

# Update

WEST BEDLINGTON TOWN COUNCIL'S NEWSLETTER



WEST BEDLINGTON  
TOWN COUNCIL

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are we going to  
achieve it?

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Fabulous festivities  
for everyone to enjoy  
this December.

WINTER 2024



# Welcome

# to Update



West Bedlington Town Council's newsletter is back, with a brand-new name and lots of fantastic updates, from improvements that are happening in the town, to events you won't want to miss, and so much more.

It's been some years since our last newsletter - way back in autumn 2019. We know lots of people have missed this valuable publication, so we have brought it back and hope to be able to publish regular issues in the future.

We hope you like the new name and design, as well as the content which is focused on communicating what we do in the community, as well as what we don't do, to help signpost you in the right direction should you ever need assistance.

One major change is that we will no longer be distributing our newsletter through every letterbox in West Bedlington. To help keep costs within our budget, and to

help us print more regular issues, we have changed our distribution strategy.

Update will now be available for residents to collect at the following local places:

- **Morrisons, Choppington Road**
- **Aldi, Schalksmuhle Road**
- **Co-op, Netherton Lane**
- **Bedlington Library, Glebe Road**

You can also pick up a copy from West Bedlington Town Council's office in Bedlington Community Centre and view it on our website. If you would like a copy posting, please let us know and we will add you to our mailing list for future issues.



## Foreword from councillor, Christine Taylor

I'd love to share some of the latest news with you all in this fabulous publication, which is back by popular demand.

### Market Square update

In the Market Square, the four new shops and six apartments are scheduled for completion in February 2025. Although there is no more funding available to do anything else right now, Keith Fitzsimmons is standing by with his project to build a hydrotherapy pool. Although this is a private business, not only would this bring jobs into the town centre and much-needed visitors to Bedlington, but our children would be able to have their swimming lessons within the centre of Bedlington and not have to travel to other towns. Now, wouldn't that be something.

### New cycle link

The cycle link is in full swing, too. I hope as many of you who wanted to, either came along to our consultation day in Bedlington Community Centre or had an opportunity to have your say at the library. You can find out more about the project on page 13.

### New train line

The new train line at Bedlington Station is scheduled to open in 2025 – see page 15 for more information.

### New data centre

World-leading organisation, QTS, is planning to create a data centre campus at Cambois which will bring employment opportunities, both during the construction of the facility and its ongoing operation. See page 14 for more details.

### £3m funding for Bedlington

I have been part of the Borderlands team for three years. The team works across Northumberland County Council, Cumberland Council, Dumfries and Galloway Council, Scottish Borders Council, and Westmorland and Furness Council.

The Borderlands team is responsible for supporting and overseeing the ten-year £450m Borderlands Inclusive Growth Deal. As part of this, funding worth three million pounds is to be shared between both east and west Bedlington. Through this investment, it is hoped to enable businesses to thrive, improve productivity, attract new residents and welcome more visitors to enjoy the beautiful natural environment of our vibrant region.

### New planters, bins and seating

While bigger projects are ongoing, here at the Town Council we have our own responsibilities and have plans for 2025 to remove the old, damaged planters in the town with new, bespoke floral planters at strategic points along the length of the Front Street. We are also undertaking a refresh of all of our seats, some of which are long overdue, and we have replaced a number of litter bins for larger more economical bins. We also regularly check our play parks and undertake all repairs to ensure they are safe for our children to play in.

### Remembrance

I'm incredibly proud of our Remembrance service which we have built up over the last ten years from a small gathering to around 2,000 people. With representation from our schools as well as the armed forces both in and out of uniform, I feel it's important to honour those who sacrificed their lives, so we could live ours.

And finally, as we approach the season of goodwill, we at West Bedlington Town Council would like to wish you all a very merry Christmas and a healthy, happy new year.

*Christine*



# Your Town Council, here for you

**West Bedlington Town Council was created in April 2009 and represents two-thirds of the town of Bedlington including the town centre and the villages of Nedderton and Hartford Bridge to the west. We're committed to working to improve the quality of life of residents, visitors and those who work here, whilst preserving Bedlington's heritage.**

## Our services

We thought it would be helpful to include a list of what we do, so you know who to contact, should the need ever arise. Our services include the provision of:

- Allotments – but not their management
- Bus shelters
- Children's play areas (not Doctor Pit Park)
- Community events
- Remembrance Sunday event
- Christmas lights switch-on
- School holiday events for children
- Summer music event
- Community grants
- Community CCTV provision
- Community defibrillators
- Grit bins – if the County Council won't supply them, the Town Council might
- Litter bins – we provide, but we don't empty them
- Public seating
- War memorial
- Christmas lights
- Christmas tree
- Christmas gifts for primary schools
- Flower beds and bulb planting
- Notice boards
- Town gateway features
- Road speed-awareness signs

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](http://fix.northumberland.gov.uk) or by calling **0345 600 6400**.

## Small team, big aspirations

**We're delighted to have Steven Young, our Town Clerk back at work after a six-month period away with ill health. Steven says he feels well and ready to support the Town Council through its next stage of development and improvement.**

Steven has been joined for the first time ever by an extra member of staff. Our newly appointed Assistant Town Clerk, Michelle McTeer joins the team to help us increase our visibility and identity within the community.

Finally, we would like to thank Gillian Turner who stepped in to cover Steven's absence. Her warm personality together with her invaluable years of professional experience have been a true asset to West Bedlington Town Council during this challenging time.

## It's always great to hear from you

**Whether you'd prefer to call, email, or pop in during office hours, here are the contact details you need. You can also find lots of useful information on our website.**

E: [westbedlingtontowncouncil@gmail.com](mailto:westbedlingtontowncouncil@gmail.com)

W: [westbedlington.org.uk](http://westbedlington.org.uk)

T: 01670 457070 (office hours only)

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

Office opening hours (subject to change):

- Monday 9.30am to 1.00pm
- Thursday 9.30am to 1.00pm
- Friday 9.30am to 1.00pm

# Meet your councillors

West Bedlington Town Council now employs two part-time members of staff to support councillors and residents. We have nine councillors representing three electoral wards: Bedlington Central, Bedlington Park Road and Bedlington West.



## Christine Taylor

**Mayor**  
**Central**

48 Hartford Crescent,  
Bedlington, NE22 6JB  
E: christine.taylor8@icloud.com  
T: 07591 621 238



## Paul Hedley

**West**

19 Shields Road, Hartford Bridge,  
Bedlington, NE22 6AN  
T: 01670 530566



## Victoria Thompson

**Central**

55 Acorn Avenue,  
Bedlington, NE22 5SP  
E: mrsvict@gmail.com



## Adam Hogg

**West**

14 North Ridge,  
Bedlington, NE22 6DE  
E: adam.hogg.wbtc@hotmail.co.uk  
T: 07866 895 781



## Diane Wallace

**Deputy Mayor**  
**Central**

22 Humford Way,  
Bedlington, NE22 5ET  
E: di.wallace@btinternet.com



## Jayne Todd

**West**

23 Carisbrooke,  
Bedlington, NE22 7LB  
E: westbedlingtontowncouncil@gmail.com



## Russ Wallace

**Central**

22 Humford Way,  
Bedlington, NE22 5ET  
E: russ.wallacebtc@btinternet.com



## Bill Crosby

**Park Road**

14 Hirst Villas,  
Bedlington, NE22 5QQ  
E: bill.crosbywestbed@btinternet.com  
T: 07866 802 510



## Catherine Henderson

**West**

16 Briardale,  
Bedlington, NE22 6EH  
E: catherinehenderson4@sky.com



**Scan QR code to  
visit our website**

Local elections will take place in May 2025, so please be aware that our team of councillors could change next year. If you would like to declare an interest in becoming a councillor for our area, we're always happy to chat.

# Life savers, on your doorstep

**In Bedlington, we are fortunate to have six public-access defibrillators and an additional one at Bedlington Community Centre which is only accessible when the centre is open.**

A defibrillator is a device that gives a high-energy electric shock to the heart through the chest wall to someone who is in cardiac arrest. This high-energy shock is called defibrillation and it's an essential life-saving step in the chain of survival.

If you come across someone who has had a cardiac arrest, it's vital to call 999, and if you are able to start CPR\*, you should find out if there is a defibrillator close by.

These defibrillators are often known as public-access defibrillators, as anyone can use them in an emergency. You shouldn't be afraid of using a defibrillator if someone has had a cardiac arrest. They are amazing pieces of equipment that give simple voice commands which make them really easy for anyone to use.

It's nearly ten years since our very first public-access defibrillators were installed, thanks to the generosity of Synergy Healthcare and Bedlington Masonic Hall. As these two defibrillators approach the end of their working life, West Bedlington Town Council has arranged to replace both the defibrillators and the new cabinets in which they are housed.



## **Where's your closest defib?**

Hopefully you'll never need to use a defibrillator, but it's always good to familiarise yourself with their locations, which are as follows:

- Bedlington Masonic Hall, Hartford Road, Bedlington – outside wall
- Synergy Healthcare, Front Street East, Bedlington – outside wall
- Plessey Woods Café, Hartford Bridge, Bedlington – outside wall
- Bedlingtonshire Golf Club, Hartford Road, Bedlington – outside wall
- Netherton Social Club, 1A Netherton Lane, Bedlington – outside wall
- Willow Vale, 69 Glebe Road, Bedlington – outside wall

## **A heartfelt thanks to our guardians**

West Bedlington Town Council would like to take this opportunity to thank our defibrillator guardians - Keith Morris, Vida Morris and Lucie Archbold - for their ongoing help. Without the support of loyal guardians, many public-access defibrillator sites and initiatives would not be possible to operate.

A guardian carries out regular, simple cabinet and defibrillator inspections which are completed and returned to the Ambulance Service via the Town Council's office to determine whether a defibrillator is operational. It's possible to have more than one guardian per cabinet to share the responsibility.

If you're interested in becoming a defibrillator guardian, we'd love to hear from you.

\* Cardiopulmonary resuscitation, commonly known as CPR, is an emergency procedure that combines chest compression often with artificial ventilation in an effort to manually preserve intact brain function until further measures are taken to restore spontaneous blood circulation and breathing in a person who is in cardiac arrest.

# Investing in our community groups and schools

Did you know, West Bedlington Town Council has a Community Chest scheme which gives local voluntary groups and organisations a chance to bid for funding? This might be to help establish a new group, or to carry out extra activities that would otherwise be out of reach.

To qualify for an award, you must be able to clearly demonstrate that any funding will benefit the town and/or its residents. Applications will be considered to help with the following:

- To purchase equipment or materials, full or in part
- To purchase services, such as venue hire or transport that will enable group members to partake in trips regardless of their income
- For running costs (but not wages) of a viable group that is experiencing a period of hardship
- For the provision of recreational activities and facilities
- For activities that raise the profile of the area

This financial year, there is a budget of £3,500 for community grants and a maximum award of £500 per successful application. To apply, please visit [westbedlington.org](http://westbedlington.org) for an application form which you can find under The Council/Community Grants.

As well as helping with community organisations, we also have a Pupils' Fund for local primary schools to benefit from. This is available to help fund a range of improvements, whether that's for a bigger, better allotment, or an exciting new initiative that would otherwise be outside of a school's allocated budget. To find out more, please email [westbedlingtontowncouncil@gmail.com](mailto:westbedlingtontowncouncil@gmail.com) or call **01670 457070** Monday, Thursday or Friday between 9.30am and 1pm.

## Watch this space for updates from Northumbria Police

**Bedlington Neighbourhood Policing Team will be contributing to future issues of Update so people who live and work in the town can stay in the loop with incidents and performance of their local service.**

In recent weeks, Sargent Cook has joined to head up the Neighbourhood Policing Team, which has seen an increase in arrest numbers and crimes being successfully dealt with. This can't be done without the help and willingness of the local community, so if you have any queries, please email: [Bedlington.NPT@northumbria.police.uk](mailto:Bedlington.NPT@northumbria.police.uk) – thank you.







# Events for everyone, at the heart of the community



**Although West Bedlington Town Council has its office within Bedlington Community Centre, we are separate organisations.**

They really are the best neighbours you could ever wish to have though, offering everything from line dancing and pilates classes, to private room hire and so much more. Their brand-new lift, which is due for completion soon, will also open up the

facilities upstairs to everyone, regardless of age or physical ability.

Bedlington Community Centre is located right in the middle of the town's main street and is well served by local bus services and close to free parking facilities. For more information about what's on, and when, visit their Facebook page, email [bedlingtoncommunitycentre@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:bedlingtoncommunitycentre@hotmail.co.uk), or call **01670 824141**.

## A bright idea from local GCSE student



**We're thrilled to announce the addition of a brand-new Bedlington terrier Christmas light which will be making its debut in the town this year.**

Local resident and GCSE student, Josh Douglas contacted West Bedlington Town Council last year with this fantastic design idea which has been developed

and manufactured by Gala Lights in time for its big reveal on 30th November at our Christmas lights switch-on event.

The light, which is 100cm high and 110cm wide, fits in perfectly with the town's unique identity and will hopefully bring a sense of joy to everyone who lives and works in Bedlington for many years to come. Big round of a-paws for Josh.



# Family fun for everyone

**Did you know that West Bedlington Town Council provides a range of fabulous events for families during the holidays? Whether it's a day out, a party, or a craft session, you can book up via our Events page on our website.**

Events are also advertised on our Facebook page, [facebook.com/westbedlington](https://facebook.com/westbedlington), which we have plans to improve in the new year, so please bear with us while we have a little dust of our social-media offering.

You may have attended some of our events, but if not, here are some of our recent activities to give you a flavour of what you could expect. Many of our events are free and some you can get for a snip of the normal price, so it's certainly worth looking out for. And they're not just for little ones either. Over the last few years, we have introduced a fun-filled afternoon for yesterday's youngsters twice a year, so watch this space for updates.

## Such a spooktacular bash

The town's spookiest witches, wizards and werewolves gathered at Bedlington Social Club on Saturday 26th October for the Halloween party of all parties. From grose games and devilish dancing, it certainly was a night to remember.

## Blackpool, you were illuminating

West Bedlington Town Council sponsored a day trip to Blackpool on Friday 1st November 2024 which was free for children, including a packed lunch, and just £35 per adult.

As part of this brilliant provision, each family could choose two activities, including tickets

to Blackpool Tower, Madame Tussauds and the circus to name just a few. By all accounts, an amazing day was had all round and the illuminations were a fantastic success.

## A cram-packed summer of events

Summer is now a distant memory, but hopefully the events we sponsored and organised over the warmer months helped to create lifelong memories for you and your family.

Our family festival in June was amazing, with thousands gathering on 20 Acres to enjoy the music, food, rides and chilled-out party vibe. This year we were able to get The Overtones at our event, and we've had everyone from '80s pop star, Sonia, to the iconic Lindisfarne in years gone



by, so watch this space for 2025's band line-up.

Our trips to Lildorei and Edinburgh Zoo were a roaring success this summer, too. While the Town Council utilised the youth provision budget to ensure the children visited for free, parents paid for their own entry, allowing us to take more little ones.

From free pottery-painting and breakdancing classes, to discos for tots and unusual-pet events, we certainly provided a cram-packed schedule of activities for everyone to enjoy.

Next year, we're looking forward to many more fantastic events, including a street fair and the return of the super-popular music festival on 20 Acres. More details will be included in the next issue of Update, our website and Facebook page closer to the time.

# Working to safeguard Bedlington's past, present and future



Here at West Bedlington Town Council, we work hard to safeguard Bedlington's past, present and future, and we have developed a four-year Strategic Plan to help us deliver our aspirations.

Our Strategic Plan sets out our aims and objectives; to deliver the aspirations of the local community within a planned budget and timeframe. It demonstrates our services and also acts as a reminder of areas that are beyond our legal, expenditure and resource levels.

Whether you know a little bit about our Plan, or nothing at all, we thought our newsletter was a great place to share it so it's accessible and visible for everyone.

### **Community involvement is key**

Our Plan was created to start and end midterm between-elections; to provide a framework for any newly-elected council to work within and create continuity of services. It will evolve through community engagement and will assist councillors to make decisions in the best interests of those they serve.

As part of the Plan's progression, we welcome comments from community members to help shape its development. What's more, it will be reviewed on a regular basis to ensure its progress is monitored and updated as necessary.

### **Our mission**

West Bedlington Town Council is committed to maintaining Bedlington as a unique separate town with an active life of its own and working to improve the quality of life of residents, visitors and those who work here, whilst preserving our heritage.

### **Our aims**

The aims of our four-year Strategic Plan - which was established in 2022 and runs until 2026 - are as follows:

- To deliver our services cost effectively and efficiently so that they contribute to a better quality of life.
- To ensure that community development is driven by the local community and that it represents their needs and ambitions.
- To represent the views of the local community by working with residents to improve the local environment and preserve its heritage.
- To be open, transparent and accountable; working within our statutory obligations as a town council.

## The objectives of our Strategic Plan are as follows:

Objective	How we plan to deliver this	Focus area
<b>1. To work with the local community by listening to their views, needs and aspirations and assist to bring these into fruition</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Residents' panel</li> <li>• Annual residents' survey</li> <li>• Councillor surgeries</li> <li>• Council meeting question time</li> <li>• Regular meetings with county councillors</li> <li>• Residents' newsletter / e-newsletter</li> <li>• Our website</li> </ul>	Communication
<b>2. To demonstrate openness, transparency and accountability in all Town Council activities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Agendas and minutes published on our website and distributed to our mailing list</li> <li>• Accounts open for public inspection</li> <li>• Audio recordings of meetings</li> <li>• Only making decisions about items included on meeting agendas</li> </ul>	Governance
<b>3. To support the local economy</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Working with local service providers wherever possible</li> <li>• Choosing local shops if cost effective and practical to do so</li> </ul>	Local economy
<b>4. To work with partners and stakeholders to improve and enhance the local environment</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Working with neighbouring parish councils</li> <li>• Residents' groups</li> <li>• School collaboration</li> <li>• Collaboration with Bedlington Community Centre</li> </ul>	Community
<b>5. To support the work of voluntary groups and organisations within the town</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community Chest Fund</li> <li>• Room hire</li> <li>• Councillor membership - outside bodies</li> <li>• Supporting local food banks</li> </ul>	Community
<b>6. To represent the views of residents in response to local planning applications</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Planning champion</li> <li>• Planning working group</li> </ul>	Community support
<b>7. To promote ethical and fair practices to promote harmony and social inclusion</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inclusion is at the heart of all our policies</li> <li>• Specifically, our equalities policy promotes equality for all</li> </ul>	Governance
<b>8. To support efforts to sustain the social, environmental and economic wellbeing within a safe town</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community events</li> <li>• Youth support programme</li> <li>• CCTV</li> <li>• Speed signs</li> <li>• Community defibrillators</li> </ul>	Community support

*Continued overleaf...*



Objective	How we plan to deliver this	Focus area
<b>9. To fulfil its statutory obligations, use those powers and duties appropriate to its status as a Town Council and understand and communicate the limits of those powers and duties to its residents</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Website</li> <li>• Residents' newsletter</li> <li>• Training</li> <li>• Protocols with NCC and county councillors</li> <li>• Signposting to other organisations</li> <li>• Effective governance and up-to-date practical policies and procedures</li> </ul>	Governance
<b>10. To ensure that councillors and staff are sufficiently trained to deliver public services to the people served by the Town Council</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Up-to-date training programmes</li> <li>• Sharing best practices with other councils</li> </ul>	Governance
<b>11. To encourage the community to take "ownership" of community initiatives</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 'Friends of' groups</li> <li>• Defibrillator Guardians</li> <li>• Flag Flying Master</li> <li>• Community litter picks</li> </ul>	Community support

If you have any questions or comments about our Strategic Plan, or would like to make any suggestions to help shape its development, please email [westbedlingtontowncouncil@gmail.com](mailto:westbedlingtontowncouncil@gmail.com)

What's more, if you'd like to receive Town Council agendas and minutes from our monthly meetings, please drop us an email and we'll add you to our mailing list.

### Would you be interested in joining a residents' panel?

We welcome the views of residents and are looking to form a brand-new panel of up to twelve

individuals to share ideas about how we can improve our services.

The panel would meet around four times a year and each meeting would be up to two hours long, arranged by panel members to best suit their joint availability.

The sessions will be hosted by representatives of West Bedlington Town Council where you will be able to speak openly and confidentially about the Town Council and its services. If you would like to be considered for inclusion, please email [westbedlingtontowncouncil@gmail.com](mailto:westbedlingtontowncouncil@gmail.com) and put Residents' Panel in the subject line. Thank you.

## Are you a budding photographer?



### Have you captured a fantastic image of Bedlington you'd like to share with us?

If so, and you'd like your photograph to feature in a future issue of Update, please email your image to [westbedlingtontowncouncil@gmail.com](mailto:westbedlingtontowncouncil@gmail.com) and include Newsletter Photography in the subject line. Whether it's a frosty morning at Atlee Park or sunrise on the high street, we can't wait to see your photographs of West Bedlington.



# New cycle link to Bedlington Station

**Northumberland County Council has scooped almost £15m funding towards new cycling and walking routes for Bedlington and Tynedale, to make it easier, safer and greener for people to get around the county.**

The funding was secured through the Government's Levelling Up Fund (LUF) - a multi-billion-pound scheme for eligible local authorities to invest in infrastructure that improves everyday life, including regenerating town centres, high streets and upgrading local transport.

In Bedlington, the scheme will provide a new and upgraded active travel infrastructure to improve the east to west link

across the town, connecting key residential and employment areas with the planned Northumberland Line station. Additional benefits to this route include connections to schools across the town.

The project will see a new active travel path along part of Ridge Terrace, up Hazelmere Avenue, and along the existing footpath to Choppington Road. It will continue along Schalksmuhle Road to Bedlington Police Station, continue around the back of the station, then go along the edge of Gallagher Park to Rothersey Terrace. It will then meet a path that runs from St John's Road to East Sleekburn, then along Brock Lane to Cambois.

There will also be a route along part of Stead Lane, Steadland Square, and The Oval, then along an existing path to the

B1331, before connecting with the railway-side cycle path and Palace Road. Some new crossings will also be installed.

Various meetings to update and listen to the good folk of Bedlington have taken place in a consultation period which ended on 5th November 2024. A petition has been submitted to the Local Area Committee. The last meeting that took place was at Bedlington Community Centre on 17th September, where concerns from some residents about tree removal and varying path widths were raised with the project lead and we hope will be adhered to.

**The plans can be found online at [northumberland.gov.uk](http://northumberland.gov.uk) and are printed out in Bedlington Community Centre for the public to view.**



# New data centre to drive economic growth in our region

**QTS builds, owns and operates some of the most advanced and resilient facilities in the world, with more than 60 data centres in operation or under development across the United States and the Netherlands. They have stepped in following the withdrawal of the previous investor and are seeking to redevelop land at the former power station site in Cambois, near Blyth, into a data centre campus.**

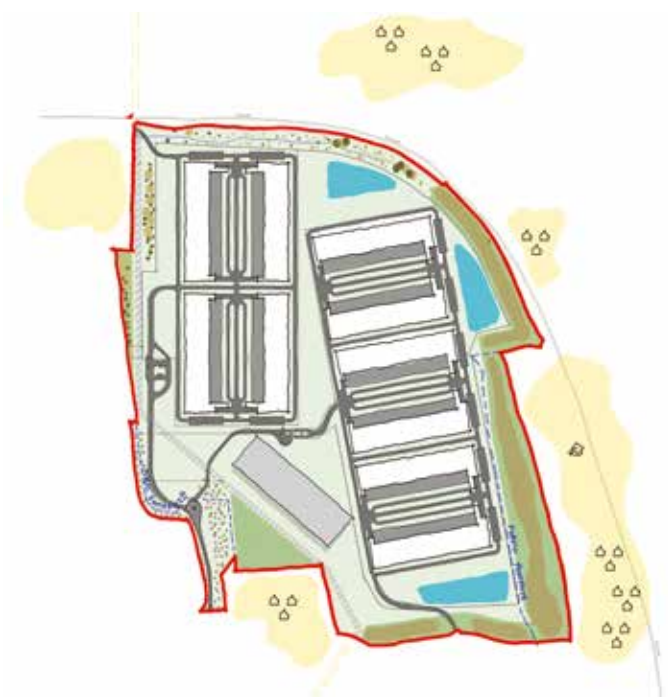
A data centre campus is a group of buildings that store and manage large amounts of digital data for leading companies, enterprises and government entities who rely on technology to operate and communicate. You access a data centre whenever you use your mobile phone, a credit card, the cloud, or any online activity.

Creating a data centre campus at Cambois will bring direct and indirect employment opportunities, both during the construction of the facility and its ongoing operation. There is a real opportunity to train and employ local people, leaving a lasting legacy.

The new development will protect and enhance existing habitats, promote biodiversity and provide landscaped buffer zones to create visual screening.

The proposals help to meet the aspiration of the North East Combined Authority and Northumberland County Council to drive economic growth and bring jobs and investment to the region.

To find out more, visit [qtsdatacentres.com](https://www.qtsdatacentres.com)





# Just the ticket for Bedlington

**The Northumberland Line project to bring back passenger trains into service between Ashington and Newcastle is due to be completed soon, with the station in Bedlington opening in 2025. This is great news for the town as it will stimulate and support economic growth, regeneration and community development.**

Bedlington will be the first stop for trains leaving Ashington and will have two platforms, one for services to Ashington and one for services to Newcastle. In order to meet the expected demand for passenger services, some additional parking will be available at the station, including Blue Badge spaces and Electric Vehicle (EV) charging bays. The station and car park will also include tree planting and wildlife-friendly landscaping.

As well as single trips, railcards will be available to purchase for the following prices.

<b>16-17 Saver</b>	For everyone aged 16 or 17	£30 per year	50% discount
<b>16-25 Railcard</b>	For everyone aged 16 to 25 and mature students	£30 per year or £70 for 3 years	1/3 off rail travel
<b>26-30 Railcard</b>	For everyone aged 26 to 30	£30 per year	1/3 off rail travel
<b>Disabled Person's Railcard</b>	For everyone with a disability that meets the eligibility criteria	£20 per year or £54 for 3 years	1/3 off rail travel for you and an adult companion
<b>Family &amp; Friends' Railcard</b>	For up to 4 adults travelling together with up to 4 children	£30 per year or £70 for 3 years	1/3 off rail travel for adults and 60% reduction for children
<b>Senior Railcard</b>	For everyone aged 60 and over	£30 per year or £70 for 3 years	1/3 off rail travel
<b>Two-Together Railcard</b>	For you and the person you travel with the most	£30 per year	1/3 off rail travel when you travel together
<b>Veteran's Railcard</b>	For UK veterans	£30 per year or £70 for 3 years	1/3 off rail travel for you and a named companion

## Days out just got even more accessible

As well as travelling to Ashington, Newsham, Seaton Delaval, Manors or Newcastle along the new rail line, there are also some great-value days out with just one change in Newcastle.

Carlisle (Off-Peak Day Return) £25.30 from Bedlington  
 Seaham (Off-Peak Day Return) £12.40 from Bedlington  
 Metrocentre (Off-Peak Day Return) £8.30 from Bedlington  
 Whitby (Off-Peak Day Return) £24.80 from Bedlington  
 Hexham (Off-Peak Day Return) £13.20 from Bedlington  
 Visit [northumberlandline.uk](http://northumberlandline.uk) to find out more.



A trip to Whitby, £24.80 from Bedlington



## Community spirit at its best

**Once again, our Remembrance service was a huge success as thousands gathered to commemorate the sacrifices of members of the armed forces and civilians in times of war.**

On Sunday 10th November 2024, representatives from West Bedlington Town Council, the Royal British Legion, Northumberland Fire and Rescue Service, Northumbria Police, Salvation Army, local schools and groups, and members of the public joined the parade and laid wreaths and poppies

at the war memorial in the town centre.

West Bedlington Town Council provided free refreshments at Bedlington Community Centre afterwards and a range of delicious cakes and bakes were supplied by Nedderton and District Women's Institute.

As always, it was a deeply moving event with a strong sense of community spirit. We also had an act of remembrance specifically for the younger generation on Monday 11th November and BBC News even came to film this special event.

## Keeping the town looking its best

**We care about enhancing, maintaining and refurbishing areas of the town to keep it safe and looking its best.**

In recent months, we have improved our commemorative seats in the Market Place.

We have also made improvements to the handrail at the War Memorial and the welcome train at Atlee Park, as well as carrying out regular maintenance of our play parks at 20 Acres, Meadowdale and Westlea.

We hope you've noticed these improvements whilst sitting having a coffee in the town square, or taking the dog for a walk perhaps. However, you can always email us at [westbedlingtontowncouncil@gmail.com](mailto:westbedlingtontowncouncil@gmail.com) if there's something else you'd like to mention.

## Sweet treats for cute little elves

**Once again this December, West Bedlington Town Council will be spreading a little festive cheer by gifting a chocolate selection box to all pupils at our four fabulous primary schools.**

It's really important for us to support local businesses wherever possible, so we liaised with Steven Wyeth, Store Manager at Morrisons in Bedlington to purchase 1100 selection boxes to gift this Christmas.

So, if you know any cute 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 the best Christmas ever.

# Our monthly meetings are open to the public

**Our Town Council meetings usually take place on the second Thursday of the month and members of the public are welcome to attend. They generally start at 6.30pm at Bedlington Community Centre.**

You can view meeting agendas and minutes on our website, [westbedlington.org.uk](http://westbedlington.org.uk), and they will also be displayed in the notice board in front of Bedlington Community Centre. If you would like these emailing, please get in touch and we'll add you to our mailing list.

At the start of each meeting, there will be a fifteen-minute open session where the Chair will invite members of the public to ask questions directly to the Town Council. We're always interested in hearing your views and comments, but once the meeting commences, the public are politely requested just to observe, unless specifically requested by the Chair to speak.

## Delivering quality services and value for money

Autumn is the time when the Town Council begins its budget-setting process and forward planning for 2025/26. The main aim is to deliver quality services whilst at the same time achieving value for money.

The key dates and objectives, which were agreed at West Bedlington Town Council's meeting on 10th October 2024 are as follows:

- 14th November 2024 – in our most recent meeting, we considered new spending/projects to be included in the 2025/26 Budget
- 12th December 2024 - to formalise the Budget and Precept for 2025/26 and review current spending.

**All meetings are subject to approval, however provisional dates for the next six months are as follows:**

- 12th December 2024
- 13th February 2025
- 10th April 2025
- 9th January 2025
- 13th March 2025
- 8th May 2025

## Brilliant local tradespeople needed

**We love working with local tradespeople and service providers to maintain and improve our town, whether that's installing a new seating area, planting flowers, or repairing bus shelters.**

Of course, there are lots of other jobs, big and small that come up from time to time, so if you'd like to be added to our database of brilliant local people to work with, please email [westbedlingtontowncouncil@gmail.com](mailto:westbedlingtontowncouncil@gmail.com) with a brief description of the services you provide and include Local Providers in the subject line. We look forward to hearing from you.



# Who's got the best garden in town?



**Chances are, it's cold and drizzly in Bedlington today, but we want local residents to look forward to the hotter months and help to create a blaze of colour for summer.**

We're delighted to relaunch our summer gardening competition, which will be open to all residents of West Bedlington. We would love as many residents and businesses as possible to enter the competition, so we thought we'd give you plenty of notice to plot, plan and prepare now.

Judging will take place at the end of July 2025, with a presentation of prizes taking place in autumn.

The four categories you can enter will include:

- Large garden
- Small garden
- Senior citizen's garden
- Best business floral display

What's more, there will be a separate competition for young residents up to 16 years of age for the 'best child's garden box or pot', and we will be inviting our local primary schools to enter a 'best school garden' competition too.

## HOW TO ENTER

It's free to take part and entry forms will be available in spring 2025 to download from our website or to collect from our office. More details will be published in our next issue of Update, including competition rules, closing date, confirmed

judging and presentation dates.

This is a fantastic opportunity for the whole community to get involved in something that can improve the general feeling of wellbeing in the town. And of course, officially knowing that your begonias are better than Bill's, or your petunias are prettier than Pam's is always secretly good to know too.

## WE'RE DOING OUR BIT, TOO

We're also doing our bit to make West Bedlington look its best with a brand-new project starting next year to invest in the town's planters and flower provision. So, hopefully, with our contributions, and yours, the town will be looking its best when the warmer months come (fingers crossed we get a summer next year).





## A plan driven by the community, for the community

**West Bedlington Town Council has a Neighbourhood Plan, but what exactly is one of these you may ask? Quite simply, it's an important policy, led by the community, instead of local planning departments. It defines what's important to local people to help get the right developments in the right places.**

### **Our vision**

Our Neighbourhood Plan has a clear vision; to create a sustainable and cohesive community.

By 2036, improvements will have been made to the local environment, employment opportunities, services and facilities. Communities will be well connected via sustainable transport routes to enhance employment opportunities as well as having access to more services and facilities further afield.

There will be an appreciation of the importance of the heritage of the area, which will give local communities a sense of belonging.

### **How are we going to do this?**

We have four main objectives to help us to achieve our vision.

#### **Quality of life**

Ensuring any new development is sustainable and contributes positively to the built, historic and natural environment of the area. New developments will be managed to ensure that important green spaces are protected. As part of this, we will work with planning experts to ensure any new buildings fit

in with the town's existing framework and heritage. You may hear us refer to these as 'design codes', but in essence, this is why they are put in place.

#### **Community wellbeing**

To build on the strong sense of community and recognise the diverse needs of existing and future residents. This includes supporting the provision of different types of housing that people can afford, and which meets specific needs, including those of an ageing population; ensuring the local community has access to the services and facilities they need.

#### **Local economy**

Supporting both existing and new employment opportunities. Protecting the vitality and viability of the town centre as an important source of local employment and services.

#### **Accessibility**

Promoting access to sustainable modes of transport which connect local communities to employment as well as the services and facilities they require. Ensuring that the environmental quality of the Plan area is protected by effectively managing traffic.

To find out more, visit our website,

**[westbedlington.org.uk](http://westbedlington.org.uk)**

or email **[westbedlingtontowncouncil@gmail.com](mailto:westbedlingtontowncouncil@gmail.com)**

# It's going to be a cracking Christmas

**We've got so many fabulous festive events planned this year, starting with our Christmas lights switch-on event on Saturday 30th November.**

Festivities for the whole family start at 2pm and include an ice rink, face painting, craft stalls, Christmas carols, rides, and your little angels can post their letters to Santa, too. The lights will be switched on in the Market Square at 5pm and Santa will be arriving at approximately 5.15pm with a little gift for all children, whether they're on the naughty or nice list.

We know last year the removal of the town's Christmas tree was disappointing, so we've taken extra steps this year with the help of local companies, Windmill Farm Christmas Trees and WL Straughan & Son Ltd to hopefully make sure that won't happen again.



## An afternoon of fun and festivities

On Monday 9th December, we've got an afternoon of fun and festivities planned with our Magic of Christmas event for yesterday's youngsters at Bedlington Community Centre, including afternoon tea, bingo and a spectacular show. This year's event is fully booked, but please keep an eye out for the next one at Easter.



## Aladdin is coming to town

Our pantos have become so popular with residents of West Bedlington, so we're pleased to be doing it all again this year. "Oh, yes we are!"

We'll be showing the much-loved Aladdin at Bedlington Social Club, once in the morning and twice in the afternoon of Friday 27th December, so it's the perfect family activity for that lull in between Christmas and new year. Visit the Events section of our website - [westbedlington.org.uk](http://westbedlington.org.uk) - to book. Booking opens early December.



Scan QR code to visit our website



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.