leman High School Awards evening and events with Sea Cadet unit and with Thirst Youth Group.

I am especially looking forward to rounding off my mayoral year with our events to mark the 80th anniversary of VE Day on Thursday 8th May. This will be both a celebration of the end of the war and a commemoration of those who were lost during the six long years of fighting. We will be having a celebration in town centre from 5.30pm to 8.30pm, followed by a procession to the quay, where the evening will be rounded off with a short service of remembrance before we light the beacon at 9.30pm. Everyone is welcome to join us.

Thank you to those who supported my appeal for my chosen good cause, Forget-me-nots, the dementia and memory loss support group based at Public Hall. I hope to make a presentation of the proceeds at a Forget-Me-Nots session, as my last act as Mayor before my successor is chosen.

Colin Hill



Your Town Council

The Council has sixteen councillors, four of whom represent each of the four Wards (Centre, Common, Darby and Rigbourne). Councillors are elected every four years; the most recent elections were held in 2023 and the next elections will be in May 2027.

Councillors elect a Mayor and Deputy Mayor - in 2024-25, there were:

Mayor - **Cllr Colin Hill** | Deputy Mayor - **Cllr Barry Darch**

Centre Ward (BCE)		Common Ward (BCO)
Stevie Bubb		Gillian Birrell
Jeff Harris		Nathalie Chidley
Colin Hill		Peter Shannon (co-opted September 2023)
Christine Wheeler		Daniel Smith
Rigbourne Ward (BER)		Darby Ward (BCD)
Kirsta Booker (co-opted February 2024)		Barry Darch
Tarik Lahin (co-opted May 2023)		Philippa Drew
Joseph Athorn (co-opted May 2024)		Chris Greenhill
Richard Stubbings		Sam Hunt (co-opted May 2023)

Details of meeting attendance by councillor is available on our website

Councillors



Colin Hill
Centre Ward



Christine Wheeler
Centre Ward



Geoff Harris
Centre Ward



Stephie Bubb
Centre Ward



Daniel Smith
Common Ward



Gillian Birrell
Common Ward



Nathalie Chidley
Common Ward



Peter Shannon
Common Ward



Barry Darch
Darby Ward



Chris Greenhill
Darby Road



Philippa Drew
Darby Road



Samuel Hunt
Darby Road



Joseph Athorn
Rigbourne Ward



Krista Booker
Rigbourne Ward



Richard Stubbings
Rigbourne Ward



Tarek Lahin
Rigbourne Ward

Our Projects 2024-25

What we achieved in 2024-25:

- Running the 'Soapbox Derby' event in town in September 2024, which attracted huge crowds to Station Road to watch the racing
- Relaunching 'Beccles Open Gardens' in June 2024, which drew over 500 visitors
- Replacing both town council and 'Visit Beccles' websites
- Installation of floodlights at Beccles Skatepark
- Growing the number and range of stallholders on the Friday Market.
- Running the Beccles Voluntary Organisations' Showcase at the Public Hall



Our Projects 2025-26

Our priorities for 2025-26 are:

- Replacing the signage on the Marsh Trail
- Working with Beccles Townlands Charity to replace play equipment at Waveney Meadow
- Providing electricity to the Quay field and to moorings on the north bank of Beccles Quay
- Improving signage for pedestrians between the town centre and Quay and replacing tourist information boards around the town centre
- Relaunching the 'Duck Race' event at Beccles Quay
- Arranging a celebration event to commemorate the 80th anniversary of VE Day on 8th May
- Working with Beccles Town FC to run a fundraising one-day music event in July
- Improvements to parking facilities for users of the sports facilities off Common Lane
- We will be holding our first Climate Change weekend June 6-8th



Staff Team

The Council employs a team of staff to implement the decisions of the Council, and to manage the resources that the Council own and operates.



Paul Cunningham
Town Clerk



Candi Turner
Deputy Town Clerk



Gary Jones
Finance Officer



Helen Lower
Marketing & Events
Officer



Julie Allen
Administration
Officer



David Cripps
Ranger



Michael Graveling
Town Cleaner



Steve Radway
Town Cleaner



Graham McCabe
Harbourmaster



Martin Eglington
Harbourmaster



Steve Clarke
Harbourmaster

To contact the staff at the Town Hall, please use the following methods

Telephone - 01502 712109

Email - admin@becclestowncouncil.gov.uk

Post - Beccles Town Council, Town Hall, The Walk, Beccles, NR34 9AJ

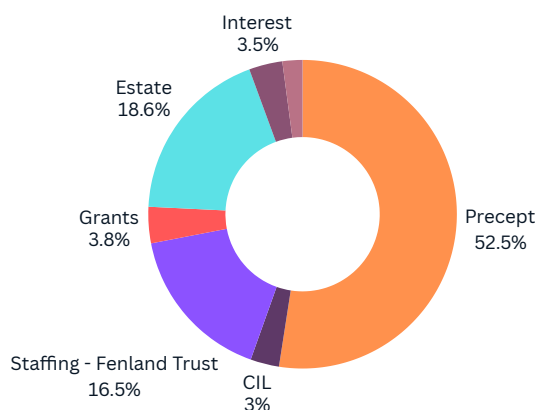
To contact the Harbourmaster at the Quay, call 01502 712225 or email becclesquay@becclestowncouncil.gov.uk

Finances

Income

Total income: £452911

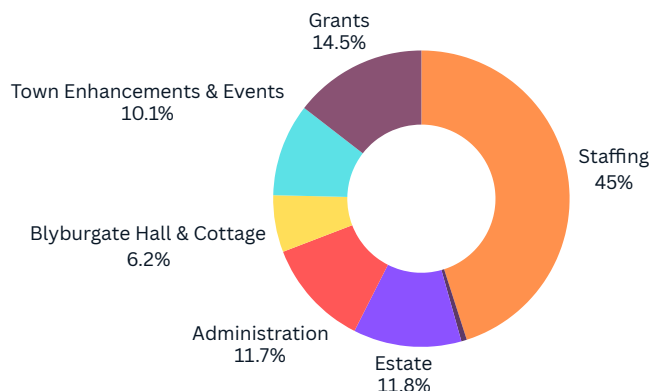
The Town Council gets income from rents (including from market traders on Friday market), hire of Blyburgate Hall and visitors to the Bell Tower. Approximately 50% of the Council's income comes from residents through their Council Tax – this is known as the precept. In 2024-25, this was £69.44 for a Band D property, which generated an income for the Council of £237,320



Expenditure

Total expenditure: £456304

The Town Council spends money on maintaining its buildings (including Town Hall and Blyburgate Hall); projects to enhance the town; grants to other organisations, salaries for Town Hall staff.



Beccles Fenland Charity Trust

Beccles Fenland Charity Trust (of which the Council is the trustee) also receives income from rents of allotments, grazing marshes, and land rents as well as mooring fees from users of Beccles Quay. The Trust spends on the maintenance of the Fen lands, including the Quay, Common and marshes, as well as on staffing costs for the Quay, and a contribution towards the costs of the Town Hall staff.

Grants

The Council gave grants to local organisations during the year as follows:

Food Festival	£500
Hospital Garden	£500
Twinning Association	£2500
CAB	£3000
Lions for defibrillator	£250
RBL for standard	£1053
Catch 22 for football activities	£1000
Beccles Tennis Club for floodlights	£1000

TOTAL £9803

See our website at becclestowncouncil.gov.uk/grants-for-good-causes to see our grants awards policy and to download a grant application form, or phone us on 01502 712109 for a paper form.

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For more information and resources, please visit our website at <https://becclestowncouncil.gov.uk> which provides details of all our services and facilities, information about Town Councillors, Council committees, meetings, agendas, minutes, policies, contact information and Council news.

Alternatively, please contact us:

Beccles Town Council
Town Hall
The Walk
Beccles
Suffolk
NR34 9AJ



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