



MAYORAL REPORT 2024/25

STRATFORD-UPON-AVON TOWN COUNCIL

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Message from Councillor, Jason Fojtik

This **“Year in Review”** will take us from May 2024 until May 2025.

My mayoral year began in May 2024 and has been filled with meaningful and memorable moments. It commenced with the deeply moving 80th anniversary commemoration of D-Day — a solemn and unifying tribute that brought together generations in remembrance. Soon after, we honoured the dedication and bravery of our service personnel on Armed Forces Day, a celebration that continues to inspire pride across our community. Among the many highlights was the Mayor’s Centenary Bowls Match — a much-loved tradition that once again brought people together in celebration and camaraderie.

These events represent only a fraction of the many occasions that have made this year so special. As detailed in the full report, the breadth and variety of activities across the town reflect an incredibly vibrant and committed community.

Throughout this journey, I have come to appreciate more than ever the remarkable work carried out by local organisations — each contributing in its own unique way to the life of our town. It felt particularly fitting that, as the mayoral year drew to a close, we were able to host a Volunteers Reception at the Town Hall to acknowledge and celebrate the tireless efforts of those who give their time and energy for the benefit of others.

I would like to extend my heartfelt thanks to the dedicated staff of the Town Council, whose support has been invaluable. The role of Mayor is only possible through the hard work and collaboration of many, and I am truly grateful.

It has been an honour and a privilege to represent our town, and I look forward to passing on the mayoral chains to my successor with pride and confidence in the continued strength of our community.



*Councillor Jason Fojtik
Mayor of Stratford-upon-Avon
2024 - 2025*



*Mayor, Cllr Jason Fojtik and
Mayoress, Miss Chloe Fojtik*



*Councillor Dani Hunter
Deputy Mayor of
Stratford-upon-Avon
2024 - 2025*

Mayor's Charities

The charities for my Mayoral year were:

The UK Sepsis Trust

The UK Sepsis Trust exists to fight this life-threatening condition, stop preventable deaths and support those affected by sepsis.



The Shakespeare Hospice

Providing care & compassion across South Warwickshire to anyone affected by a life-limiting illness.



YEAR IN REVIEW

MAY 2024

- It was proposed, seconded, and resolved that I be elected as 479th Mayor of Stratford-upon-Avon. A Civic Sunday service was held on 19th May at Holy Trinity Church



Town Council Official Photograph



Mayor and Deputy Mayor 2024/25



Civic Dinner May 2025

- Council appointed Members to Standing Committees.
- The following meetings were held during the month:
 - Personnel Committee
 - Annual Meeting of the Town Council
 - Planning Consultative Committee
- Mayoral Engagements:
 - Mayor Making
 - Civic Dinner
 - Civic Sunday Service
 - Shakespeare Hospice Charity Shop
 - SMTC Choir – Natures Notes
 - Interview with Welcombe Radio

JUNE 2024

It was a busy first month for Mayoral engagements:

- Warwick Mayor Making (Deputy Mayor)
- SMTC Concert
- Bishopton Community Centre (Deputy Mayor)
- D-Day 80th Anniversary Beacon Lighting
- Summer Fete, Shakespeare Hospice
- Friends of Czechoslovak Memorial Fountain, Leamington Spa
- Shakespeare Beer Festival
- Armed Forces Day

- The Town Council approved the Annual Accounts for Year ending 31st March 2024
- The Town Council approved the Annual Governance and Accountability Return for 31st March 2024
- The following meetings were held during the month:
 - Finance & Audit Committee
 - Town Council
 - Planning Consultative Committee
 - Personnel Committee

D-Day 80th Anniversary Commemorations

Stratford-upon-Avon marked the 80th anniversary of the D-Day Landings on Thursday 6th June with an Act of Commemoration in the Garden of Remembrance, led by the Vicar of Holy Trinity Church, Revd. Patrick Taylor. The evening incorporated the lighting of the Stratford-upon-Avon gas beacon by the Lord Lieutenant.

The beacon was one of hundreds being lit across the UK and the Commonwealth, following the lighting of the principal beacon at the naval base in Portsmouth, the departure point from which many of the boats sailed in June 1944.



Armed Forces Day

On Saturday 29th June, the Town Council gathered to show their support for our Armed Forces – those who are currently serving, their families, Cadets and veterans. The Mayor welcomed his Cadet for 2024/25 – L/Cpl Lewis Trevor from the Army Cadet Force.



JULY 2024

July welcomed Councillor Steve Albon to the Town Council. Steve was elected to the Shottery Ward and will work alongside Councillor Gill Cleeve.



Mayor's Centenary Bowls Match

On Thursday 3rd July 1924 the official opening of the Avon Bowls Club took place with the Mayor, Alderman Robert Cox, captaining a team against Avon members. The Mayor's team triumphed in a 28 shot victory!

That early vision acknowledged the peace and tranquility of the recreation ground and saw the role of the bowling club as integral in making the riverside fields an attraction for visitors. Long may it continue.

It gave me great pleasure on Thursday 11th July to unveil a plaque to mark such a special occasion, celebrating the close associations which exist between the Town Council and the Avon Bowls Club.



Mayoral Engagements:

- Clopton Nursery Event
- Bear Pit production - 'Do not forget me'
- Mayor's Bowling Match
- Stratford Primary School, Summer Fete
- Stratford Gin and Rum Festival
- Songs of Praise, Bandstand
- Clopton Community Fun Day
- Warwick Civic Service

- The following meetings were held during the month:

- Community Services Committee
- Planning Consultative Committee
- Civic, Heritage & Events Committee
- Town Council
- Planning Consultative Committee



Bear Pit Production



Mayor's Bowling Match



Clopton Nursery



Clopton Fun Day



Stratford Primary School Fete



Songs of Praise



Pride Event



Gin & rum festival

AUGUST 2024

Mayoral Engagements:

- Guild Cottages Annual Garden Party (Municipal Charities)
- Shakespeare Morris - Day of Dance
- Civic Charity Race Night, Mayor of Alcester
- Launch of Beleza Restaurant
- Civic Visit to the Fred Winter Centre
- Judging of the Rotary Duck Race Window Competition
- Annual Cortina Car Club Meeting
- Rotary Duck Race
- Young Traders Market - official opening
- Young Traders Market Presentation

- The following meetings were held during the month:
 - Personnel Committee
 - Planning Consultative Committee



Official opening Young Traders Market



A day at the Circus



Shop window judging



Ken Kennett Community Kitchen



Fred Winter Centre



Guild Cottages Garden Party



Shakespeare Morris – Day of Dance

SEPTEMBER 2024

Mayoral Engagements:

- Art exhibition, KES
- Launch of Bishopton Community Garden
- Stratford Boat Club – meeting Esme Booth
- Scouts AGM
- Gail's Bakery opening (Deputy Mayor)
- Stratford in Bloom Awards (Deputy Mayor)
- Stratford Town Football Club
- Volunteers Reception – Mayor or Kenilworth
- Community Noticeboard openings

- The following meetings were held during the month:

- Finance & Audit Committee
- Planning Consultative Committee
- Civic, Heritage & Events Committee
- Town Council



Community Noticeboard Openings



Boat Club – Esme Booth



Scouts AGM



Gail's Bakery Opening



Stratford in Bloom Awards Evening



Volunteers Reception - Kenilworth

OCTOBER 2024

Mayoral Engagements:

- Legal Service, Warwick
- Death Us Do Part, Bearpit Theatre
- Stepping Stones, United Reformed Church
- Whitnash Civic Service
- Shakespeare Stagecoach Tour
- Bread presentation to Alms People
- 60th Anniversary Concert, Chamber Music Society
- New Real, RSC
- Official Mop Opening
- Silent Disco
- Beer Festival, Shottery (Deputy Mayor)
- Civic Service, Leamington Spa
- Othello, RSC
- Civic Service, Warwickshire County Council (Deputy Mayor)

- The following meetings were held during the month:

- Planning Consultative Committee
- Personnel Committee
- Community Services & Environment Committee
- Planning Consultative Committee



Bread presentation – Alms People



Whitnash Civic Service



Warwickshire County Council – Civic Service

Mop Fair

A cherished tradition for generations, the fair brings a vibrant mix of thrilling rides, delicious food, and lively entertainment to the town. After the official opening ceremony has taken place, its onwards to auction off the first slice of the pig roast and finally a turn on your favourite rides!



The Carousel



Hog roast auction



Cars ride

Silent Disco

For the first time ever, the Town Hall hosted a Silent Disco. All proceeds raised from the event were shared between the Mayor's charities – The Shakespeare Hospice and The UK Sepsis Trust. Wireless headphones were worn, favourite music chosen and an unforgettable night was had by everyone.



NOVEMBER 2024

Mayoral Engagements:

- Rugby Club bonfire and fireworks event
- Athletics Club awards evening
- Stratford upon Avon Rotary Club Children of Courage awards (Deputy Mayor)
- Rock Church childrens toy presentation (Deputy Mayor)
- Shakespeare Birthplace Trust, Iqbal ceremony
- Remembrance concert
- Remembrance Commemorations
- Christmas Lights Switch-on
- Scout Christmas Postal Service launch
- Parliament Week with a local school
- Avon Bowls Club AGM

- The following meetings were held during the month:

- Community Services & Environment Committee
- Planning Consultative Committee Meeting
- Finance & Audit Committee
- Town Council



Scouts Christmas Postal Service



Athletics Club



Shakespeare Birthplace Trust, Iqbal ceremony

Remembrance Commemorations

The parade and service in the Garden of Remembrance was a moving tribute to all those who have served and to those who have given their lives in service to our country and was very well supported. The service was led by Rev. Patrick Taylor of Holy Trinity Church and Rev Dr Paul Edmondson, chaplain to the Town Council.

Special appreciation goes to the Royal British Legion, whose commitment ensures that we honour our heroes with dignity and respect each year.

We also recognise the hard work of our Town Council's Open Spaces team, who maintain the Garden of Remembrance with care throughout the year. Their efforts provide a beautiful, tranquil space that allows for reflection and remembrance.



Armistice Day

An Interfaith Remembrance Day Service with wreath laying was also held at the [Commonwealth War Graves](#) at the Town Council owned Cemetery on Evesham Road. This service honoured the 177 servicemen laid to rest here, many where from the Royal Canadian Air Force. This service took place at 4pm which is 11am EST.



Remembrance Concert

A wonderful Concert of Remembrance was held at the Town Hall, I was delighted to host this event, fundraising for the Poppy Appeal. Thank you to Sam Jenkins for putting on this wonderful event.



Remembrance Concert – Lili Redman



Dignitaries attending the Remembrance Concert

Christmas Lights Switch-on

The annual Christmas Light Switch-On, marks the beginning of the festive season. The day started with wonderful weather, featuring refreshing blue skies that set the perfect mood for the festivities. Although the rain arrived later, it failed to dampen the spirits of residents and visitors, who turned out to enjoy the magical atmosphere.

The festive lights were made possible thanks to the dedication of the Stratford-upon-Avon Christmas Lights Company volunteers. The day's celebrations were brought to life through a collaborative effort by Stratford-upon-Avon BID, the Town Council, the Town Trust, Magic Alley, LSD and Bell Court.

A heartfelt thank you goes to everyone who worked tirelessly to make the event a success, including the dedicated volunteers, performers and organisers. The Christmas Light Switch-On was a true celebration of community spirit and holiday cheer, setting the stage for a joyful season ahead in Stratford-upon-Avon.



Christmas Lights 2025



Father Christmas and Mrs Christmas

DECEMBER 2024

As we embraced the festive season, I wished that the joy and peace of Christmas filled your homes and hearts. The town is rich in history, beauty and community spirit and it is an honour to serve and celebrate alongside such remarkable residents. Together, let us look forward to a New Year filled with hope unity and new beginnings.

On behalf of the Town Council, I wish you and your loved ones a Merry Christmas and a prosperous, healthy New Year.

With warmest wishes
Mayor, Councillor Jason Fojtik

Mayoral Engagements:

- Shakespeare Hospice Anniversary Ball
- Canning Court lights switch-on
- Ukes of Ale Fundraiser
- Opening of Stratford Acupuncture Community Multi-bed facility
- Civic Heads Dinner, Coventry
- Leisure Centre, Shakespeare Hospice fundraising exercise class
- Stratford Town Football Club
- NMTF Young Traders donation presentation
- Side-by-Side Theatre performance
- Jubilee Club Christmas Party, Bishopton Community Centre

• The following meetings were held during the month:

- Community Services & Environment Committee Meeting
- Finance & Audit Committee
- Planning Consultative Committee Meeting
- Personnel Committee

During the festive period, we paid visits to the following venues:

- | | |
|--------------------|----------------------|
| • Tiddington Court | • Alveston Leys |
| • Scholars Mews | • Trinity Manor |
| • Canning Court | • Stratford Hospital |



STFC



Christmas Visits



Jubilee Club



Ukes of Ale



Coventry Civic Dinner



Acupuncture Clinic



NMTF

JANUARY 2025

Happy New Year to you all!

As we step into a brand-new year, I extend my warmest wishes to each and every one of you for a happy, healthy, and prosperous 2025.

This past year, we have all, I am sure faced challenges and celebrated achievements, each reminding us of the resilience and strength of our community. As we look ahead, let us continue to work together to build a future filled with opportunity and shared success, ensuring that our town remains a beacon of inspiration for generations to come.

The Mayor, Councillor Jason Fojtik

Mayoral Engagements:

- SMTC Christmas Crackers
- World's Oldest Choir Attempt
- Walk Through Christmas Service (Deputy Mayor)
- Holy Trinity Church Carol Service
- Rotary Club, Stratford-upon-Avon
- High Bailiff Service, Alcester
- Junior Handicapped Tournament (Deputy Mayor)
- Community Kitchen

- The following meetings were held during the month:

- Planning Consultative Committee Meeting
- Town Council Meeting
- Finance & Audit Committee
- Civic, Heritage & Events Committee



World's Oldest choir attempt



Ken Kennett Community Kitchen



Junior Handicapped Tournament

February 2025

Mayoral Engagements:

- Bridgetown Primary School Panto
- Holy Trinity Primary School Panto
- ILEAP Party
- Shipston Panto - Peter Pan
- National Apprenticeship Week, RSC
- Heart of England Community Foundation 30th Anniversary
- Hamlet, Press night RSC
- Mayor's Charity Quiz
- Whitnash Civic Dinner
- Tiddington Players Community Panto

• The following meetings were held during the month:

- Planning Consultative Committee
- Personnel Committee
- Community Services & Environment Committee
- Planning Consultative Committee



Bridgetown Panto



Holy Trinity Panto



Tiddington Players Panto



Hamlet



Ileap Party



Whitnash Civic Dinner



Mayor's Quiz

Heart of England Community Foundation 30th Anniversary

I was invited to attend The Heart of England Community Foundation 30th anniversary with a celebration at St Mary's Guildhall in Coventry. Established in 1995, the Foundation has awarded over £49 million through approximately 14,000 grants, supporting more than 8,000 projects across the West Midlands and Warwickshire. The event brought together stakeholders, donors, corporate partners, and beneficiaries to reflect on the Foundation's impact over the past three decades. The Foundation's work continues to focus on connecting donors with local causes, supporting initiatives that promote inclusivity, wellbeing, and community development.



March 2025

Mayoral engagements:

- Vice Presidents Day celebration, Stratford Rugby Club
 - World Day of Prayer, Baptist Church, Payton Street
 - Alcester Civic Dinner, Alcester Town Hall
 - Kenilworth Civic Dinner, St Francis of Assisi Church Hall, Kenilworth
 - Romeo Place Official Opening, Alcester Road
 - Scholars Mews Spring Fair
 - Shipston Civic Service, St Edmunds Church, Shipston-on-Stour
 - RSC First Encounters: The Tempest, The Other Place, Southern Lane
 - Leamington Spa Civic Dinner, The Glasshouse, Jephson Gardens
 - Choral Society Concert (St John Passion) by JS Bach, Holy Trinity Church (Deputy Mayor)
- The following meetings were held during the month:
 - Finance & Audit Committee Meeting
 - Annual Town Meeting (7:30pm)
 - Civic, Heritage & Events Committee Meeting
 - Planning Consultative Committee Meeting



Kenilworth Civic Dinner



Community Marketplace



Community Café



RSC

The Annual Town Meeting was held on Thursday, 6 March 2025. At the start of the meeting, I took the opportunity to express support for Ukraine.

“Stratford-upon-Avon Town Council stands in unwavering solidarity with the people of Ukraine, both those bravely enduring hardship in their homeland and those who have sought refuge in the UK, including within our own community.

At this time, we reaffirm our commitment to supporting Ukrainian residents and promoting initiatives that offer practical assistance and compassion. Our thoughts remain with all those affected and we will continue to stand for peace, freedom and the values that unite us.”

The Town Hall flew the Ukrainian Flag



April 2025

It was an honour to welcome Her Excellency Ambassador Marie Chatardová to Stratford-upon-Avon to the Town Hall as we marked Shakespeare's birthday in true style.

As a Mayor with Czech roots, it was a particularly proud moment to host her at the Town Hall and to join her at the Shakespeare Birthplace, where she cut the birthday cake alongside Rachael North, CEO of the Shakespeare Birthplace Trust, renowned Shakespeare scholar Dr. David Sterling Brown, and the Reverend Dr. Paul Edmondson, Head of Research for the SBT and our Town Council Chaplain.



Her Excellency, Ambassador Marie Chatardová



Shakespeare birthday celebrations

Shakespeare Birthday Celebrations

The town bloomed with pride as we celebrated Shakespeare's birthday - bands, parades, flags unfurled and flowers in every hand. A beautiful tribute to the Bard!

Thank you to everyone involved in organising this event.



Shakespeare Birthday Celebrations

A lovely Shakespeare Service at Holy Trinity Church with a thought-provoking sermon read by Peter Graystone, alongside performances from actors currently starring in Much Ado About Nothing at the Royal Shakespeare Theatre. Beautiful performances from the Church Choir and students of the Birmingham Conservatoire.

The morning concluded with a procession back to the Town Hall



Shakespeare Service

Volunteers Reception

I was delighted to host a reception at the Town Hall to celebrate the incredible volunteers who give so much to Stratford.

Being the Mayor, gives a unique opportunity to witness at first hand the difference volunteers make to the community.

I'd like to take a moment to recognise one volunteer in particular - someone whose dedication and impact I have personally witnessed and deeply appreciate.

This year's Mayor's Award was presented to Lorraine Mansfield. Thank you, Lorraine, for all that you do for our town and its communities. Your commitment is truly inspiring.



Mayoral engagements:

- Leamington Civic Dinner
- Brook Arts Hub opening
- Warwick Civic Dinner
- Sea Cadets Presentations
- Southam Civic Dinner
- NMTF Presidents Dinner
- Jubilee Club, Easter Tea
- Czech Ambassador Visit
- Volunteers Reception
- Shakespeare Birthday Celebrations

• The following meetings were held during the month:

- Town Council Meeting
- Planning Consultative Committee Meeting
- Community Services & Environment Committee Meeting
- Planning Consultative Committee Meeting



Brook Arts Hub Opening



NMTF Presidents Dinner



Sea Cadets Presentations



Southam Civic Dinner



The Town Council said farewell to Dave Lawley from the Open Spaces Team as he retired after 5 years dedicated service.

Thank you, Dave for all your hard work – wishing you all the best in your retirement.

May 2025

Mayoral Engagements:

- Shakespeare Morris May Day Celebrations
- Shakespeare Music Festival
- Bandstand re-opening
- V E Day Commemorations
- Alcester Mayor Making
- V E Day service, Warwick
- Mayor Making, Royal Leamington Spa
- Great Bowden Recital Trust Concert
- Shakespeare Hospice Ball

- The following meetings will be held during the month:

- Personnel Committee Meeting
- Extraordinary Finance & Audit Committee Meeting
- Annual Meeting & Mayor Making Meeting
- Planning Consultative Committee Meeting



May Day Celebrations



Shakespeare Music Festival



Band Stand re-opening



Mayor's Cadet Presentation



Beacon for V E Day Commemorations

Message from the Deputy Mayor

As I prepare to take on the role of Stratford-upon-Avon's 480th Mayor, I also reflect with gratitude on a fantastic year supporting our current Mayor, Councillor Jason Fojtik. Stratford has been my home for over a decade - a town my husband and I have chosen as our forever home and where we feel incredibly fortunate to raise our children.

Serving as Deputy Mayor this year has been an honour and a privilege. I have had the opportunity to represent our wonderful town at a wide range of events, from church services and sporting occasions to care home visits and charity fundraisers.

I look forward to the year ahead, representing Stratford-upon-Avon with pride while continuing to serve as a town councillor for the Orchard Hill ward.

Councillor Dani Hunter

Deputy Mayor Engagements:

- Warwick Mayor Making
- Bishopton Community Garden opening
- Stratford Fun Regatta
- Gail's opening
- Stratford in Bloom Awards
- K.E.S. Speech Day
- Canning Court fête
- Stratford Methodist Church refurbishment anniversary
- Be More Hannah fundraiser
- Morrisons Challenge 24 fundraiser
- Stratford Herald Awards
- Shottery Beer Festival
- WCC Civic Service
- Rock Church Toy Appeal
- Stratford Rotary Children of Courage Awards
- Trinity Manor Christmas party
- Holy Trinity walk through carol service
- Stratford Sports Club Junior Squash tournament



Elected as Deputy Mayor



*Mayor and Deputy Mayor
2024/25*